

The 33 Year Olds

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## The junk

The rain cluttered on the roof of the car when Yuki and Yocco got into the car in attempt to keep the evidence from getting wet. It had been pouring for over an hour and the crime scene was already pretty much wasted on arrival. There was little else to do than just wait in the car and examine the few seemingly useful scraps found around the body.

“Ok, lets go over them again”, Yuki said in a slightly agitated voice while whipping some rain drops from her forehead, “this fucking weather is messing up our crime scene, goddammit”.

Yocco opened the file she was carrying, which was now semi wet from the scraps, and handed Yuki the first piece of paper which was folded over several times. Yuki gently unfolded the sticky sides from each other but failed to keep the piece of paper completely intact, as the folding line turned into a rip. With the two sides barely connected words become visible but each one of them was smudged, due to the rain, to a point where there was no making sense of it.

*“My -----re a-----ie- f-- -----l-d ---ro---t s--e u--- e-----ent, --- d----e a -----c-----bu---- to -----l  
-e m---r”*

Yuki gave it a long stare before handing it back to Yocco who in turn gave it a long stare after putting her big investigation glasses on.

“Can you make anything of it?”, Yuki asked.

Yocco remained silent as if the pattern of smudges on the piece of paper had hypnotized her and now held her brain hostage. She had a knack for seeing detail in what others easily discarded as irrelevant but was also known for taking her time in the process making Yuki grow impatient.

“Well, what do you see!”

“The message cannot be determined without further analysis, but the jagged sloppy curves of the F’s and the poorly closed O’s, surely tells us something about our victim’s personality. On first impression I would conclude our victim was in a poor mental state, maybe fear or possibly anxiety”.

“Interesting, what else do we have?”

Yocco took of her glasses and put them down on the dashboard in order to have her hand free to deal with the fragile piece of paper. With one hand she opened a small zip-locked plastic bag in which she carefully inserted the piece of paper. The file contained one additional item aside from the note which was a yellowish pale looking credit-card-sized name card. On it was a name written. It read “Jonas Bell”, nothing more.

Yocco passed the name card to Yuki who examined it briefly and then gave it back and as she sighed in despair. “Well at least that’s something”, she said.

The local police was now working the crime scene in groups of two. Two men wearing bright yellow raincoats were busy setting up a tent over the crime scene. Not that it mattered now but protocol is all these guys know. The spectacle took little over two minutes and Yuki zipped up her coat and wrapped her head in the coats hood.

“Let’s go”, Yuki said as she swung the door open and leaned out of the car. Yocco copied the ritual and followed her boss walking towards the tent covering the body. When she arrived Yuki was already on her knees, closely examining the body from head to toe. The body was lying face down on a concrete pavement in a pool of blood and what has to be the remains of his brain.

“What do you make of this mark in the back of his neck”, Yuki asked without taking her gaze of the black markings. Yocco kneeled down opposite from Yuki and put on her glasses as she leaned in to take a closer look. Three horizontal stripes were on the sides of his neck with a cross sign in the middle. “SAN JYUU SAN, the number 33 in the Japanese language”, Yocco said as she pushed her big glasses back on her nose to keep them from falling of.

“Right, what do you think it means.”

“Too early too tell, but statistics suggest most tattoos in the neck are gang related.”

“Good, and what do make of the crime scene, is this murder or suicide or what?”, Yuki asked while getting up her feet again.

“My intuition tells me this was no murder, there is no sign of a struggle at all and the writing on the note and the name card support the idea of suicide. As for the scene it is seems to be an isolated place only bums, drunks and junkies seek refuge for the night. This is not a place where one comes to rob the rich”.

“But if this is possibly gang-related we can’t exclude a revenge killing between gangs!”

“Yes, this seems like an obvious case of suicide but it’s too soon to exclude other possibilities.”

“Right, let’s go back to the so we can start the paper work.”

The rain was thinning out and the sun was coming over the horizon. Yuki walked up to one of the policemen guarding the crime scene and instructed him to keep her updated if anything new would come up. Yuki always had a very straight forward, almost blunt, character. She knew what she wanted, when she wanted it, and how she wanted it which made her the ideal person for leading the investigation but at the same time disliked by many, especially men couldn’t deal with her aggressive nature.

She started her private investigation bureau 7 years back when a flood of crimes reined the streets of downtown London. The first 3 years were a struggle in competing with the local police authorities and the bureau wasn’t taken seriously until Yocco, a shy girl from the neighbourhood, joined.

Their first case as a duo involved the ritual murder of royal couple and thus gained a lot of attention from local media, effectively getting the bureau in the spotlights. The case was

corrupted in every way imaginable and high-level judges and officials were pulling strings behind the scenes in order to cover for someone they considered important. Yuki first noticed Yocco's extraordinary ability to read between the lines of human behaviour when the first suspects were under investigation. Yuki's methods of interrogation were harsh and known to make even the toughest of men shiver like a little kid who just got caught doing something bad. Yocco would always just stand in a corner of the room watching and analyzing every move from the suspect and then when she was sure she would walk up behind Yuki and whisper "it is not him". How she knew remains a mystery all Yuki concluded was that she had a gift for sensing people and seeing behind the most of evil masks came almost natural to her.

Now 4 years in the business together they've established quite the reputation and are respected among the local authorities. On many occasions they were brought in to crack the toughest of cases and this one is no other. With the crime rates rising higher and higher with each year they get the occasional case from the local police reinforcement.

Back in the car, Yuki waits for a police man, guarding the scene, to pull up the yellow tape surrounding the scene so she can drive the car out of there. When one finally notices their car engine rumbling he walks over to the tape and pulls it up and signals Yuki to come forward. As she drives by she throws him an empty smile and steps on the gas pedal. Yocco in the seat next to her is carefully studying the smudged note again. She doesn't speak for the entire way over to the bureau and doesn't take her gaze off the piece of paper. On occasion she mumbles some words that make no sense other than to her.

When the bureau comes in sight, Yuki pulls up the driveway into an alley and steps on the brakes making the car squeak like an old antique piece of furniture being moved. In one move she pulls out the keys and opens the car door. As she gets out, Yocco opens her door gently still completely immersed in the note and feels around with her foot on the ground.

As the doors slam shut, Yuki asks, "How is that note coming along?" As if she sees water on fire, Yocco looks up with a gaze of surprise.

"I have found the first six words most likely to be 'my sincere apologies for I have' but nothing more after that".

"What do you think it could mean"

"We cannot be sure yet but leaving an apologetic note on a dead body seems highly unlikely for a killer these days."

"So, you're saying this means it suicide then?"

"We still cannot be sure but if this words mean what I think they mean the case is most certainly shifting in that direction."

"Interesting, good job!"

Yuki turns around and reaches in her pocket to find the key to the front door. The bureau used to be an old asylum in which mental patients were treated through practices people nowadays rather not talk about but both Yuki as Yocco liked the place for its serenity. When Yuki turns

the lock and pushes open the door a sterile smell often found in hospitals escapes the asylum. The smell quickly wears off so they step through the corridor and turn on some lights before closing the door and making their way into the main office. The main office used to be an old isolation room though now the door has been broken removed making it somewhat part of the corridor. The room contains two desks, one completely cluttered in files, notes and scraps of papers while the other is meticulously ordered with everything in its own correct place.

Yuki flips the light switch next to the door-less opening which generates a buzzing sound throughout the white-walled square room slowly followed by a dim light growing stronger with each second. With a dull thud Yuki drops into her chair and rests her head on the desk in front of her leaving her arm dangling like a string puppet.

“What a morning, she sighs”

Without a word Yocco leaves the room and enters a smaller room across the corridor where a small kitchen is located. She puts some water into a metal kettle and places it on the stove. She takes out 2 small cups and waits until the kettle starts singing which is her cue to take it off the stove. With the cups in hand she returns to the main office where Yuki still has her arms dangling aside from her. Gently the cups are placed on the desk as the sound of pouring water in combination with the smell of green tea sparks Yuki’s interest to change posture.

“Thank you, Yocco, just what I need”

For a moment nothing is said as they both carefully take little sips of their tea and enjoy the momentary silence. Then Yuki breaks the silence and puts down her cup as she grabs the case file and inserts a blank sheet of paper into her typewriter and starts typing.

Case NR: 721  
Document NR : 1  
Victim: Jonas Bell (unconfirmed)  
Race: Caucasian  
Age: 30~40  
Cause of death: Suicide (unconfirmed)  
Date: 21 September, 1994

On the morning of September the 21<sup>st</sup>, private investigator Yuki Sato and assistant investigator Yocco Tanaka were called on to support London police precinct 17 in a suspected crime.

On arrival, Yuki Sato and Yocco Tanaka were guided onto the crime scene by the precinct’s chief of investigation Mr. Morgan who, right there, handed over the case to “amai private investigations”.

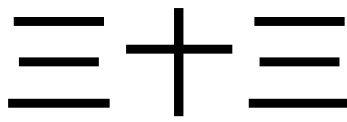
Yuki Sato investigated the scene first and found,

- One name card containing the name Jonas Bell
- One scrap of paper containing smudged words

The evidence found has been found in less than optimal circumstances due to the heavy rain fall of the last few weeks.

The victim was found lying face down. From initial investigation the primary cause of death has been a high velocity impact to the front of the head. There has been no sign of a struggle or supportive evidence suggesting murder.

In the neck of the victim we found a tattoo of the Japanese number 33 which stretches from the left side of the neck to the right side of the neck. As of yet we see no scientific correlation to the death of the victim.



Representation of tattoo

Signed Yuki Sato

Date

.....

.....

With a loud noise, Yuki rip's the paper from the typewriter and slips it in the file along the name card.

“Any luck with the finding out what is on that piece of paper?”

“Not much yet, I managed to fill in 3 more words but as a whole it still makes no sense to me. Listen to this ‘my sincere apologies for I.....something something.... shame ..... something something .... death .....something something.... major’.”

“Doesn't ring any bells with me, sorry...”

“So what now?”

“We'll visit the morgue as soon as the precinct confirms they have released the scene. See what we can find out about our victim. But it looks like it's going to be a case closed.”

## The message

That afternoon the medical investigator of precinct 17 gave a call to the bureau and notified Yuki of the transfer of the body from the scene to the morgue. The medical investigator would start processing the body at 15:00 and invited Yuki to join. She confirmed and hung up the phone.

“I’ll leave for the morgue in about 5 minutes, you want to come along?”

“No, I’ll work on the note further and do some research on the tattoo, see where it get me.”

“Ok, suit yourself.”

Yuki, grabbed a brownish bag from the floor, standing next to her desk, and placed it on her chair. She collected some small items, pens, a notebook, etc, and divided them over various compartments of the bag. She grabbed the two empty cups from the desk and brought them back across the corridor into the kitchen along with the kettle. As she returned she grabbed the brownish bag from her chair and walked past the desks.

“Well, I’m off to the morgue. Good luck.”

“Thank you. You too!”

Once Yuki was outside the weather had turned out to be quite nicely and the sun was warming up her face. For a moment she just stood there, feeling the sunrays exploring every pore on her forehead. But there is not time for idle thoughts and she turned towards her car and walked over to it. It was a small old yellow car but big enough to get both, her and Yocco, everywhere where the job needed them to go. The early signs of its death were already showing through some rusty spots and small indents. The front window was a bit dirty and had small crack in it.

She opened the door and placed the bag in the passenger’s seat while holding her self steady with one hand on the steering wheel. Once seated she turned on the engine and put the car in reverse. As she looks over her shoulder through the back window and steps on the gas she suddenly freezes as she notices a face in the far distance looking right back at her. From the momentary shock she twitches her legs making the engine stutter and eventually die out with little bang from the exhaust.

When her fright wears off and her natural instinct kicks back in, she jumps out of the car and sturdily walks towards the face without taking her sight of it. She crosses the street, in what has to look like an attempt to kill her self, since she completely ignores the little but possibly deadly traffic. As she closes in and for just a moment looks away as a car rushes past her, her gaze no longer meets that of the stranger. With squinted eyes she scans the surrounding areas but nothing more to see than the usual. Like a disappointed child she stands there not moving, her heart beating in her throat and temples. What just happened?

As another car rushes by her adrenaline rush dies out and she carefully makes her way back to her car. When she takes place behind the steering wheel again she reaches over the passenger seat and flips the bag over so the compartments become visible. She reaches in one of the

compartments and takes out a cell phone. With the phone to her ear she uses her other hand to start the car engine again turns the car around. The phone rings but no answer yet. She puts the car in first gear and drives out of the alley onto the main street where she just was standing. She drives slowly while closely watching the sidewalk hoping to recognize that face again but after a while the pointlessness of this dawns on her and puts the car into second gear. When the phone rings for the 6<sup>th</sup> time it finally comes through.

“amai private investigations, this is Yocco Tanako.”

“It’s me, listen, I feel something suspicious is going on, could lock the doors please and keep an eye out for anything unusual.”

“What happened?”

“I’m not sure but I think we are being watched.”

“By who.....since when.”

“Listen, just do it. Lock the doors and keep an eye out. I have to go now, well talk later.”

“Ok, bye”

“Bye”

Yocco hung up the phone and returned to her desk where she had the scrap of paper lying under the bright light of her desk lamp next to a huge magnifying glass and a freshly set cup of green tea. She took a quick sip of her tea, enough to steam up her glasses, and then picked up the magnifying glass and gave the scrap of paper her full attention once more. Under the bright yellow light the paper shows the indents of the writings which slowly but surely could be deduced back to their original meaning with the help of the magnifying glass.

The smudges still made it really difficult to decipher the messages but it wouldn’t take long now before she would crack it. She took another sip of her tea and wrote some letters on a piece of paper mimicking the indents that were visible under the smudges. It now read,

*“My sincere apologies for I have failed and brought shame u--- -e -----ent, may my death h--- a minor c-----  
bu---- to ---- -l -e major”*

The more words that were filled in the easier the pieces of the puzzle were coming together. Within minutes the smaller words were filled in leaving only the final words open. These were not only severely smudged but also the indentation was weaker than the other words.

*“My sincere apologies for I have failed and brought shame upon the -----ent, may my death have a minor c--  
---bu---- to what will be major”*

With the piece of paper in hand she read it out loud over and over again hoping some dark part of her brain would fill in the two missing words. The first 4 times nothing happened but the fifth it just fell right into place. Contribution, she said out loud. Finally! One more to go.

She followed the same ritual over and over again for what must have been over 30 times. Then in a moment that felt like an epiphany she could see it, the complete meaning of the

piece of paper. For a moment she froze thinking she might forget it but she quickly grabbed her pen and wrote it down, “establishment”. Just below it she wrote the complete sentence again, right between all her scribbles and notes.

*“My sincere apologies for I have failed and brought shame upon the establishment, may my death have a minor contribution to what will be major”*

Thrilled by her result and perseverance she ran over to the phone on Yuki’s desk and dialled her number from memory. The phone rang once and then was answered,

“Yuki speaking”

“Its me....I deciphered the piece of paper we found with the body!”

“Nooo....”

“Yes, listen to this. *‘My sincere apologies for I have failed and brought shame upon the establishment, may my death have a minor contribution to what will be major’*”

“Establishment?”

“Yes, could it imply a gang relation after all...”

“It definitely opens up other possibilities. This guy was connected to something.”

“I .....

“Yocco, are you there.....”

“.....”

“Yocco, what happened?”

“.....Someone is fumbling with the lock on the front door.....”

“Are you sure...”

“Definitely”

“Goddammit, what is happening here...did you lock it?”

“Yes, like you told me”

“Good, there is no way someone can get in then....listen, I need you to go to the front door and take a look through the spy hole. We need to know suddenly has this strong interest in our business.”

“No, no, no, no. I can’t....”

“Yes you can, just put the phone down and go.....Go Yocco, Go”

Still hesitating, Yocco slowly puts the phone on the desk and makes tiny steps towards the corridor. When she arrives in the doorway she carefully throws a peek through the corridor onto the front door. The door lock is jiggling around in irregular intervals throwing high pitched sounds through the corridor into the emptiness.

Step by step she comes closer. The silence is only broken by the lock but her feet move over the floorboards like feathers through air. When she is only a few feet away from the door and prepares herself for the worst the sounds suddenly stop. For a moment the silence feels even worse. Her heart beats so fast she can feel it in her fingers. Slowly but surely she leans forward and rests her head against the front door, closes one eye, and uses the other to peek through the spy hole.

All she can see is an empty alley that in the distance flows into the main street on which some cars pass by. The wind is playing with some garbage that is lying around in the alley. As she pulls her head back from the door and is about to turn around she suddenly sees the light coming through the spy-hole dim out and then grow brighter again.

Frightened and interested feelings torment her brain until she breaks the dualistic spell and makes her self watch. She leans in again and rests her head against the door. She sees the backside of a man in a long overcoat walking out of the alley. She keeps watching until the man reaches the street and disappears around the corner. Just to be sure she waits a little longer but then she pulls back and runs back to the main office where Yuki is still on the line.

“Yuki...”

“What is it”

“Someone has it in for us. I just saw a tall man in an grey overcoat walk out of the alley.”

“Fuck, fuck, fuck. We really can’t deal with this now, I just arrived at the morgue. Well deal with this later, ok.”

“Ok”

“I have to go now....bye”

“bye”

## The morgue

Yuki hung up the phone and stepped out of the car. In quick pacing she made her way over to the morgue from the parking lot. The day was already growing darker as the sun was going down little by little.

As she neared the two big automated front doors of the morgue, an assistant medical investigator was just about to leave and kept the door open for her. Once in the lobby she checked in with the reception and was told she could go on further to the autopsy area.

Yuki never liked the morgue much. The building was completely build from greyish cement and reminded her of a bad horror movie. The lightning in the halls were always flickering and overall cold in the whole building topped it off.

She passed through several automated doors and finally came to a greyish metal stairs where she would descend into the autopsy rooms. The medical investigator had told her the autopsy would take place in room 06 which was in the back of the hall, once down the stairs. Halfway the door opened and the medical investigator came out and greeted her surprisingly warm for such a cold environment.

“Please come in, I have been waiting for you”

“Thank you, I am Yuki Sato”

“Hi, my name is Doctor Francis White”

“Haven’t seen you before in the morgue”

“Indeed, I recently started. I transferred from precinct 13”

“I see, well nice to meet you, none the less”

The autopsy rooms were new and executed in a completely white sterile manner. Two bright lights lit the room up in such a bright manner that you had to squint upon entering the room. There were two metal examination tables mounted into the floor on which one was the body of Jonas Bell. Or at least we assume. He was already equipped with the ever so fashionable toe tag.

“Shall we begin Miss Sato?”

“By all means, Doctor”

The Doctor put on a white overcoat and gave a similar one to Yuki along with protective mask and a mouth cap. Once we were fully dressed up he took out a memo-recorder and started speaking into it.

“Victim, Jonas Bell. Caucasian, between 30 and 35 years old.”

He released the record button and walked more towards the victims head and leaned down to take a closer look at the victims face, or what was left of it.

“The victims face is severely dismembered by what looks like a frontal blow at high velocity. The eyes and nose of the victim are gone and the skull has to some degree imploded, obviously the primary cause of the victim’s death.”

He released the record button once more but for a moment hesitated to press it again and add something to where he just left off but then eventually decided not to and looked Yuki in the eye and said.

“You think this was suicide?”

“Possibly, we’re not sure yet but there are several signs suggesting suicide.”

“Do you have any clue to how he might have done this if it were to be suicide?”

“No, we don’t have any theories on that one yet. The area he was found in was pretty remote and abandoned. There were no rooftops or anything he could have jumped of from.”

“Interesting, the impact pattern on his skull also doesn’t suggest an impact with such a flat surface as the ground he was found on. It must have been a smaller sized object”

“So you’re saying it definitely wasn’t suicide then...”

“That would be my conclusion in this stage of the examination, yes.”

“But he had a note on him expressing his apologies...”

“Suicide is not in line with the victims body. Maybe the notes have been planted...”

“Thanks doctor. Ill have to make a call. Ill be back in a few minutes.”

“No problem. Ill start preparing the body for the procedure.”

Yuki walked out of the autopsy room into the hallway and grabbed her mobile phone out of her pocket. The display indicated she had no reception and so she walked towards the stairs and went to the ground floor until her phone’s display showed a sign of connectivity. Using speed dial she called Yocco. The phone rang once until it was entered.

“amai private investigations, this is Yocco Tanaka speaking.”

“Its me. Listen. The medical investigator just ruled out suicide so I want you to start investigating the tattoo. It’s our only lead now.”

“I already took the liberty to do so. I have not yet found anything useful though. The databases don’t recognize the tattoo or a gang affiliating themselves with the number 33.”

“Good. Really good! Keep digging then. I have to return to the medical investigator. He is about to starts. Well talk later.”

“Ok, bye”

“Bye”

Yocco hung up the phone and returned to her desk where an old yellowish computer was buzzing in attempt to cool itself down. As she sat down behind the monitor she pulled the keyboard closer and started typing in new search-terms hoping the database would spit something back. “Thirty three gang” Enter.....”No results found”. “San Jyuu San gang” Enter.....”No results found”. This was hopeless, she concluded, and tried to come up with alternative ways to find this piece of vital information.

She got up from her chair and started walking back and forth through the room in circles while resting her head on her hand. What am I missing, she wondered. Gangs can not go unnoticed. How is this one different?

As she roamed through the room, lost in thought, it suddenly came to her. Of course, that’s it. She quickly made her way to her desk and fumbled around between all the notes and scraps of paper. When she found note she had written on the words of the smudged note found with the body, she said,

“The establishment.....”

Her gaze was fixed on that one words as a million thoughts ran through her mind thinking of all the new possibilities this brought to the case.

“It’s not a gang at all. It could be anything...” she mumbled.

She walked to Yuki’s desk and took the phone of its base and dialled Yuki’s cell phone number. It took a while before she answered, probably because she had to excuse herself from the autopsy.

“Yuki”

“It’s me”

“What’s new”

“I just wanted to run something by you”

“Ok”

“The note we found on the body, this morning spoke about ‘the establishment’...”

“Yeah, so....”

“So what we might have been focussing too much on the idea of a gang but the word establishment could be anything. A gentleman’s club, a company, an underground organization, a poker club basically anything that connects a group of people together could be spoken of as an establishment.”

“Damn. You’re right. This widens up the case a lot more. We should start checking ‘establishments’ in the direct area. There has to be a reason the body ended up in downtown London.”

“Ok, ill see what I can do...”

“Good, and thanks for calling Yocco.”

“No problem.”

Yuki hung up first and placed her mobile phone back in her pocket and made her way back down the stairs and through the hallway. Upon entering the autopsy room the medical investigator had his hand in the body’s intestines.

“Sorry for that, it was an important phone call.”

“Sure, no harm done”

“So what did I miss?”

“I was just about to start examining the stomach contents.”

“Ok”

With a small scalpel the medical investigator started cutting around the stomach making some surrounding organs make small sounds. When he got the stomach disconnected from its owner he put down the scalpel and placed both hands around the stomach and carefully lifted it up out of the body. With great care he placed the stomach in a weighing scale that was connected to the room’s roof and stated the stomach was of average weight. He then carefully lifted the body out of the weighing scale again and placed it on small metal table mounted into the wall and instructed Yuki to come closer. Together they were standing around the metal table looking at the stomach like two highschool kids that are about to dissect a frog in biology class.

The medical investigator made a small incision into the stomach releasing the smell of stomach acids which rose up into the nostrils, initiating the gag reflexes. Yuki quickly took a step back hoping she wouldn’t throw up in her mouth cap tormenting herself with more bad smells from the stomach. It didn’t seem to bother the medical investigator and Yuki leaned back in to see what could be learned from the stomachs contents. With the scalpel he separated out the contents of the stomach over the table.

“This is most interesting” he remarked.

“What”

“This is caviar.”

“What”

“Yeah, this is caviar.”

“Are you sure?”

“Positive”

“That’s quite the exclusive meal for the night your about to die on”

“I see what you mean, what do you make of it”

“I don’t know, but this case is getting more complex with the minute. I think I know enough for now. Ill come by later to pick up a copy of your final report, ok.”

“Sure, good luck. It was nice meeting you.”

“Likewise...Bye”

“Bye”

Yuki walked out of the autopsy room and headed for the stairs. Once back on the ground floor she headed straight for the exit towards her car. It had turned dark already outside as the evening was kicking in and throwing a thick darkness over the city. As she approached her car she could see the wind playing with a white piece of paper on her car’s front window. When she stood in front of the car she leaned over and grabbed the piece of paper from under the car’s windscreen wiper. It was folded two times and once she had opened it she read “were watching”.

She turned around immediately thinking someone on the parking lot might be watching her that very instant. She scanned the area from car to car but could clearly tell all parked cars were empty. Quickly she unlocked the door and got in. With the keys in the ignition she tossed the note on the passenger’s seat along with her bag and twisted the keys bringing the engine to life. This case started to give her the creeps and she drove off like a criminal fleeing a scene. Once she got to the main road she got paranoid, constantly checking her mirrors if she wasn’t followed and was seriously considering taking an alternative route to see who would stay with her. The chills went down her spine. She just didn’t get it. What was so special about this victim? What are they telling us? Should we back off? Is this a warning?

The questions just kept stacking on top of each other until an endless mountain of complot theories and riddles made her brain so clouded she missed her exit and made her snap out of it.

“Fuck, Fuck, Fuck” she rambled while hitting the steering wheel with her hand.

“Goddammit”

She drove 20 miles harder than was allowed but al she could think of was getting back the bureau and locking all doors and talk this over with Yocco. She always knew how to rationalize things and how to put things into perspective.

The next exit came into sight and she rushed of the main road and really had to step on the brakes hard making them squeak like fingernails on a school board. She made a quick U turn when she could and got back on the main road in the opposite direction. She was almost there

now and could feel her senses were calming down a little giving her enough reason to stick the speed limits. Finally, when her exit came insight she sighed from relief and drove as straight towards the bureau.

As she parked her car in the alley she noticed the lights were burning in the corridor through one of the small top windows meant for air circulation. She picked up the note from the passenger's seat and pushed it in her bag and got out. Yocco opened the door as she must have recognized the cars engine sound. Yuki walked past her straight through the corridor and into the main office. With a dull bang she tossed her bag on the floor and let herself fall into her chair. She could hear Yocco closing the door and fixing all the locks after which she came towards the office.

Yocco had noticed Yuki's fear and without asking moved towards the kitchen and started preparing some green tea. When the tea was ready she took the cups and brought them into the main office where Yuki lied buried in her own arms resting on her desk. Yocco placed the cups at the end of each desk and took a seat without saying a word, just waiting for Yuki. 4 minutes went by in which they both just occasionally took a sip from their tea.

"This case is getting fucked up, Yocco", Yuki finally said.

"What happened?"

"First I saw someone watching me from the main street when I left for the morgue, then you heard someone trying to break in, then when I left the morgue someone had put a note under the windscreen wiper letting me know I'm being watched."

"What note..."

"It's in my bag"

Yocco placed the brownish bag on her desk and noticed the white paper in one of the compartments. She plucked it out with two fingers and unfolded it. Were watching.

"Who is watching..."

"We don't know, but that's not even all of it. Our victim of whom we though would be a pretty simple case of suicide apparently isn't. The medical investigator ruled out suicide. He has definitely been hit in the face with an object. And then to top it off, his last meal was quite the exclusive one. He had caviar in the last 24 hours before his death."

"No....."

"Yes....."

"How does that fit. So if we assume this was a murder, then what was the motive? If our victim had the money to eat as exclusive as caviar how does he end up between the bums and junkies in downtown London without any signs of struggle other then his cracked open forehead?"

"You tell me....maybe he was dumped there and killed somewhere else..."

“Ok, with what as motive?”

“If he could eat as exclusively as he did he must have had quit some money. Maybe the money has been taken from him at the place he was murdered before he got dumped in downtown London.”

“Good. And how does the name card fit in and the note?”

“.....I don't know”

“Why a name card to begin with?”

“Guess someone wants us to know who he was.”

“But why? It goes against the motive of getting money. A burglar doesn't want to leave any clues around. Why bother planting this note?”

“Someone is playing with us”

“That does fit today's events!”

“That implies a different motive. Someone killed him to get our attention.”

“But why, why us?”

“Impossible to know. We need to find out more about our victim as soon as possible. We'll go back to the scene tomorrow and see what we can learn from the local bums and junkies.”

“Ok”

That night they both worked further on analyzing the events that had occurred on this crazy day. It still felt like they were in way over their heads and that someone was toying with them but they grew more confident that together they would be able to deal with this case.

## The scene

The following morning the morning dew painted a blurry picture of the scenery where the victim was found. You could not see further than 50 yards and the fields of grass were slippery making Yuki and Yocco very on guard. Yocco was a registered gun owner and always had a small 9mm gun with her when they went to do field research.

For a while they circled around the spot where the body was found while discussing their theories. They soon noticed though their theories were in a dead-lock which ironically only a local bum or junkie could release them from. Yuki came prepared and bought some cigarettes and liquor as she knew how to deal with these people.

As the sun started rising above the horizon the first signs of life became visible as they crawled out from under their carton boxes. Yuki and Yocco drew a lot of attention on themselves with their small posture and relative elegant clothing making 4 or 5 local junkies steadily but surely come closer towards them. Yocco reached in to her coats jacket tacking a firm grip on her 9mm preparing herself for the worst. It wouldn't be the first time someone tried to take advantage of their lack in height and strength.

When the first junkie came so close, they could both smell the horrible stench that greeted them with. Yuki repressed her disgust and started to make conversation.

"Hi we're with the London police department and we have some questions..." Yuki initiated knowing it would be better to tell them they were with the London police force instead of a private investigation bureau. Even London's underbelly knew the position that private investigators were in these days.

"What dooo....do you want", the junk stumbled with red bloodshot eyes.

"We have some questions for you....how about we make a trade. You give me a satisfying answer and I give you some liquor." She said while pulling out the neck of the liquor bottle from her coats pocket to prove she was not bullshitting him.

"Oook, whaat doo you want....to know?"

"Tell me about Jonas"

"I dddont know any Jonas...."

Yocco leaned in over Yuki's shoulder and whispered "he's lying", to which Yuki turned around and whispered back "sure?". Yocco nodded in confirmation making Yuki turn around facing the junk and threw him a fake smile and said.

"You loose. Ill ask some of your friends" and she walked past him while Yocco remained in her spot.

"Now hold....hold up a minute" he stumbled, "I remember now.....I remember Jonas".

A grin appeared on Yuki's face which faded out as she turned around and faced the junkie positioning him between herself and Yocco.

"So what can you tell me about Jonas?"

"He used to come here a lot to get a fix. I can't say we were close, we don't get much visitors here but for some reason Jonas got some people looking for him making the other not trust him."

"What kind people do you mean?"

"Rich people. They often came in black expensive looking cars and some of them were wearing three piece suits."

"How often would you say these people came to visit?"

"On a weekly basis I think."

"Do you know what they wanted?"

"No, but from a distance it looked like they wanted to get him out of this place but Jonas always resisted them."

Yuki looked at Yocco who nodded meaning she could find inconsistencies based on tone of voice and body language.

"Ok, thanks." Yuki said and handed him the small liquor bottle which he eagerly grabbed and opened. He walked away from them while taking the occasional sip from his recently acquired friend.

Yuki walked closer to Yocco and said, "well if this doesn't give this case a twist then what does. A junkie with powerful connections, why would upper class people care about a junkie like Jonas?"

Yocco didn't answer and knew this case was different than the other cases they handled. There was something not right about this one. That morning they asked several others at the scene who were willing to tell something for something but not much new had presented itself. No one really knew Jonas or the people that came to visit him and so after an hour or so Yuki concluded they would not find much more and should return to the bureau.

As they were sitting in the car about to drive back to the bureau, Yuki suddenly got a call on her mobile phone. At first it seemed like a normal conversation but about 30 seconds into the conversation Yuki's eyes turned wider and wider while she only answered with the occasional "uh-huh". The call took a little over a minute and when she hung up the phone and slid it back in to her pocket she said looking at Yocco,

"You are not going to believe this. A new body has just been found. Guess how this one connects to our case."

Yocco never liked these questions which she wasn't supposed to answer anyway but played along to keep the conversation going and said,

"I don't know, what is it?"

"Same tattoo in the back of the neck. The number 33 in Japanese."

Yocco had to admit to herself that this little fact got her attention and it kicked her brain back into gear after listening to junkies and bums this morning. Her curiosity triggered question after question but she had a hard time getting them out.

"What..., when....., who....., I mean where was the body found?"

"From what I heard Caucasian male between 30 and 40 hanged himself in an old abandoned house in Havering, east London. They could not tell me more but the precinct chief Mr. Morgan recognized the tattoo in the neck making it our case, so let's go."

As she drove off in their small yellow car away from scene she started discussing the case at hand. They both agreed the case was evolving faster than they could keep up making them feel like they were in over their heads. They could hardly grasp the events that occurred in the case of Jonas Bell let alone a similar case adding more twists to it. Yocco, being the analytical one of the two, was trying to set the events apart in an attempt to make sense of it. On a piece of paper she scribbled her notes while listening to Yuki's theories with one ear and half her attention.

The victim,

Jonas Bell

30 to 40, male, white, social failure

Friends in high places

Tattoo san jyu san

Murdered somewhere else than where the body was found

The crime scene,

Downtown London

Abandoned factory sites

Place for junkies and bums

The evidence,

Name card

Fake suicide note

Possible motives,

Gang related

Open issues,

Affiliation of victim with some establishment

Meaning of tattoo found in neck of victim

Who has been coming to the bureau and who left Yuki a

Note?

She kept going over her notes with her finger like she there was something between the lines her eyes did not pick up on. Yuki's voice drowned out more and more in a background echo somewhere in the back of her head. She realized the problem was in the fact they had no idea what the "establishment" was making it extremely difficult to find the scope of their case but with an additional victim one thing she was sure of. This case was and would grow bigger than they initially had thought of.

"Hellloooo.....are you listening" Yuki suddenly remarked breaking her train of thought and making it crash into the back of her head where she had no control over it anymore.

"Sorry, I got lost in thought for a moment." Yocco responded.

"Any new thoughts then....."

"No, we are kind of stuck on understanding what the tattoo means and how it connects to some establishment. We can only guess at this point to the scope of the influence of this establishment but it seems likely this establishment is bigger than we might think."

"What do you mean, how big..."

"The man that came to the bureau and the note that you found under your windscreen wiper might be coming from people with the same establishment that was in the suicide note. Why would they want us to stop our investigation?"

"You're right, its priority we find out who we are dealing with. As soon as we are back at the bureau I'll see if I can call in some favours so we can learn some more about this establishment."

"We should also not underestimate how dangerous this establishment might be. The attention we got from them is more then we ever got from all organizations together involved in previous cases."

"Good point, .....were almost there now" Yuki said as she made the final corner and drove through a setup of police cars finding an empty spot to park the car.

## The cook

As they got out yellow dinky toy they were greeted by the precinct officer Mr. Morgan who instructed them to follow him. They were guided through some alleys leading to the back area of a big industrial building that seemed to be almost falling apart. Apparently some locals had called it in after they saw some suspicious lights going over the building the other night and heard someone forcing the door. The front door was indeed quite havocked by a crowbar as the door now was covered in scratches around the locking mechanism.

Mr. Morgan lead us up some stairs and through some corridors and when we finally entered the room we could see the body from a white male hanging hanged with a rope which was tied around one of the wooden beams that ran from horizontal from one side of the room to the other side of the room. There was a wooden table in the room which was being investigated by one of Mr. Morgan's subordinates. Under the body was a wooden chair lying on its side which he must have used to stand on before hanging himself. As Yocco explored the room, taking every detail into account, Yuki started questioning Mr. Morgan.

"Do we know who the victim is?"

"Yes, its surprisingly similar to your previous case. The victim left a suicide note on the table and a name card. We verified the name and we're dealing here with Matthew Hoit, father of 3, married to Evi Hoit, works as a cook in one of those taverns in London centre."

"Ok, noted what else..."

"Well, here is the twist....aside from the similar tattoo your previous victim also had, Matthew turned 33 today."

Yuki's eyes turned wide open as her jaw dropped open from surprise. For a moment she had to process this little detail of information but as common sense returned to her brain she remarked.

"You're kidding me....."

"Most definitely not. We just got it verified from his wife. He turned 33 this night but. As they were sleeping he got out of bed. His wife thought he was getting up for a midnight snack and didn't make anything else of it so she went back to sleep. Apparently he had different plans and got here and well.....you get the rest."

"What is in the suicide note?"

"It reads...", Mr. Morgan said while flipping the pages of a small note book, looking for the right notations.

"It reads, '*with pride I did my best to become something for the establishment, may my death have a minor contribution to what will be major*' .....did you get that?"

"Almost.." Yuki said as she was scribbling aggressively in her notebook copying the words she just heard. "Got it.."

“Can you make anything of it explaining why a father of three would kill himself on the day of his 33th birthday?”

“We managed to retrieve the text on the note we found on the previous scene and it read something similar.”

“Good, so you have a lead then...”

“Yes but we’re starting to think we don’t have the resources to keep up with the pacing of events in this case. We could sure use some of the precincts resources.” Yuki hinted.

“You know I can’t do anything like that. It will jeopardise my credibility as well as that of the precinct if we start exchanging information with the local private investigation bureaus. We process the scene for you but from there it’s up to you to connect the dots.”

“I know. It’s just.....”

“Believe me Yuki, you and Yocco are the right team for this case” he spoke with great confidence.

“I guess...” she responded with little shame of prematurely admitting to failure and now being reprimanded by her the precinct chief for not believing in her own skills and talent.

“We are almost done processing the scene. I have to go now, talk to one of the my agents if you need anything else, ok.”

“Sure, thank you”

The precinct officer left the room and Yuki joined Yocco in exploring the room for any detailed that might have been missed. They circled the victim who was about to be cut down by the coroner. From the back you could the victim’s tattoo partly being covered by the rope tied around his neck. The coroner instructed some agent guarding the scene to give him a hand while getting the body down. The agent clearly showed signs in his facial expression of dislike in his newly assigned task and seemed to object but knew this would not be a wise move.

While the agent held the body around the waist the coroner cut the body and instructed the agent to gently lower the body. Both Yuki and Yocco took a step back giving the agent room to execute his move in the best way he new how. As the head of the victim tipped over making the agent become unbalanced the coroner quickly moved in and took a firm grip at the body’s shoulders. Together they slowly put the body in a horizontal position on the floor after which a gurney was driving into the room and the body was transferred onto the gurney.

The coroner instructed two other agents into rolling the gurney out of the room and down the stairs leaving Yuki and Yocco alone in the room where it all had happened this night.

“What is your first impression?” Yuki asked.

“This case is too similar too our previous case. I suspect it will not end with 2 bodies.”

“Right, there is a clear pattern occurring here. What predictions can we make about the next case.”

“It will most likely be a white male between 30 and 40, probably 33. The body will be found with a name card and a suicide note. Whether it is suicide or murder remains to be seen.”

“Yes, and what else can we learn from the scene.”

“Not much considering the few items that were left behind. We’re better of talking to his wife.”

“Good, let’s wrap things up here then and see if we can arrange a meeting.”

An agent came into the room and approached Yuki and gave her a file containing some pictures of the scene and the body along with the name card and the suicide note. Yuki passed it along to Yocco who started investigating its contents while Yuki expressed her thanks to the agent and asked for additional information on the wife. The agent wrote down the address and ripped out the note from his small note book, handing the note over to Yuki.

As Yuki and Yocco came outside the black car from the coroner just drove off between the series of police cars. They made way towards their own car and halfway Yuki gave an honest smile to the precinct officer who was dealing with the local media who had picked up on the case somehow.

Once they were seated and strapped in the car they drove off and made way towards the Hoit residence. Yuki hated this part of cases they dealt with as she was way to straight forward and blunt in her approach. She just couldn’t think of them as victims somehow. Therefore they long before decided in these rare cases Yocco would be the one to speak to the victims. She could, with pin point accuracy, sense what people were feeling and would carefully craft here line of questioning.

The ride took a little over 20 minutes as morning traffic was coming to life and the first accidents had already occurred having them stuck in traffic on more then 2 occasions. Thankfully Yuki was quite familiar with the inner workings of the city and took several short cuts through obscure alleys and sanded roadways.

When they arrived at their destination Yocco checked the file once more before exiting the car as if to make sure she would not forget any detail she might be able to get from Mrs. Hoit.

The address proved to be quite the big house. Though, it wasn’t in London centre where only the most influential and the wealthiest could reside, the place was not bad. Yuki knocked on the door twice before she could hear some movement inside the house. Footsteps were coming closer and then the door opened. Carefully, as if she was prepared for the worst, Mrs. Hoit’s head appeared from behind the door to be followed by a much smaller head a few feet below here.

“Are you Mrs. Hoit?”

“Yes, who are you.”

“Were the investigators who have been assigned to your late husband’s case. We have some questions if you don’t mind. May we come in?”

“Why, I already talked with the police this morning when they came to tell me what happened” she explained while pulling back her curious son and instructed him to go back to the living room.

“I understand ma’am, but and I’m sorry we have to do this so soon, but it’s in the best interest of your husband’s case to do this as quickly as possible so we can close the case meaning there won’t be any more questions for you either.”

“Well, ok then, you can come in” she said while opening the door further so they could enter.

Yuki went in first and entered the living room where 3 small children were sitting on the couch. One boy of what must be 7 or 8 years old and 2 girls aged around 4 or 5. Yuki took off her coat and smiled at the children who turned a little reddish but returned the smile.

Mrs. Hoit entered the living room followed by Yocco who took her coat off and placed it over Yuki’s coat and sat next to Yuki on the couch opposing the children while Mrs. Hoit took a seat in a chair.

Yocco could immediately sense the hostile vibe that Mrs. Hoit was sending them by not offering them anything especially in front of the children since it was the kind of behaviour you would like your children to pick up. Carefully she started devising a line of questioning hoping to win her over.

“How are you doing” she started asking the oldest boy sitting on the couch while playing with his sisters fingers. The boy flushed a little but answered,

“I miss daddy.....”

Yocco could tell immediately the boy had been instructed to respond in certain ways as his facial expressions did not seem to match his words. He was holding back as if his mother had told him he was not allowed to cry. Yocco waited a while for she asked her next question so she could analyze the boy’s behaviour who was not constantly looking for confirmation from his mother as if to say, ‘did I do it right, did I answer the question right’. But Mrs. Hoit kept looking away trying not to give herself away about something.

Even Yuki could now sense the strange vibe hanging in the Hoit residence and subtly poked Yocco making her continue in her questioning.

“I understand you miss your dad. How is mommy doing” Yocco asked hoping the boy would reveal more but then Mrs. Hoit interrupted and said,

“Could you please direct your questions towards me instead of the children, they have enough to deal with.”

“I’m sorry Mrs. Hoit, I understand it must be a hard time for your children.”

“Yes it is”, she remarked coldly and shifted her posture in her chair making her seem nervous.

Yocco knew the best way to work in these cases was to just ask directly making people feel trapped immediately which always would result in them revealing their true feelings.

“Are you nervous, ma’am?”

Mrs. Hoit pupils dilated as she firmly gazed into Yocco’s eyes as if to say she should back off immediately giving Yocco exactly the information she needed. There was something at play here. There was an elephant in the room and its name was Matthew Hoit. Mrs. Hoit clearly wasn’t revealing her cards. Then all of a sudden her eyes turned red and she started crying. She quickly sent the children upstairs and took a seat on the couch opposing from Yuki and Yocco.

“I’m sorry, I just try to stay strong in front of my children, I don’t want them to see me like this. If Matthew taught me anything it was that I should always try to be strong no matter what life throws at me.”

Yocco understood exactly what she was doing but choose to play along and shifted into a line of questioning that Mrs. Hoit would expect and would be more comfortable to answer.

“Could you tell us what happened since you went to bed yesterday?”

“Well, at 19:00 I put the girls to bed and at 20:00 I put my son to bed. My husband and I stayed up till 23:30 or so. We watched some television and talked a little about our days. I woke up at 03:30 when he was going downstairs for what I though was a snack or something. He did that quite often so I didn’t make much of it. When I woke up this morning I didn’t think much of it either, since he always had to leave early and I take care of the kids here.”

“I understand, can you tell us something more about your husband, what kind of man was it?”

“Matthew was a hardworking man. He took his job seriously and he took pride in the fact he could proved for his us. He was calm at heart and didn’t have enemies. He loved his job. He was cook at the Red Rose tavern. He was doing well and just had gotten a promotion.....”

“Would there be any reason he would commit suicide?”

“Not that I can think of....”

The entire conversation Mrs. Hoit was in tears and hid her face in her hand palms while using some tissues to wipe her nose and tears making it hard for Yocco to read her but nevertheless she knew what was going on.

She subtly poked Yuki in the side and gestured her to come closer. Yuki leaned in with her ear as Yocco whispered “crocodile tears”.

Yuki’s eyes widened so open from surprise she could feel the strain in her head. She had to really try to remain as calm as Yocco was but managed to pull it together and as Mrs. Hoit looked up from over her tissues she was looking at the duo as she expected.

“Thank you for your time ma’am, and we’re sorry for your loss.”

“Thank you”, she sniffed while blowing her nose into one of the tissues, “if you can let yourself out” she hinted.

“That will be no problem ma’am, goodbye”.

They got up from the couch and picked up their coat while walking through the corridor leading to the front door. Once they were outside Yuki was about to burst from excitement but Yocco insisted she kept her cool until they were in the car and out of the property.

When they finally drove away she burst loose,

“You got to be fucking kidding me, she is lying all the time, her tears are fake, what the fuck is going on her. What mess have we got ourselves into?”

“I’m positive her tears were fake. She was staging it all. Nothing in her posture matched her words. Nothing in her facial expressions matched her words. Also the kids had been instructed to answer questions.”

“That means she must have known. She knew her husband was going to kill himself. But why...”

“Why indeed. Why would a loving wife with 3 kids accept her husband’s suicide and why would he commit suicide. He had a nice life.”

The case was turning into a freak show. They both knew it. For every piece of the puzzle that fell into place 5 more pieces were added. Things just didn’t add up. Their minds were all over the place, thinking of conspiracy theories, religious cults, political cover ups, but nothing added up to it.

## The bureau

Later that afternoon they returned to the bureau. Too exhausted from the case they both didn't notice the front door was open. When they got out of the car and slumped towards the door Yuki suddenly stood still making Yocco bump into her back.

Surprised and stunned from hurting her nose she looked up and noticed what had made Yuki stop in her tracks. The door had been forced. The locks had been broken out. All of them! Yuki took a step back while Yocco took out her 9mm and pointed it forward. Step by step they entered through the door into the corridor. On the floor were wet footsteps that lead towards the main office but nothing could be heard.

They stood there for a few minutes but it felt like an hour. Step by step they came closer to the main office and once they were at the doorway leading into the office they slowly turned the corner.

Nothing! There was no one in the room. The footsteps led around their desks but everything seemed to be in its original place. They went outside the office to see where the footsteps led. Back in the corridor the footsteps led to the end of the corridor where the stairs of the once asylum were gated off. You could not go to the floors above unless you had the key of the lock wrapped around the fence.

Once they were at the back of the corridor they could see the fence was still in place and the lock was still tightly wrapped around the fence. The footsteps led up the stairs but from there didn't continue. Someone must have tried to get into the asylum but for what reason.

Yocco lowered her gun and walked back to the front door which she closed as far as that was possible. Now that the locks and part of the door mechanism were missing the door would not remain closed so she carefully closed it until the door would stay in position hanging on its own weight.

They both went into the main office and sat down behind their desks and looked at each other in despair. They could sense each other's thoughts. This case was getting unpleasantly close to them. They were starting to feel claustrophobic in their own office, like someone was watching them all the time. Yuki frantically started checking everything on her desk thinking she might have missed something the first time. She opened every drawer and went through its contents but she could not find any changes.

Yocco followed her example, not because she felt the need to but just to make Yuki feel more comfortable. She opened her drawers on the right in which she stored her case files. Nothing was changed; just the case files were in there. The second drawer was for storing her supplies. Paperclips, notebooks, pens, papers, it was all still there. Finally she opened her third drawer.

On opening the drawer an odour came from it so powerful Yocco immediately pulled away. It was so repugnant it felt like it had entered her stomach which was now heavily contracting to evade this unwanted intruder. She ran into the kitchen where she hung over the sink. Yuki ran after her and leaned over her asking what happened and whether she was ok. Her face was so pale she looked like a corpse. She started gagging but nothing would come out. Her eyes were tearing up and her face now turned a little reddish. She looked at Yuki and who was saying

things to her but she could hear her. It was like her brain was shutting down. All she heard was a buzzing sound in her head. She got more and more difficulty breathing and she started trying to move towards the front door hoping fresh air would come to help. But her feet didn't carry her anymore. She bumped from wall to wall. She could feel Yuki's arms clasp around her waist pulling her towards the door. Yuki kicked the door so hard it bounced back and opened. The outside air forced its way into the corridor but Yocco didn't respond anymore. Yuki dragged her outside into the alley where they fell onto the ground. Yuki kept slapping Yocco in the face telling her to wake up but she didn't respond. Her eyes were rolling around in her sockets like she was infected by some kind of zombie virus. She was shivering all over and started shaking heavily. Yuki held her head in place so she wouldn't crack her skull in the process. She positioned herself behind Yocco's head and squeezed her head between her legs while keeping one hand on her forehead. With her free hand she took out her cellular phone from her pocket and started dialling the emergency number.

The call got answered within the second and with trouble Yuki managed to explain what happened and where they were. The woman on the other end instructed her to stay calm and to stay with the victim until the paramedics would arrive.

It took a little longer than 5 minutes. Yuki had covered Yocco with a coat to warm her up. The shivering had stopped but she still looked as pale as a vampire. Two male paramedics jumped out of an ambulance and rushed towards them. They knelt down and instructed Yuki to step back. She complied but felt so powerless, watching Yocco lie there on the ground while a tube was being inserted into her throat.

Within 2 minutes she was placed on a gurney and into the ambulance. Yuki took place next to the paramedic in the back while the other paramedic took place behind the wheel and turned on the alarm. The sound was ear-deafening but it all went by Yuki. It felt like she had already lost her dear friend. For a moment she felt an intense rage in her, an intense hate towards the case and everything it had brought upon them. For a moment time stood still in the back of the ambulance. Every little detail, every streetlight, every corner Yuki took in and registered.

The trip towards London Hope Hospital took a little under 3 minutes. Once the ambulance pulled into the parking lot on the backside of the hospital we could see hospital personnel rushing towards the back of the van. The doors were opened and the gurney was pulled out and pushed through the hallway. The automatic doors opened one after the other while a team of medics followed with Yuki running after them.

Finally the gurney was wheeled into an operation room where a nurse among the medical staff instructed Yuki to wait outside. She again complied but could not contain her curiosity and kept peeking through the door window. She had to stand on her toes due to her short stature making her look like a child looking over the counter of a candy store. After a while another nurse instructed her to follow her to the lobby where she could wait until a doctor would come to inform her.

45 minutes went by while waiting in the hospital's lobby until a doctor in scrubs and a white lab-coat approached her. "Are you Mrs. Yuki Sato," he asked. Yuki got up from her chair and shook the doctor's hand in confirmation.

"Your friend is going to be fine, though we would like to keep her here for an additional day for observation, just to make sure. Currently she is sleeping."

“Thank you doctor” Yuki sighed, “what was wrong with her?”

“She inhaled some kind of poisonous gas, we couldn’t find out what kind of gas we were dealing with so got her on some generic blockers. I was hoping you could tell me more about the gas type.”

“I cant, it all went so fast.”

“I understand. Do you have any questions I could answer?”

“No thank you doctor”

“Ok, then I have to continue my rounds, bye Mrs. Sato”

“Bye”

Yuki dropped back into her chair and dropped her chin on her chest while exhaling all air she had left in her. What a night she mumbled. After a minute or two she got up and made her way to the hospital exit. There was no point in staying here while Yocco was asleep and someone had to hold the forth back at the bureau, especially now with the front door broken.

Once outside in front of the hospital she realized she came here with the ambulance and now she had to take a bus or walk back. It wasn’t that far but the clouds showed little happy foresights and the first drops of rain could felt on her face. She decided to walk anyway and made way through several alleys as the sky ripped open. It poured so hard she was soaked within seconds but she couldn’t care for it much. She was completely lost in thought. Now more then ever she felt a strong need to understand what has been going on for these last few days. In her mind she was reliving each day from the start. First the junkie in downtown London, murdered but made to look like suicide, part of something called 33. Second the cook in east London, committed suicide and also part of something called 33. His wife apparently knew about his suicide and had piece with it. Then the notes, so far both of them seem to serve the establishment with their death and once victim kills him himself on his 33th birthday. Coincidence or not?

She approached the alley leading to the bureau and made a turn looking into the alley right at the front door. It was wide open and the wind was playing with it making it shut and then blowing it open again, each time with a loud resounding bang. She walked up to the door and pushed it open walking into the corridor. The floor was wet from the rain that blew in making her take small steps.

The open door must have blown in so much air that the gas that Yocco inhaled must be gone now. The corridor was icy cold and as she approached the main office she quickly threw a peek into the room to make sure nothing would surprise her. When everything seemed safe she put her coat sleeve in front of her nose and mouth and entered the room. The drawer Yocco had opened was still open and Yuki kneeled down besides it while protecting her nose and mouth. She could see and transparent ampoule being taped into the drawer in a setup that would break the top of once you opened the drawer. Carefully she tore the tape away and ripped the ampoule out of the drawer. She investigated the drawer for more surprise but couldn’t find anything more.

She got up from her knees and took her brownish bag from the floor and started filling it up with case files. Everything she could find and though was important enough to take with her she stuffed into her bag. With the bag completely stuffed and some additional files under her arm she went for the front door and walked out of the alley into the main street.

Not far from the bureau was a cheap motel she had used before in the early days. She made her way over there and tried to shield the files from the rain by putting them under her coat. She looked like a paranoid drug dealer who was hiding her stash thinking the police might be on her ass any moment now.

When she entered the parking lot of the motel she was greeted by the pink neon lighting cast by the tubed flamingo standing on the roof of the motel. Motel flamingo was a place for London sweethearts to meet up and get it on after a cheap date. Yuki knew the owner and therefore choose to come here even though she stood out as much as she did.

She opened the door leading into the small motel lobby where a little old scruffy man with big glasses was standing behind the counter. He didn't notice her so she broke the silence and said,

“Hi dad...”

The scruffy old man looked of from his glasses without moving his head and replied,

“Hi Yuki....to what do I owe the pleasure....”

“The bureau got broken into and I need another place to do my work, do you have a room available....”

“Sure Yuki” he replied and turned around facing a board full of keys while he explored different room number with his hand. His hand finally stopped at number 302 and he grabbed they key hanging under the number and turned around.

“There you go...” he said while he slided the key on the counter over into Yuki's direction.

“Thanks dad...” Yuki replied while taking the key from the counter. For a moment the were both waiting to say something but the silence quickly grew awkward and Yuki turned around and made way to room 302. Halfway her dad remarked,

“Nice to see you Yuki.”

Yuki turned around and threw her dad a genuine smile and said,

“Thanks dad. Nice to see you too!”

The relationship they had was complex. Yuki's mom never accepted the relationship Yuki had with Yocco and felt she brought shame upon her and the family. She even went so far in this that she denounced Yuki as her daughter which was way more Yuki's dad was willing to settle for and thus her relationship with Yocco put a huge strain upon her parents marriage until it broke. Even though Yuki's dad never agreed with his wife's point of view she was the love of his life and always felt the sting of losing her when Yuki came by. Therefore Yuki tried to make things easier for her dad and cut herself out of his life as well making her loose

2 parents. Though her dad never broke it off completely and she knew she could always still call on him if she needed.

Yuki turned around again and climbed the 2 stairs leading to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Room 302 wasn't really spacious but it was clean and had all the essentials needed like a chair, a bed, a desk, some lamps etcetera.

She placed her overstuffed brown bag on the desk and let herself fall onto the bed. She needed a moment to pick of all the pieces of her scattered brain. So many things had happened in so little time to make sense of it. While staring at the roof of her room she started losing herself in thought. It was like she could make sense of it somehow but still had to push it a little more. As she started rethinking each and every aspect of the cases and the victims, how the correlate to each other, her eyes grey heavier.

After a few minutes she of overused her brain and it stroke back and shutdown leaving her in a dark deep sleep.

## The motel

After a good 4 hours of sleep Yuki slowly woke up again. Her brain still half functioning but at least making an effort to start up again proved promising. She got up from her back and sat at the end of the bed while rubbing her wrists in her eyes hoping to permanently drive the sleep out. While a big yawn tried to tell her otherwise she finally got up on her feet and walked over to the desk where her brown overstuffed bag was standing. She grabbed it by the top handle and tossed it on the bed which took more effort than she had calculated and the whole move threw her a little of balance.

Thirsty as she was, Yuki went into the small kitchen and put on some water and prepared herself a cup of tea. The hot steam fogged up her nose and had her sniffing at regular intervals but she hardly noticed. Her brain had kicked back into working mode and already was back on connecting the dots. She opened the bag on the bed and pulled out the relevant files and laid them out on the bed so that soon the bed was covered in files, notes and scribbles.

She started exploring them by shuffling them around, each time categorizing them in a different order. From another compartment from the bag she took out a notebook and a pen and started scribbling out little drawings connecting them with lines and arrows. After a while she realized she got lost in her own notes and tore out the paper and tossed it on the ground.

Thinking out loud now she called out all the essential basics to the case: thirty three, suicide, male, thirty three, suicide, male. The pattern was clear to her that 33 year old males were committing suicide for some reason. Not knowing this reason was what was killing her. Why would they want to die, for what cause, for whom.

Even though the first victim's age had never been confirmed the fact that the Matthew Hoit killed himself on his 33<sup>rd</sup> birthday with a tattoo of the number 33 in his neck made Yuki a believer that if future victims would present themselves they would fit this exact pattern.

With her head resting in her hands she was gazing into the files as if something was on the bed with them that she could not see, just lying there in plain sight waiting for her to pick up on. The frustration grew stronger and stronger until she couldn't contain herself anymore and whipped the files of the bed and threw the bag into the wall.

"Fuck, Fuck, Fuck" she screamed at the top of her lungs, "Goddammit". She dropped to the floor and fell aside as tears started running down her face. It took her a while to get herself back together.

She slowly stood up and headed for the door of the motel room. Once outside she headed downstairs where the grumpy old man was dozing off behind the counter. Yuki silently snuck out through the front door and headed into the pink lighted parking lot. There wasn't much clientele for the flamingo motel in these harsh times and the parking lot was completely deserted.

Yocco should be up by now and should be in a good enough state to be released from the hospital. The walk over there should not take longer then 5 minutes but nevertheless Yuki started running. She needed to clear her mind and this seemed to be the next best thing.

When she approached the hospital her lungs felt like they were flooding with blood and saliva but she didn't stop running until the automatic front door response made her. She came to a stop a little too late and bumped into the automatic doors throwing her back a little. The doors finally noticed her presence and opened up.

There was no one sitting behind the front desk and thus she waited for a second until a nurse came into sight from the end of the hallway. Impatiently she walked up to the nurse and asked halfway if she knew the room number for patient Yocco Tanaka. The nurse acted a little surprised but then replied she was in room 1206 which was on the first floor. Yuki walked past the nurse and went through the door leading into the hospital's stairs.

Once she got to the first floor she checked the door numbers for reference in finding Yocco's room and finally went into the direction leading from the number 1202 to 1204. The door to room 1206 was open and as she walked through the door, Yocco was getting out of her hospital gown and into her own clothing. As their eyes met a big smile appeared on both of their faces and with half her clothes on she fell into each other's arms.

"Are you okay?" Yuki asked and held Yocco by the shoulders while checking for any bodily deformities.

"Yeah, I feel fine now, can't really remember much of what happened though, but the doctor filled in the blanks"

"Ok, well I checked into the flamingo motel. I got all the files from the bureau but we're not going back there until it's safe again."

A doctor came in the room and interrupted their conversation. He held a chart and a pen and walked up to Yocco and asked if she could sign her release forms. She quickly buttoned up her trousers and took the pen from the doctor and scribbled her signature on one of the dotted lines. The doctor cleverly remarked, in what must be doctor humour, she was free to go now and he hoped never to see her again. They both didn't laugh but gave a smile of courtesy as the doctor turned around and continued his rounds.

Yocco grabbed some of her things lying on the bed and made her way to the door as Yuki followed and threw her arm around Yocco. Together they took the stairs back to the base floor and headed for the exit. Midnight was about to set in as the moon rose over London and gave the city a cold vibe. The sky was clear and the stars were bright asking to be admired.

"Have you eaten?" Yuki asked.

"Not much..."

"Ok, let's grab something on our way over then..."

They skipped the usual alleyways this time and stopped at the first place that had some decent take out menu. Packed with a big paper bag of rice, soup and fish they continued their way over to the motel.

The neon lighting of the pink flamingo appeared brighter than usual against the clear dark sky. The light lit up Yocco's face in a pink aura while she was eagerly working away at a rice ball,

making Yuki chuckle. Smiling surprised with a mouth full Yocco looked at Yuki while they crossed the parking lot and made their way into the motel.

Mr. Sato was standing behind the counter taking sips from a cup of coffee while reading yesterdays newspaper. He looked up from over his glasses and remained silent for a moment upon their entrance as if he didn't know how to act.

"You need a hand?" he asked then breaking his stare of amazement.

"No, thanks dad" Yuki replied.

"Hi Mr. Sato" Yocco said with a big smile on her face making it impossible for Mr. Sato to not treat her as if she was his own daughter. With a little reddish blush on his cheeks he pushed his glassed back on his nose and replied,

"Hi Yocco, how about you, you need a hand?"

"No, I'm ok too, but thank you."

"Ok, well if you need anything you let me know."

"Thank you"

Yuki disappeared on the stairs while Yocco followed not much later. Once they were at room 302 Yuki opened the door and let Yocco in first who was greeted by the mess Yuki had made and couldn't resist her inner urge for need and order and started picking up the files immediately and ordered them back into the files.

"Sorry for the mess" Yuki apologize but it didn't stop Yocco from cleaning up the room. Once she had every document and note back in the files she placed the files on the desk and sat on the bed and let herself fall into the pillows.

"I'm so tired....." she sighed.

Yuki lied down on the other side of the bed and watched Yocco's face as she was slowly being pulled into a big black world of nothingness. The whole act took a little over 3 minutes before she was gone and her heavy breathing turned slower and slower until it was a regulated in steady intervals. She pulled up the blankets so they were covered from the neck down. Her eyes turned heavy once more and she could feel the similar force pull her in. For a while she tried to resist it but the more she tried the harder it became to resist. Her eyelids felt like they were an inch thick and finally she gave into it and stopped trying to open her eyes.

The darkness pulled over her like an ocean not guided by rules. No structure, no problems, no case, no nothing. Just the bliss of forgetting as it penetrated her brain and like a virus and shutdown each and every non vital function one by one. Finally she could forget for a moment.

Finally.

## The asylum

Rays of sunlight pierced through Yuki's eyelids making her brain start up all functionality again while trying to make sense of this bright intruder. With one hand she pushed herself up and gazed onto Yocco who was still in a deep sleep and didn't seem the mind the suns torture on her eyes. She rubbed eyes and stretched while leaning one leg over the bed side looking for stability.

As she got up she woke up Yocco who cried a small moan while driving out the sleep in her head. Yuki went into the kitchen and splashed some water on her face while Yocco remained paralyzed in the same position occasionally stretching out.

"Come on sleepyhead" Yuki remarked, " we have a lot to do today".

"Mmmmmwaaa" Yocco moaned while stretching once more, "I'm coming" she said while turning on her side and pulling up the cover to her neck. Yuki walked around the bed to the end grabbed the covers with two hands. In one strong tug she pulled the covers away from the bed leaving Yocco surprised behind with wide open eyes turning back to her back.

"Why" she sighed, "just 5 more minutes".

"No, now, come on"

Yocco complied and rolled out of bed and stumbled into the kitchen where she did a similar ritual to Yuki's but took considerably longer. She carefully splashed a little water in her left eye followed by just a little water in her right eye. She was meticulous like that.

"Ill go buy us some breakfast" Yuki said and walked towards the motel room door. Yocco still in the midst of her ritual gave a small grunge in confirmation and had now proceeded to splashing water on the left cheek. As Yuki walked out the bang of the door shook her brain more awake and at that point there was not return.

As Yuki descended down the stairs where another man than her father was standing behind the counter probably an employee who took over. He smiled and greeted her when she opened the front door and walked into the parking lot where the neon pink flamingo had died out in the suns orange morning glow. She picked up her pace and went through some alleys till she ended up in front of a local bakery that had just opened.

She was the only customer this early and thus had first pick. She took some rolls and some buns and had them bagged in a white plastic which made a buzzing sound as the night wind died out little by little in the morning glory. The smell of the freshly baked buns rose out of the white plastic bag and made things unearthly for a moment as she passed over the parking lot which had turned into an orange pool of dancing sun light.

As she entered back into the motel the man at the counter was checking in a couple and just handed them their room keys and offered to help with their luggage. Yuki didn't pay any further attention and moved up the stairs.

Once in front of the motel door she could hear the shower running when she entered the room. She placed the bag on the desk and took one of the buns from it. There were some files lying next to the bag. Yuki opened the file and skimmed through the contents while eating away at her bun. She flipped through some pages as crumbs from her bun dropped down into the file.

The sound of running water stopped and the door to the bathroom opened as Yocco came out in a cloud of hot steam as if a rock-star entered the room. Yuki grabbed the plastic bag from the desk and took out the other bun which she handed over to Yocco. Together they sat on the bed enjoying their buns while Yuki was still going through the file she had now placed in her lap. Yocco leaned in was skimming over the documents while drying her hair with the towel around her body when suddenly she remarked,

“Where is the addition to the file?”

“What do you mean?” Yuki said looking surprised.

“I added the documents that came in from the coroner and the lab results of the autopsy from the first victim, but there not in here.”

They looked at each other with big eyes both knowing what the other was thinking. It must still be in the office.

“Dammit” Yuki sighed.

“We’ll just go there and get the documents, it’ll be fine”

Yuki didn’t respond steering the conversation in a one way direction leaving Yocco standing there looking for ways to comfort her. As she concluded the pointlessness in this she stepped into the bathroom and got dressed.

Few minutes passed while Yocco got dressed and Yuki finished mopping. Yuki took a roll from the plastic bag and handed Yocco the bag who took the remaining roll and together they headed for the office.

The office used to be an asylum back in the days. Story goes that not just the insane and loonies were kept there but also the occasional reformation program was conducted there. About 15 years ago a case leaked out about the asylum running weird experiments on its youngest inhabitants. Though it never really got public for some reason unknown though many at that time thought someone higher up was calling in favours. The asylum closed a few years later but never was torn down and so it was put of for rent. Though, not many companies that aimed for a profit could afford convincing their customers that how cool it would be if their head office was in a freaky asylum carrying a reputation. Finally Yuki put in an offer which was cheap but reasonable for such a place.

The alley to the asylum slash office was in reach now and Yuki took the lead as they turned into the alley. The front door was still wide open though the wind was so weak today it could not defy the weight of the door. Yocco grabbed Yuki’s hand and slowly they moved forward towards the door. Once they came in reach Yocco started squeezing Yuki’s hand as if she wanted her to stop her from dragging her along into the asylum. Yuki didn’t respond to it and kept her eyes locked on the corridor as she stepped over the door step into the dark hallway.

Yuki kept moving forward but Yocco was clearly now pulling her back making Yuki turn around and gesture towards her what she was doing. Yocco whispered, "I don't think I can do this" and looked with fear sprung eyes into Yuki's who placed her hands at Yocco's shoulders and replied, "Yes you can, I need you to, please....".

Her words comforted Yocco and she managed to find some strength in her trust. Yuki turned around and felt Yocco reaching for her hand again. Together, hand in hand, they made small steps further into the dark corridor. When they almost were at the doorway into the office Yuki took a deep breath and slowly peeked into the desks. They seemed normal as if nothing had changed. Everything was apparently in its right place meaning it should be safe to enter though hesitation rose to its climax and she had great difficulty fighting rationality from fear. Slowly she enhanced the scope of her view of the office until she could confirm to herself the room was safe to enter and no one would be there to ambush them.

Relieved she entered the room as she always did and started going through her drawers looking for the file. The top drawer was still open from her last visit and it contained nothing but some pens and paperclips so she pushed it shut. Yocco had let go of her hand and was standing in the doorway afraid to come in further. Carefully she placed her hand on the second drawer handle and opened it with the greatest care. Mentally she was prepared for the worst, making her feel incredibly stupid when the drawer was completely empty. With a bang, of frustration she shut the drawer and placed her hand on the third drawer handle. She pulled it open, still with care, but more rationally determined of the unlikelihood of a similar rig that was in Yocco's drawer. The drawer appeared empty but on further inspection she could see there was a document lying in the back of the drawer. She reached in and got the file from the drawer.

As she stood up she looked at Yocco and smiled at her with the file lifted up in her hand but Yocco didn't return the feeling of joy. She stood there frozen in the doorway with big eyes looking slightly paler. Yuki walked up to her and whispered "what is it" fearing the worst. Yocco whispered back with a slight stutter in her voice, "the lock has been broken" as she hinted in the right direction with her eyes without moving her head. Yuki looked into the corridor but had to give her eyes some time to adjust before they could make out the subtle contrast differences in the poor lighting.

Then slowly she could see the snake like shape of the lock on the floor in front of the stairs leading to the upper floors. Someone was in the building had gone into the asylum itself. Yuki turned her head back to Yocco and looked at a now even paler face. She could see the fear that was in her eyes but likewise Yocco could see the sheer determination in Yuki's eyes. She knew Yuki didn't like the situation either but they had to find out what was going on here before the case would devour them both. They had to be bigger than their own fear.

After a moment of working her thoughts out Yocco nodded in confirmation of Yuki's plans to go and see who was on the upper floors of the asylum. She grabbed Yocco's hand and slowly moved towards the upper floors trying not to make a sound. In the 7 years they had their office they had never been to the upper floors which was also prohibited due to problems with the foundation of the floors. Yuki took the first steps onto the stairs which were answered by loud squeaky wooden noise that ran through their spines and gave them chills all over. The stairs had around 40 steps until it would flow into a small flat floor where the stairway would continue at 180 degrees in the opposite direction. It seemed to take them ages to conquer those 40 first steps.

Once they were at the in between floor Yuki tried to pick up a little more pacing realizing they could make each other go crazy at this rate. Halfway the second stairway Yuki could see into the hallway of the first floor. There were several signs that read “employees only” and these doors seemed to have a considerable amount more locking mechanisms on them. The hallway was divided into wing A and wing B. Above each door was a room number indicating going from 101 to 125 on one side and 102 to 126 on the other side. The hallway was poorly lit and the electricity had been cut off ever since the floors became off limits.

Step by step and hand in hand, they slowly moved forward looking at every door with great paranoia as if at any moment a crazy old nut job would appear from behind it. Yocco’s hand had turned so cold she was shivering now and Yuki could feel her hand moving around uncontrollably. At the end of wing A was what appeared to be a door standing open and Yuki turned around facing Yocco and whispered, “Do you have your 9 with you”. Yocco still pale as she was before shook her head in denial. “Dammit”, Yuki replied looking down as if the answer might be lying right there in front them.

Suddenly a loud bang shook them up so bad the both took a step back. Yocco was about the freak out. Her hart was racing so bad she could feel it in every part of her body. Her temple, throat, arms and legs were all pulsing in fear for what could be responsible for the sound coming from the floor above them. Yuki grabbed Yocco by the hand and walked over to the stairs leading to the second floor. As the second hallway came into sight she slowed down her pacing and carefully let her eyes adjust to the even darker top floor. The second floor was also divided into two wings being named A and B. The door numbering was similar to that of the first floor except they all started with a 2. Most doors in the hallway appeared open making it harder for Yuki to determine where to start.

They slowly moved towards 201 and pushed the door further open so that they had a clear picture of the room. It had an old bed frame and some furniture. The cold blue paint on the walls was peeling of and covered the floor with little pieces and fragments. Yocco took a step back into the hallway and let Yuki past her so she could go first. The door to room 203 was shut and judging from the locks it hadn’t been opened either for the last 10 years or so. They gazed into room 202 on the other side of the hall and moved towards the door which was almost closed. She pushed the door open but the door didn’t budge. Yocco let go of her hand show she could put her small but reasonably more weight into it. The door still didn’t budge much but on her second attempt it came into motion and with a loud squeaky noise the door revealed its secrets. Another rusty bed frame and some furniture!

Room 204 and 205 were both shut but room 206 and 207 were open. Room 207 was wide open which gave it primary focus of the detective duo. As the approached the doorway they could see some light falling through. When the backside of the room came into vision the source of the light was determined to be some of the broken matted windows. Looking through the holes in the window showed the morning orange of the sun turning into a brighter yellow. The sun threw a yellowish glow into the room making it appear less cold then previous rooms. A sun ray cast a yellow line on the walls of the room leading behind the door.

Slowly Yuki entered while feeling her heart pulsing in her throat. The room contained a bed frame like the other but no furniture. She moved in further and could see sparks coming from the broken pieces of glass on the floor. She had the room now for 60 percent in her vision and still pushed forward. The yellow sun line on the wall continued moving lower and lower. Yuki turned her head slowly and followed the line leading behind the door until she could see

a red thick substance on the floor. Her heart and mind were in an intense conflict on what to do next but she ignored them both and slowly took a step aside when a leg appeared in the red substance. A little further and she had found the cause of their mystery.

On the ground behind the door sitting in a pool of blood was a white male looking at her with eyes wide open. His arms were hanging on his body like strings on a puppet. Broken pieces of glass were lying around him one of the pieces was firmly clasped in his left hand. He was bleeding from his wrists painting almost the entire surrounding ground red. There were pieces of glass sticking out of his wrists and it looked like he didn't just cut the arteries but also the tendons.

Yuki looked at Yocco who was still standing besides the door and had not yet seen the body. Yocco pushed forward but Yuki placed her hand on her chest and held her back and looked at her with a sturdy look.

“Take a deep breath before you come in” she advised.

Yocco complied and mentally prepared herself by taking a deep breath and then slowly exhaled. She then took a step forward and turned around as she took place next to Yuki and faced the white pale man sitting on the floor in his own pool of blood. For a moment it got to her like all cases did but she soon managed to rationalize things and became comfortable with the situation.

Her analytical brain drove out all fear now that the source had been determined and proven unable to bring harm on her. She kneeled down and started to carefully look at the cuts on his arm. Even though it's impossible it was like he was still watching them, like there was still some entity inside the body looking out. Yocco got back up and looked at Yuki and said,

“We'll have to inform the precinct officer...”

“Yes.....lets go back and call it in, we have what we came for...”

In a few second they had descended the four stairs that were between the base floor and the second floor. Yuki went into the office where she positioned the phone more prominent on her desk and started dialling Mr. Morgan from memory.

“Officer Morgan speaking...”

“Hello, this Yuki Sato.”

“Hi Yuki, how can I be of service?”

“I like to report another suicide....”

“What.....”

“At the bureau.....”

“You stay where you are, ill send two patrolling cars over right now.”

“Ok”

The precinct officer hung up abruptly leaving Yuki behind with a strange sense what just happened. This was behaviour unlike Mr. Morgan but she couldn't make more of it and thus went outside with Yocco where they waited for the patrol cars to arrive.

It took the patrol cars a little more then 3 minutes before the first car came rush into the alley with the sirens on and all. Yocco looked full of surprise at Yuki hoping to find some sense in her face as to what reason all the emergency over a reported suicide.

The first car parked right in front of them while the second drove to the side of it and the last one stayed behind the first car. The doors swung open while a dozen of police men rushed out. From the backseat of the 3<sup>rd</sup> car appeared Mr. Morgan who stepped out and started walking up to them. Yuki turned to face him in order to start explaining the order of events but before she could start Yocco was being pushed on the hood of one of the police cars. Yuki protested while switching her gaze between Yocco and Mr. Morgan. Then two policemen grabbed her by her arm pushed her against the side of the car. She felt the cold metal of police handcuffs being slide around her wrist,

“Yuki Sato and Yocco Tanaka, you are under arrest on suspicion of murder.”

“WHAT” Yuki said while struggling against the weight of the police men holding her against the car.

“What the fuck is this” she angrily threw at him but Mr. Morgan didn't say anything more then that. He turned around and went to sit in the back seat of the police car he had appeared from.

Yocco was placed in one police cars while Yuki was put in another. They kept looking for each other but it all went really fast they got disillusioned from the whole situation. Was this all a bad joke being played on them, a kind of police humour they didn't get yet? Then, when the sirens were turned back on, on all three cars, as they rushed away, the realization sunk in that it couldn't be. They were being arrested on suspicion of murder.

## The precinct

While the sirens were throwing red and blue shades on the hood of the police car Yocco remained silent. She didn't move or look up. Halfway the agent in the passenger seat turned around and made some remarks but her brain didn't register it. Something was wrong here and her brain was doing overtime figuring out the events of last 24 hours.

Yuki, on the other hand, was demanding answers. She kept kicking the seats of the two policemen in front of her who had instructed her on more than one occasion to shut the hell up. But she didn't, she knew something was wrong. They were being setup or something and she wanted answers right now.

"I demand to know the reason for my arrest. Tell me!"

"Shuuut uup" the agent in the passengers seat replied.

There was little they could do other than just hope for the best. If they were being setup they needed to know who they were dealing with before they could even attempt to set things straight. The police car drove further and further into the hart of London and all the time with the sirens on as if they were big time serial killers that just got caught and required everyone's attention. Yuki could see Mr. Morgan sitting in the back of the police car in front of her. He didn't move or looked back.

The cars drove onto the precinct's parking lot and one by one turned off their sirens as they came to a stop. Doors were opened as Yocco and Yuki where taken out of the cars and lead into the precinct. It was like each agent had his own role and they coordinated perfectly in one synchronous dance. One opened the door while two others went in and opened the doors after that so they could walk straight through without any delays.

Mr. Morgan was walking in front of them all and apparently lead the way to them. He went around some corners and finally led us all to a small cell block where Yuki and Yocco were put in separate cells. The doors closed with bang and the agents disappeared one by one back to where they came from. The lights in the cell block corridors went out and they only had a small light in their 3 by 3 meter cells. The silence was broken when the agents had all left and you could hear other "inmates" starting to talk.

Yocco hadn't spoken since they were arrested and suffered from her own overactive brain trying to solve this crazy puzzle. The day was about to go into the afternoon but she already felt tired and sat on the metal bed that was mounted into the wall. She turned to her side and closed her eyes for a moment trying to visualize the events that led up to their arrest.

Yuki felt so much energy she couldn't think straight. She walked from one side of the room to the other and back. On occasion her frustration grew so big she walked up to her cell door and started banging it while screaming she demanded to speak with her lawyer and that their arrest was completely illegal. Her heart was racing and she felt like she could beat down the door with her bear hands.

Yocco felt so woozy now she could sleep but something in her mind prevented her from doing so. Maybe it were the images flashing by of previous events or maybe she was too

conscious of the strangeness surrounding their arrest that her brain had prioritized things differently. Sleep just wasn't that high on the list at this point. She pictured yesterday from the point she opened the drawer in the office. She could clearly remember opening it but after that point there is a big gap in her memory as she couldn't recall going from the office to outside. She did however remember Yuki's voice and the sensation of feeling extremely cold. The next thing that came to mind was the hospital, doctors talking to her and explaining vague scenarios of what had happened and what she needed to do now. She couldn't make any sense of anything up to that point. Questions like, who, why, how all remained unanswered. Nothing much had happened from there until they found the suicide case that led to their arrest. Yocco tried to picture the pale white male sitting on the floor in his own pool of blood in the asylum. His eyes haunted her and made it uneasy to recall. She remembered kneeling down and looking at the man's face. His eyes so wide and full of fear it he must have been quite desperate to commit suicide. Then she could vaguely recall a little detail she had dismissed earlier. She could see 6 small marks in his neck, 3 on either side. If the lines ran from once side to the other it would mean he had a serious cut in his neck worth exploring but she knew better. The 3 lines were part of the number tattoo. They formed the three's in the Japanese number for 33.

It suddenly dawned on her why they were here. She still couldn't understand the details but it fitted the pattern of previous events. Someone, with powerful connections, was trying to stop them in their investigation into the suicide series. If these connections ran as high as the police force they were in way over their heads. Someone powerful was toying with them.

Yuki had lost her energy. Her throat felt soar from all the screaming and she was ready to give in and accept her circumstances. Nothing seemed to make sense anymore. The case had grown out of proportion and now this. She walked to her wall mounted metal bed and lied down on it. Her eyes felt dry though she was about to break into tears but nothing came. She felt she had no more tears to spare.

Both Yuki and Yocco were now lying on the cell beds helplessly waiting for justice to arrive and turn this bad dream around. A little over a hour had past now when suddenly their cell doors opened up and policemen came in and grabbed each of them by the arms and escorted them out of the cells. The lights in the cell block's hallway were still flickering from being recently turned on as the needed to warm up a little.

They were led to another side of the precinct's building where what must be the interrogation rooms are. They were separated once more and put into different rooms. The rooms were quite cliché in that they had one table in the middle with a big light hanging above them, a seat on one side and two seats on the other. Of course the big mirror mounted into the side wall cannot be missed either.

Yocco took a seat and waited for someone to initiate the interrogation. She understood the psychology behind these things very well and knew the first 5 minutes no one would come into the room to set the suspect on edge. She figured while she has the advantage in her level of understanding psychology she might as well make use of it and folded her arms over each other and placed them on the table in front of her while she rested her head on them making it look like she was crying and hid her face in despair.

Yuki, in the room next to Yocco's didn't understand much of all the psychology Yocco was into. She often had listened to her explaining it but she had a far more pragmatic kind of mind.

If you want it you go get it had been her motto for most of her life. Her experience as a private investigator though allowed her to understand how these interrogations went. She walked around the investigation room and started looking into the mirror mounted into the wall. She knew very well how much investigators hated that when a suspect was doing that.

It took a little less than the expected 5 minutes before two men entered the room and took occupied the chairs opposing Yocco. One was a buff looking man wearing a Hawaii t-shirt showing palm trees and some beaches. The other was a more skinny man with thick glasses on who carried a notepad with him. The Hawaii-fan opened the conversation and asked,

“Do you know why you are here?”

Yuki smiled at him and replied; “no, can you tell me....”.

He clearly did not appreciate her smile and ignored her remark and said, “how are you related to Jonas Bell and Matthew Hoit?”

“Jonas Bell is the first victim in our investigation as licensed private investigators in a series of recent suicides. Autopsy showed he was murdered but we think it was somehow assisted suicide. Matthew Hoit was the second victim who hanged himself in the middle of the night leaving wife and child behind for reasons unknown to us. Both victims I have not known personally and have never met or talked to them.”

“You’re lying, we have it on record you and Matthew Hoit met on occasion” he said in attempt to push her buttons. Yocco could tell from his behaviour and facial expression he had just made this event up and replied.

“If you want this interrogation to go any where you have to bring something better to the table than such ridiculous claims of evidence.”

The investigators looked at each other surprised at her response whispered something in each others ears before the buff one continued the interrogation. She had clearly caught him off guard and she could tell he was looking for new angles but she knew he had nothing on her.

“Eehum, where were you yesterday night? Do you have an alibi that can be confirmed?” he attempted in retaliation.

“Please, you got to be kidding me with this. Yesterday night I was working the case of Jonas Bell together with my partner Yuki Sato in the next room who will be happy to confirm this. Now please if you could go find me an investigator who knows his ass from his head before me and my partner sue this whole goddamn precinct from A to Z, that would be most appreciated.”

The buff guy got from his chair and whispered something in his colleague’s ear and left the room. Yuki looked for eye contact with the remaining investigator but he seemed to busy scribbling down something on his notepad and hid behind his glasses. When the awkwardness became too big and the elephant in the room was about to sit on him he got up and also left the room.

Yuki in the other room was still waiting for her interrogators to come through the door. When one finally did and took a seat she opened the conversation with,

“What is this all about, someone tell me on what charges we are being held here.”

The man put his cup of coffee down on the table and pulled the chair out from under the table so he could sit on it. He didn't respond but carelessly took a sip from his coffee and looked up at Yuki while the steam flew up in front of his face in wave forms and shapes.

“You are held here on suspicion of the murder on Jonas Bell, Matthew Hoit and Richard White...is that enough for you?”

“Richard White....who is...”

“Richard White is the man you killed in the asylum....”

“No I did no and the same goes for Jonas Bell and Matthew Hoit...they killed themselves...”

“They didn't in our investigation...”

“What, you're setting us up.....”

“Are you ready now to make a statement? We can go at this all day long...but the outcome is already set.....”

“I demand to speak to a lawyer.”

“No need to, you partner already confessed, there is very little a lawyer can do for you now.”

Yuki knew he was lying. Not because she could read his behaviour like Yocco was capable of doing, but because she knew Yocco would never commit to something she didn't do. Even if it meant going to jail while being falsely accused!

“No lawyer, no questions” Yuki remarked and crossed her arms and looked aside like a child who didn't get their way. But it seemed to work as the interrogator got up from his seat and went for the door.

“Have it your way” he remarked while opening the door and walking out. Immediately 3 policemen came back into the room and lifted her from the chair and forced her out of the room. She was led back to her cell where she could see from a distance the Yocco was just being put into her cell.

Finally when they were both locked up once more and the lights went out Yuki started looking for ways to get into contact with Yocco. Yuki banged a few times on the wall but the walls were so thick and quite well insulated that even she could hardly hear any noise coming from her bangs on the door.

Yuki started banging on the door while calling out Yocco's name but she didn't respond. Maybe she thought she was just looking for answers from the officers or demanded a lawyer again.

Yocco was lying down on her prison bed and was looking up to the ceiling. The paint was coming down from the walls and ceiling meaning the precinct must have had quite a history. She knew they were playing games with them. Someone was pulling on strings to control the entire situation and there was no point in resisting. It would be like swimming upstream. They needed to know who they were dealing with before they could even think of taking actions. For now all they could do was go through the endless protocols and politics. Being played with in interrogation after interrogation knowing it was all a useless act.

## The cell

Mr. Morgan was in his office working behind his desk on the file of Richard White. The body was transferred from the asylum to the morgue. Autopsy wasn't needed as it was a clear case of suicide.

He skimmed through the police file and took out the little pieces of evidence. He looked at a name card showing the name of Richard White and then at the little not with his final thoughts. He knew what the not said even whiteout the note existing, he knew. He knew what future cards would look like, hell he was about to write his own.

From the top drawer of his desk he took out a bottle of whiskey and poured himself a glass which he then drank in one tug. The clock on his desk ticked away towards 03:02 and the precinct was now on its quiet. He closed the file placed it on the end of his desk and took out a business card from under his placemat on his desk. The card was placed on top of the file and he opened up a notebook and started writing.

*“With pride I know I did more then my part for the establishment, may my death have a minor contribution to what will be major.”*

He tore out the page from his scrapbook and placed it with the file on Richard White and his business card. The lamp on his desk was turned of and he got up and took the file, card and note with him and headed downstairs to where the cell blocks were. There were a few remaining guards on duty who were playing card games in the coffee lounge while others were taking a cigarette break. The cell block was hulled in darkness and even the lights in cells themselves had been turned off. Through the darkness he walked by the cells and finally came to a stop at Yuki's cell. He turned towards her door and slid open the peek hole. The room was dark so he turned on her cell light revealing her lying on the bed with her eyes closed. He whispered “Yuki....., Yuki.....”. It took a while but she woke up and slowly could open her eyes and recognized the precinct officer's face. She got on her feet and walked over to the door and said,

“What do you want” she said with a low soft voice.

“I don't have much time. Take this file, it will get you and Yocco free first thing in the morning. I'm sorry I had to put you through this but you were getting to close and I was forced to take actions. When it's all over you will understand. Take care of Yocco and it was my pleasure getting to know you two.”

He slid the files through the opening and before Yuki could comment back on what she just heard he closed the slider walked away. She opened the file and looked through the contents and understood she was holding the case file of Richard White. The file contained the coroner's conclusion of suicide meaning there was no more ground for them to be held on. Then the words of Mr. Morgan flashed by in her head, on by on until she remembered “it was my pleasure getting to know you two”. What was that about?

Then with a loud noise she could hear the cell door next to her being opened and someone getting in before the door was closed again. It all came to hear in dull and mellowed out sound but they were clearly distinguishable to guess what was going on the room next to her.

Considering the chronological order of events she knew in the cell next to her was Mr. Morgan, but why....she refused to go with her worst fear. After all it couldn't be, it was Mr. Morgan, but why the sentimental ending of their brief conversation. No, it wasn't possible he probably decided to stay at the precinct and needed a place to crash for the night.

She could hear metal clapping against metal. It wasn't a hard sound but rather a small piece of metal being thrown against another piece of metal. To what purpose? What was happening in the cell next to her? She started banging the door again and called out Mr. Morgan. The sounds briefly stopped but then continued again as if there never was an interruption to begin with.

For a while it turned quiet and she wondered if the worst had happened, had Mr. Morgan hanged himself in the cell next to hers. She dropped the files on her metal cell bed and pressed her ear against the wall hoping to get a sign going against her instincts. She pressed her head so hard against the wall that her ear started hurting but then she could hear something. A sign of life coming from the cell next to her maybe!

To taps on a metal gave her all the hope she needed to reassure herself everything was not lost but then to be followed by a dull thud sound and a crack revealed the true nature of what had happened. She pushed away from the wall and fell on her bum while looking at the wall. It couldn't be.....why.....what was happening to this case.

Mr. Morgan, the precinct officer, had hanged himself in the cell next to hers and there was nothing she could do but wait for the morning to come and hope some overactive agent would start looking for his superior. The idea of him hanging from the ceiling turning bluish was driving her nuts. The feeling of powerlessness was eating away her mind driving out all rationality leaving her in tears and despair.

After a while she gave in to the situation and attempted to sleep some more but sleep had deserted her. It could not take over her brain in this condition and therefore huddled in the back of her mind waiting for her to sort things out. Every detail about the case flashed before her eyes. There was a pattern emerging but she just couldn't find the motive to why healthy young white men would kill themselves all of a sudden without giving something more than a vague note.

As hours passed her brain started shifting reality into dreams and she noticed she occasionally dozed off and then magically though some details, never heard or seen before, were added to the case somehow. She tried to snap out of it but her attempts were futile. Her brain took over and finally allowed sleep to enter and take all the unstructured details of the case and turn them into random combinations of dreams.

Hours went by when a loud knock on the cell door woke her up and the cell door was opened. A tall man in a suit came walking in and approached her.

“Hi, my name is Mr. Wilson, I am officer of precinct 22 and was called in this morning due to the death of Mr. Morgan. We received instructions of Mr. Morgan to release you and your partner this night. Personally I am not familiar with your case so I can't comment on any details. You are free to go.”

Not completely surprised by the turn of events she responded,

“What happened to Mr. Morgan?”

“He killed himself last night by hanging in the cell next to this one. I’m sorry for your loss if you knew him personally.”

“Thank you. I think Mr. Morgan’s death might be part of our earlier investigations into a series of suicides. Could my partner and I see the cell next door if we’re free to go?”

“Like I said you are free to go, if this is part of your previous investigation than you are free to continue your investigation.”

“Thank you”

“My sincere apologies for your arrest”

“Thank you”

Yuki got up from her bed and walked after Mr. Wilson into the hallway where Yocco was waiting. Yuki asked if Yocco was okay and she confirmed she was doing fine and wanted to go back to the motel and just forget about the past 24 hours. Yuki agreed but stressed the importance of investigating Mr. Morgan’s death first to which she agreed.

The cell where Mr. Morgan had hanged him self was guarded by two agents, one on each side of the door. Yuki walked up to the door and looked for eye contact with the guards as if she still wasn’t sure she was free and she needed there confirmation to enter. The guards didn’t look back and just gazed into the opposing wall, so she entered the cell.

The head of Mr. Morgan was paler then the white wall behind him. His eyes popped out a little and the belt around his neck pushed his head in an awkward position. The precincts own investigator walked in and showed them what they found with the body and handed it over to Yuki.

“It’s a name card and a suicide note, I guess you know what to do with these” he said.

“Yes, thanks”

Yuki showed it to Yocco who read it and sighed. Yocco walked around the body and stood on the metal bed trying to peek into the body’s neck. When she could see the tattoo she confirmed to Yuki,

“Same tattoo, SAN JYUU SAN”

“Ok, let’s go back to the motel”

Yocco jumped off the bed and followed Yuki through the precinct towards the automatic doors leading out of the building.

## The Library

Back at the motel they started reorganizing the case files and put each relevant document next to the other. All 4 files were now lying next to each other. Yuki had asked her father if he could dig up and typewriter so they could document new files. Luckily he had one in the motel's cellar that hadn't been used in ages.

Yocco was sitting behind the desk with her hands resting on the typewriter ready to document while Yuki sat behind her on the bed looking at the files being spread out. Yocco started typing.

Case NR: 721  
Document NR : 5  
Date: 25 September, 1994

Case progress report

The case's death total has risen up to four. 1.) Jonas Bell, 2.) Matthew Hoit, 3.) Richard White 4.) Andrew Morgan.

In each case it involves a white caucasian male aged 33 who commits suicide or, in the case of Jonas Bell was made to look like a suicide. Each victim had a tattoo in their neck of the number 33 in Japanese numbers. Also each victim left a name card and a suicide note.

In each note is referred to the establishment of which we do not know any specifics at this point. Each victim is connected through the tattoo's they have and the suicide notes they leave. Following table shows some details of each victim,

Name	Age	Death	Profession
Jonas Bell	-	Blunt force trauma	None
Matthew Hoit	33	Suicide by hanging	Cook
Richard White	33	Suicide by bleeding	Contractor
Andrew Morgan	33	Suicide by hanging	Officer

It appears the victims are from all layers of society and so far it hasn't been confirmed any of the victims knowing each other. There only connection runs through the establishment on which our only lead is the tattoo of the number 33. This number has not shown up in any database as an organized group, clan or cult.

There are clear patterns in the case of how the victims correlate to each other yet this correlation can not be

led back to a reasonable and understandable motive in the case of the victims.

Signed Yuki Sato

Date

.....

.....

Yocco took out the paper from the typewriter and handed it over to Yuki who skimmed through it and nodded at every paragraph and finally remarks it looked good and put it on the bed with the other files.

“So first thing first, we need to understand what the tattoo means and where it is coming from. I’m sure this will lead us to this establishment.”

“Yes, and we also need to understand why Richard White broke into the asylum and killed him self there. Why the asylum, what’s so important about it?”

“You think the asylum is somehow connected to this case?”

“Yes, I do. It’s more of an instinct. Something is not right about it.”

“Ok, so well research the Tattoo and look into the history of the asylum, then.”

“Ok”

They left the room and headed outside to where they always went when they got stuck on a case. The London library had a wealth of information which surely should be able to view the case through new angles or allow them to understand certain aspects better. The library was in west London and so they took the car to get there.

While driving, they started testing theories about what the tattoo could be but one thing seemed to be sure. The number 33 was connected somehow to the age of the victims. It seemed too obvious of a detail to not connect. All the victims were 33 of which one can’t be confirmed and all carry a tattoo of the number 33. They both agreed on this pattern.

What they couldn’t figure out though was to why it was in Japanese. All victims so far were European or English, where did Japan come in. The conclusion that it was done as a fashion statement seemed odd to them. Their instinct told them it had to have more meaning especially if it is connected to your death.

The library was close now and Yuki parked the car some blocks away as she knew it could get quite crowded around the library traffic wise. They got out and walked in the direction of the library as it was about to turn into midday. The library was an old building that had a long stairs leading up to its front doors which were supported by concrete beams.

As they climbed the stairs some people were coming out of the library and moved past them. The door stood still open from their exit as Yuki and Yocco approached it and entered the building. The inside of the library was high like an ancient church and the lighting was always

dim for some reason. Both sides were covered with bookshelves and in the middle were desks and tables where mostly students were nose deep into the books. The whole thing didn't make a sound which was like a carnal sin in this place.

Yocco went her own way in the library which she always did. She scoured through the endless rows of books looking for anything of interest. Yuki searched for a library employee so she could get what she needed and start researching.

After a minute or two she found an old woman putting books away in different rows of the bookshelves and took the opportunity and asked where she could find information on the old London asylum. The woman indicated she knew where to look and instructed Yuki to come with her as they walked through rows of books. The woman finally came to a stop and pointed towards a few rows and indicated these books were about London architecture, London history, and London through the years. She said if there was a book on the London asylum it should be in these rows which was not all that comforting but still the best advice I could get in this sea of information.

She went through some books hoping to get a clue on what their about and soon she gathered the most potential books that would contain an answer to her question. She took a seat and started flipping through the pages. For a while nothing relevant or of interest showed up. Then suddenly she stopped flipping through the pages as something struck a nerve in her brain. She recognized something a few pages back and she quickly turned a few pages back. There it was the entrance to the asylum as it was 30 years back. It looked completely different in the book picture as it did now and she only recognized it because she had seen this picture before.

The book said the asylum was built in 1963 as an initiative from the city of London and several private contractor lead by a Dr. Greenway. He was a specialist and a leading figure in the field of neurology, psychology and had made several breakthroughs in the area of neurological disorders. Apparently he had opened several of these asylums in other places and successfully had patient return into society.

It showed some pictures of the asylum on the initial page and as she flipped to the next and the next it showed some indoor shots which she recognized as the hallway on the second floor. Then to her surprise the book showed group pictures of some patients in front of the asylum. The text below read the names of each individual in the picture.

“Dr. Greenway, Roger Whitaker, Francis Bakersfield, George Moore, Johnny Dunham, Patrick Bleaker, and Dr. Yamamoto” it read in the subscript.

The picture dated back to 1967. Yuki was surprised to see Dr. Yamamoto in the group as she had never heard of a Japanese doctor joining the asylum program. She scribbled the names down on a piece of paper and underlined the names of Dr. Greenway and Dr. Yamamoto. The next few pages were no longer on the asylum and thus no longer of interest. She closed the book and moved it to the other end of the table and opened another book.

Yocco had collected her own share of books and was sitting between students who were eagerly studying medicine and economics. She stood out, not only due to her short posture and large glasses, but also her book topics. She had lain out several books in the Japanese language, some on tattoos, and others on numbers. She was going through the books and tattoos and flipped through some pages showing various prints. None of them were inspiring

enough to read more about them and after a while she figured these books were way to commercial to be applied to their case and closed the book. She tried the book on numbers and used the index to find anything related to the number 33. The book read,

“The number 33,

- The atomic number of Arsenic.
- Age of Jesus when crucified.”

That was it, nothing more than that on the number 33. Greatly disappointed she closed the book and placed it on top of the other disappointing book. She got up from her chair and started looking for Yuki. It took her a while before she spotted Yuki sitting by her self at a table that wasn't meant for visitors reading books.

When she was in range she greeted her but Yuki didn't notice her approaching. Yocco took place opposite from Yuki and grabbed one of the books on the table. Yuki looked up and only now recognized it was Yocco.

“Hey Yocco, look what I found. The history of the asylum turned up some names we can further investigate.”

“That good. The tattoo's turned up nothing. I tried several books on tattoo's but they're mostly picture books. None of them had any additional explanation on them or on their origin. Also the number 33 didn't give me any results.”

“Ok, well I'm almost done here, so we can go in a minute.”

After a few minutes Yuki shut the book she was reading and instructed Yocco to go. It had been a little over 2 hours in the library and they were only a little further then before. There only lead from here were the names of the Doctors. They could tell them more about the asylum and how it correlated to the rest of the cases.

## The Country House

A few calls with the new precinct officer soon led to an address that was registered to one Dr. Greenway. The good doctor was quite hospitable to clear his schedule so he could meet with us so soon. We were on our way to the address which was located just outside London. It was a million pound country house on privately owned property. The doctor must have made quite the career for himself during the last 20 years even though his fame went down the drain after the asylum incident.

The drive took them through a forested area where only the occasional local would come into the opposite direction. The roads were covered in leaves and every few kilometres a sign would warn us a deer might jump on the road any minute now. When we finally arrived at the gate of the country house we were stopped by a gate for which Yocco had to get out and identify herself before we were allowed in. The drive from the gate to the front door in itself took a little over 40 seconds.

The house was enormous for city standards. It looked like a castle complete with the huge green garden containing statues of Greek goddesses and all. In the driveway where Yuki parked the car was a fountain of a goddess endlessly kept pouring water into the fountain from a small bucket she held at shoulder height while nymphs surrounded her.

When Yuki got out of the car she was greeted by one of the butlers who came outside and asked them to follow him. The butler guided them into the house where they were asked to wait until Dr. Greenway was ready for them. They had arrived 5 minutes early and since the doctor was already so forthcoming in agreeing to meet them it seemed very reasonable. The butler came over again and asked if the ladies would like some tea to which they both agreed.

Five minutes later with a hot steaming cup of tea in hand the doctor came down the stairs and greeted them friendly. Yocco could tell it was genuine enthusiasm and tried to analyze the doctor's appearance further. The doctor formally introduced himself and asked if the ladies would join him in the study room where they would have more privacy. The way over to the study room led them through a long corridor in which exclusive paintings hung from the wall and occasionally a statue of some sort. Yuki could not contain her interest and asked while the doctor walked in front of her,

“Business must be good”.

The doctor chuckled without looking around and thanked her for her kind remark. Not the response she was hoping for but still. Finally the doctor entered the study room and took a seat in a black leather chair behind an antique wooden desk and guided Yuki and Yocco into the seats opposite from him. When they were all seated he opened,

“So what is this all about, to what do I owe the pleasure to receive a visit from London's finest.”

Yocco could tell the doctor was analyzing them as well as his eyes shifter quickly from face to face trying to take everything in.

“We were hoping to get some information on the London asylum that you set up in 1963.”

“What about the asylum?”

“Could you tell me more about the kind of patients the asylum had?”

“The London asylum was initially targeted at all kinds of patients depending on their neurological disorder or other problems. With the arrival of Dr. Yamamoto, an expert on the neurology in the brains of children the asylum shifted more towards helping children with neurological disorders. This was at the time more inline with the research we conducted.”

“I see, and where is Dr. Yamamoto now?”

“I believe he now lives somewhere in Eastern Europe but I’m not sure, we haven’t spoken since the closing of the asylum.”

“May I ask why?”

“.....Dr. Yamamoto and I at some point disagreed on the right treating methods for neurological orders in children. This not only led to the closing of the asylum but also to the end of us as colleagues and friends. We have never spoken again.”

“Can you tell me about Dr. Yamamoto’s treating methods?”

“.....I don’t know the full extend of it, but he showed strong interest in understanding and researching the capability of shaping a child’s mind from an early age on. He wanted to find how the maturity of the brain correlates to authority.”

“How would this apply as treatment?”

“He argued if he could successfully change the brain under some authority or force the change would be in place as long as the authority as present. It was only applicable to a specific set of neurological disorders.”

“I see, and why didn’t you want to take part in this kind of treatment?”

“Several reasons but my primary reason was it felt a lot like manipulating these children into thinking they were healthy as opposed to treating their actual problem.”

“Ok, do you still have access to the files of patients back then?”

“No, Dr. Yamamoto took all the files with him. I can recall names of course but I can’t recall each individual detail about their profile, progress or case to begin with.”

“Would you mind if I run some name by you to see what you can tell me about them? Anything could be useful.”

“Sure, go ahead.”

“Jonas Bell?”

“I remember him, part of Dr. Yamamoto’s research. Never treated him myself though.”

“Matthew Hoit?”

“.....Matthew, yes I remember him. He was also part of Dr. Yamamoto’s research. Again never treated him myself so I don’t know the details.”

“Ok, how about Richard White?”

“Ah, I treated Richard at first but when Dr. Yamamoto started his research he expressed his interest in Richard and requested him to be part of his research. I think he selected his patients based on age and gender.”

“Ok, and finally Andrew Morgan?”

“Ditto, I treated him for a while until Dr. Yamamoto took over.”

“Ok, can you tell me more about the case against the asylum, what was your part in it.”

“I was only in court the few times a had to testify in which basically all I could say is that I didn’t now anything about the claims made against Dr. Yamamoto. Some journalist had sparked a scandal against Dr. Yamamoto and the asylum. I knew Dr. Yamamoto quite well but I never had was convinced the claims made against him were true. That was not the doctor I knew but then again...who am I.”

“What kind of claims are we talking about?”

“The journalist, I spoke about, wrote an article about high placed government people who visited the asylum and would have their way with the boys under Dr. Yamamoto’s supervision.”

“Could there be any truth to these claims?”

“I don’t know, after our research split Dr. Yamamoto and I also parted our ways. We occasionally spoke on conventions if we bumped into each other but our tasks at the asylum grew fundamentally different overtime.”

“What do mean?”

“Well, when the research field splitted I still came in from 9 to 5 and had my session with my patients on which I based my research but Dr. Yamamoto’s research apparently grew more extensive. He locked himself in his office often for many hours and usually didn’t go home after five. I think he also on occasion spend the night at the asylum which was quite common for employees but not for doctors.”

“Ok, thank you, I think we know enough.”

“Glad to be of service. If you want to find out more about those names you just mentioned you might want to get in contact with Dr. Yamamoto’s assistant at the time. I remember she

took quite a big part in filling and documenting the research. If you have a minute and can see if I can find her name in one of my older address books...”

“By all means, if you would be so kind.....”

Dr. Greenway got up from his chair and walked into the corridor looking for his old address book. Yocco turned to face Yuki but the butler who came in prevented her from speaking. The butler offered them another cup of tea to which they both agreed as it was a good cup of tea. As the butler turned around and walked out Yocco tried again and faced Yuki and said,

“There is nothing about the Dr. that falls out of place. Everything he told us matches up with he posture and expression. Even his tone of voice doesn’t stray from the truth.”

“So you’re saying he is clean.”

“Too clean if you ask me. Everyone lies from time to time. The little white lies don’t matter but do show in your face or behaviour but not with this guy. It’s like he knows how to hide it.”

The doctor came back into the study room and with a small pocket book in hand has sat back down in his chair behind the desk. The butler soon followed with two more cups of tea and placed them on the desk and asked his superior whether he could be provided with something else. The doctor dismissed him and the butler left once more while the doctor was flipping thought the pages looking for the name.

“Ah there it is...” he finally remarked in euphoria as if he found a long lost treasure.

“Good, let me get a pen so I can write it down” Yuki replied as she put her cup of English tea back on the desk and started fumbling in her pocket coat.

“There we go” she said showing the pen high up so the doctor could see she was ready for action.

“Ok, her name was Aiko Nishimura, her address is no longer correct though. I remember she moved back to Japan where she continued her research in neurology.”

“Thank you, the name should get us somewhere.”

“Good, ok then, I’m sorry but I have another meeting planned in a minute so if you don’t mind lets leave it at this. My butler will see you out and have a nice day.”

“Thank you, bye..”

Yuki got up and Yocco followed her into the hallway where the butler was waiting for them to show them out. He walked ahead of them and held the front door open when they were led out. He even walked them to their cars and greeted them politely for their visit and wished them all the success in the case they could have.

Yuki started the car and waved at the butler who turned around and went back inside while they drove off. The gate automatically opened and within minutes they were back on the main road leading to London central. Halfway back Yuki asked,

“So you don’t trust Dr. Greenway?”

“I don’t know, I couldn’t tell whether he whether he was lying or not....”

“Maybe you trust too much on you talent to spot the lie, maybe if it is not there it really isn’t there.....”

“Maybe, but you would think someone involved in such a big scandal as the asylum has something too hide.”

“Good point, guess we should see what we can dig up on dear Dr. Yamamoto and his assistant.”

“Guess so....”

Yocco was clearly bothered by being confronted with someone she could not understand his mind. She had grown so accustomed to reading people and playing into that that this time she felt so naked without being able to rely on her skill. She tried not to make too much of it but it kept crawling in the back of her mind.

Yuki took the exit leading back into London central and drove straight towards the motel where she parked her car under the pink neon flamingo and turned off the engine. They got out of the car and headed back into the hotel where they went into their room. Yocco started sifting through her notes again while Yuki started making phone calls trying to get more information on the name of Dr. Yamamoto and Aiko Nishimura. Both names turned up little information but they were invited to go through the precinct archives. It was the only option available now. The asylum led them to Dr. Greenway and he led them to Dr. Yamamoto and his assistant.

Yocco had ordered the files back into a need pile and suggested they started going through them once more with what they knew now. Yuki agreed and took some files from her and skimmed through the pages.

“So we now know all victims have been patients in the asylum and have been treated by Dr. Yamamoto. From there we somehow need to fill in the gaps from the asylum as young boys to suicide machines as seemingly normal 33 year old men. Any ideas.....” she asked Yocco with a smile on her face suggesting the absurdity of the case had turned somewhat humorous.

Yocco chuckled but then started thinking on what could have been the connection between the two endpoints. Her brain remained silent and she finally replied,

“If only it were that simple.....”

“You’re right, we need to find Dr. Yamamoto.....but if he is somewhere in Eastern Europe we are shit out of luck....”

“Yeah, and if his assistant is back in Japan that is not going to help much either. Don’t think we can convince the precinct officer for funding such expenses.”

“Damn...well let’s hope they’re still in the country then...”

“We should check the files at the precinct. There might be a record on the doctor that could help us further.”

“Ill make a few more calls and if that doesn’t bring us anything well go to the precinct file storage....”

Yuki took the motel phone and dialled some number. The first number didn’t get through so she hung up and tried another one. The phone rung but there was no answer with the second and third ring. On the fourth she wanted to hang up when suddenly a voice sounded,

“This is Rose”

“Hi Rose, this is Yuki from amai private investigations in London central. Did I wake you, I forgot about the timezone for a moment?”

“Hey Yuki, no that’s ok, it’s around midnight here in Osaka but I was still working on something.”

“Anything exciting?”

“The usual case, murder.....”

“I see, good luck with that. Listen I need a favour. I have a case which leads me back to a woman who is likely to live in Japan now. Could run some searches for me.”

“Sure thing, let me get a pen and paper.”

“Ok”

“Ok shoot”

“The name is Aiko Nishimura, she has lived in London as a assistant under Dr. Yamamoto.”

“Ok, got it. Ill let you know what I find ok. Got to run now....”

“Ok, thanks Rose.”

“No problem, bye”

She hung up and that was that. There was not more options for them to explore other then pay a visit to the precinct archive and started sifting through document after document.

## The case file

Later that day they were both in the cellar of the precinct where old case files were stored. It was a dusty place making it harder to breath without coughing every once in a while. Each case was represented by a box which was piled up endlessly on shelves that divided the room into sections. Yocco took one side of a shelve while Yuki took the other and the read the case names in turn. They were looking for cases related to the asylum which the clerk of the archive assured them that there was. He said he remembered the case still this day and had been a clerk even before that day with the precinct.

The archive, though, had never been digitalized and finding a case was only possible through a thick logbook containing a multitude of handwritings from which each one is more unreadable then the other. It didn't take Yuki long before she lost her patience with the logbook and suggested Yocco and she just started looking for the case on the shelves.

In the first half hour they covered the first three shelves and for a moment though the had found the case but later proved to be an even older asylum that was build early 1900 and had been demolished a few years later after a patient had set fire to it and killed over 13 patients.

The started now with the fourth shelve of boxes and were starting to doubt their method but there was little else available to move this case forward. Yuki read the name of a case written on a box,

“Bakery murders, 1943”, to which Yocco followed,

“Watson family suicide, 1952”

“Rogers marital abuse, 1967”

“Mill tortures, 1956”

“Asylum London, 1983”

“Whitakers money laundry, 1969”

“Jones, serial arsonist, 1987”

“Wait, wait, wait.....go back.....”

“What....”

“Go back....”

“Aaah, I got it, finally...”

Yuki took out the box and kept it above her head while she navigated out from between the shelves in headed for the table that was installed there for reviewing the cases. She dropped the box with a bang on the table confirming to her there was more to this case than the mere

weight of the box led to believe her. Yocco approached the table as well and took a seat on one of the chairs coming with the table.

Yuki took the lid of the box revealing a big stack of files and some plastic evidence bags from which some were empty while others had a little piece of paper in them. She took out the files and handed some to Yocco who laid them out on the table so a clear overview was emerging. Each file read a name, date and the case name on the cover.

When Yuki had emptied the box, and the table was now being covered in files and the occasional plastic evidence bag, she took the box from the table and dropped it on the floor. She took out the remaining seat from under the table and took a seat and said,

”Well, let’s go at it....”

Yocco didn’t speak but confirmed by taking one of the files and putting on her big nerdy glasses and started reading. Yuki took another file and started reading also and it didn’t take long before the first new fact had presented itself which required thorough discussion when Yocco said,

“Listen to this, its from the file ‘Carl Whitaker’ it reads,

‘Carl Whitaker, was hospitalized from the age of 5 when the family doctor diagnosed him with schizophrenia in an early stage. He had suffered from severe mood swings and was later admitted into the London Asylum where he could receive more specialized treatment. Dr. Greenway was primary caretaker of Carl until Dr. Yamamoto, the suspect in this case, joined the program and took over several of Dr. Greenway’s patients. In police interviews Carl has expressed in a multitude of times that Dr. Yamamoto was what he called “dark man”. What this means is open to debate but surely impossible to use in court especially coming from a schizophrenic now 15 year old.’

It goes on about this Carl making claims about Dr. Yamamoto” Yocco said as she skimmed ahead through the pages. Yuki was staring at Yocco trying to put the things she just heard into context with what they already knew.

“What do you think ‘dark man’ meant?” she asked Yocco.

“Doesn’t have a positive ring to it, that’s for sure. Guess Dr. Yamamoto didn’t have his patient’s best interest at heart” she said while flipping the pages of the case file she was holding.

She skimmed through the page and little by little she started remembering more details about the asylum case that was so many years back. The main thing she could remember how all of a sudden the case was being dropped as if someone high up had pulled some strings. She also remembered how local media closely followed the case but after the case was dropped no journalist really felt the need to further investigate the case. It all kind of was remembered as a case that had something fishy but no one was willing to do something about the smell.

“Yuki, what do you still remember about the asylum case” she asked.

Yuki looked up from the case file she was reading and put it down on the table while she looked up as if the answer was written on the cellar ceiling.

“I remember something was not right about it. The way it all ended I mean. It was all so sudden and unexpected. The trial was between Dr. Yamamoto” and a public prosecutor who had been tipped by the journalist. But again the most striking thing I can remember about the case was how abrupt it ended.”

For a moment they sat in silence and were rethinking the possible angles this would bring in relation to their own case.

“We need to find that journalist if we can and possibly the prosecutor” Yocco said in breaking the silence.

“Good point”

They returned to their files and started digging deeper into the case looking for new leads. Yuki read a file on a patient named Jonathan Davids who had been taken into the asylum at the age of 12 and was suffering from several neurological disorders. The boy was under care of Dr. Greenway and seemed to be making great leaps of progress under his care. Session where paying off and one by one, he was learning to deal with his disorders and sometimes could even completely recuperate.

This was an argument carried against Dr. Yamamoto during the early stages of the trial when he was presented the facts that under his care it again all went downhill with the boy. Jonathan had made progress over the course of a year under Dr. Greenway and was back to square one under Dr. Yamamoto in just over 3 months. After those three months he grew even worse and had extreme rages in which he would attack other patients and needed to be restrained to his bed in order no to hurt others or himself.

Few months later Jonathan was found hanging from his rooms ceiling where he had hanged himself to the lamp wiring. The circumstance in which he was found were dubious but not further investigated.

Dr. Yamamoto kept a lot of information behind under a patient-doctor secrecy relation and managed to dodge almost every righteous bullet that was shot at him by the prosecutor.

She closed the file and placed it on the table and took another one which read, “Michael Petersen”. She opened it and started reading.

The file was about another patient of Dr. Yamamoto who had entered the asylum at the age of 14 and had an extremely low IQ ranging between the 40 and 60 making mentally retarded and thus a candidate for the asylum. The asylum would attempt to improve his life and teach him the basic skills that were required to get by in modern society. Despite his retardation he was an introverted boy and kept to himself but after 4 months of treatment he had panic attacks when male nurses approached him. Something the file made explicitly as the boy did not have the same reaction to female nurses. After the case was over and the asylum eventually was shut down the boy was transferred to an asylum in northern England.

At this point there was a clear picture emerging about Dr. Yamamoto. He was doing something not quite right with his patients.

Yocco had changed to a different file also and was now reading a file on Roger Jones, a boy who entered the asylum at the age of 13 and had suffered brain damage due to a traffic accident. He became too expensive for his parents to take care of in his condition and there for was submitted into the asylums caretaking program.

He was under the care of Dr. Yamamoto from the start and seemed to make progress which was indicated by his parents. But after 2 months of treatment was found in the asylum public shower rooms where he had cut his wrist with an improvised knife and bled to death.

It was pushed in court as evidence of Dr. Yamamoto's malpractices but never resulted in favour of the prosecution since these kinds of things happen in every asylum as the statistics showed.

Yuki had opened a file on the cases progress and it had pictures which showed the asylum from outside and inside. Some patients and some nurses where in the pictures. As she skimmed through the pages she came across a document in which a confession by journalist A. Wilkinson was showing her how the case got started.

The document described how, A. Wilkinson, the journalist had suspicion towards the asylum after the patient suicides with relative small intervals. Call it journalist instinct or not but he knew something was not right and he started looking up more information on the asylum. He had been making pictures of the asylum and documenting the schedules. After a while he had learned that in every few weeks in the midst of nigh a multitude of expensive looking cars would come to the asylum and men in suits were entering the asylum as they were let in by Dr. Yamamoto. A picture in the file showed, in little contrast, a man opening the asylum front door and 3 men getting in the asylum.

"I'm going to check if the clerk remembers something about this case, he might know some of these names" Yuki said and got up from her chair. Yocco nodded without looking up from her file while Yuki walked past behind her. When she came into the front lobby of the precinct she found the clerk taking a break eating his lunch. She walked up to him and greeted him. He looked surprised and offered her a seat and one of his sandwiches. She took the seat but refused the sandwich and started talking.

"I was wondering, since you mentioned you have been working here as a clerk for so long, if you still remember something about the asylum case?" Yuki asked.

"Ah, yes. I remember well actually. Since the case was involved in al kinds weird outcomes. Many speculations you know...."

"I do know.....so what did you think?"

"Its fishy for sure but we commoners will never know what happened there in the asylum. You know someone high up was pulling strings. Many at the precinct speculated it ran up as high as people in the parliament but of course there was never any evidence to support that."

"I see, what can you tell me about how the case got started?"

“Ah, yes. I remember he was found dead later on in the case. Suicide said the report.”

“What, suicide?”

“Yes, I’m positive the file said it was suicide. I archived that case myself.”

“What did else did the file say about the journalist?”

“He was found dead due to an overdose. He apparently had a drug addiction though colleagues of his never confirmed that claim. They testified he was one of the most hardworking journalists they knew though they were never heard in court.”

“Do you know where the file on his suicide is in the archive?”

“It should be close to the case of the asylum since they happened so close after each other, if you want I can look it up in the logbooks.”

“No thanks, ill find it. You finish your lunch. Thanks for the info.”

“No problem, good luck. Let me know if I can help.”

“I will”

Yuki got up and headed back into the archive where Yocco was still nose deep into the file and didn’t hear or see Yuki coming back even when she took her place on her seat. Yocco closed her file and placed it on the table and asked,

“And anything new?”

“There is supposed to be a file on the journalist, he apparently killed himself during the case.”

“Really....”

“Yeah, it wasn’t linked to the case but I have my doubts...I’m gonna look for the file.”

“Ok”

Yuki walked away and disappeared between the shelves while Yocco took another file from the table and started flipping through the pages. It was clear now that the asylum took an special interest in the name of research but it was also clear that these youngster didn’t get much help under Dr. Yamamoto’s supervision. Something had happened to these boys.

All victims in the previous cases have been boys who were admitted to the asylum for one reason or another. Some were mentally ill other just had small psychological problems but the files didn’t mention anything further on the boys for some reason. None of the files described the asylum as seen through their eyes which left the most important thing only guessable.

About 70 percent of the files were describing patients of the asylum that were treated under Dr. Yamamoto and turned out for the worse. In total it counted up to 12 boys, each and every one around the age of 14 or 15.

Some of the files were testimonies of investigating officers at that time and one file was on Dr. Yamamoto which was surprisingly thin. The remaining files were documents and the progress that the case made. The case suddenly ended with the prosecutor dropping all charges and the journalist's suicide mustn't have been favourable to the case.

Yuki came back with another box labelled "A. Wilkinson, Suicide". She took the lid off and got the files out. There were only two files in the box. One documented on the way the body was found and the other on the case investigations leading on from there on. She took the first file and opened it while Yocco took the other.

To their surprise the file contained no documents or evidence the files were completely empty. In their surprise they looked at each other and Yuki said,

"Well this was to be expected...."

Yocco didn't reply but understood what she meant; the whole death of the journalists was hulled in mystery and now that the files were missing it just confirmed their suspicions that his suicide might not be a suicide after all.

All of a sudden the clerk came running into the archive. When he arrived at the table he was exhausted and needed a minute to catch his breath before he started explaining the reason for his rush. Yuki and Yocco just looked, anticipating the worse, at the clerk leaning on his knees and looking down at the ground while breathing very heavy.

"I....I....just got a phone call from the precinct officer. There....is another death...found which fits the case you are working."

Yuki and Yocco immediately started putting the files back in the boxes and closed them with the corresponding lids and slid the box to the end of the table.

"What's the address...."

"It's in the business district" he said while he got a piece of paper out of his shirt pocket and fumbled with it so the text became visible to him. He gave the note to Yocco while he was still working hard to pump some fresh air into his lungs and get his heart rate down.

"Thank you sir, we have to go now. Lets go Yocco" Yuki said when they walked past the clerk and left the archive.

## The business man

The roads were empty at this time of day and Yuki broke more than a few speed limits in her small yellow car. Yocco wanted to say something but understood, given the situation, it was better not to. The business district was as the name implied where all the cities major companies were located. They both hadn't been there that much since the line of business was quite different.

Yuki took the exit leading into the business district and left and right police cars were parked instructing people to take another direction. Yuki pulled up to one of the police cars and pulled down her window with a slight agitation.

"Were private investigators required at the scene, lets us through please" Yuki instructed the overweight policeman blocking the way with his car.

"Ma'am, can you show me some identification please, I can't let you pass otherwise" the man told her in slow and soft tone of voice.

Completely agitated now Yuki fumbled around in the car's locker and managed to get her ID out and showed it to the policeman; "Here, see!".

"Ok, ma'am, you have been cleared" he said and walked towards his car and got in. Slowly he backed the car up while Yuki drove past the two police cars and speeded up again. In one hand she held the not given by the clerk and she was not sure where the address was but given the many police cars blocking the roads it was just a matter of following the crumbs towards the cookie.

After a while of driving around and frantically looking around she spotted an area where several cars had been marked of with yellow tape meaning that had to be the place of interest. She pulled up in that street and parked the car somewhere between two other police cars and got out. The new precinct officer was already on the scene and was talking to some local press but spotted them and cut of the interview and gestured they should come over to him. When they passed the journalist and her cameraman she got the angry stare for being responsible for her shortened interview but Yuki couldn't care less. There were bigger things at stake here.

"Caucasian male, 33 jumped from the roof of his own billion dollar company" the officer said to Yuki.

"What else do we know?"

"His name is Josef Weinstein, owner of Weinstein incorporated a company that does import and export and world scale. He had a wife and child. We're sending someone over there right now. He was loved by his employees; so far everyone we questioned had not seen this coming in a thousand years. And of course there is a tattoo in his neck linking his death directly to your case. So far we didn't find any suicide note or name card. There is access to the roof if you want to investigate it. That's all I know at this point."

"Thank you, well go check out that roof then..."

Yuki and Yocco headed through the front door of the 8 floor high building. There were elevators in the lobby but they had been shut down due to the investigation and so they had to take the stairs. The building was very luxury and even the stairs had a warm vibe to them. Maybe it was the lighting or maybe the wall decoration but something about this building made it understandable why one would like to work here.

The roof door was open and guarded by another policeman. He didn't ask for identification figuring if we got this far we must be ok, probably. As we stepped on the roof we could see a yellow police tape leading to where this Josef must have had jumped of the building. They walked over to the edge and Yuki tried to peek over while grabbing for Yocco's hand for the idea of safety. Yocco took her hand and confirmed to her how stupid this was to do and instructed her to be careful.

Little by little Yuki peeked over and could see Josef lying face down on the pavement in a huge pool of blood. Killed on impact for sure! From this distance she could see the tattoo in his neck a little even though his head was in an inhuman position it being almost 160 degrees turned around as if he was looking back. Some policemen and the coroner were surrounding him and taking pictures while the coroner was talking into a Dictaphone.

Yocco pulled Yuki back and asked what she thought. It was hard to tell, it fitted perfectly with the vagueness of their case. A healthy and in this case even wealthy, young white male aged 33 commits suicide. They could assume he would have been in the asylum for a small period of time around the age of 14 or 15. Why would someone who has it all, the company, the wife, the child, the money, the success, and then throw it all away. The roof showed not much else that could be useful or groundbreaking in the case and thus Yocco suggested they headed back. With each case it was a simple suicide. The scene didn't require much investigation because they weren't looking for something that would lead them back to a killer or perpetrator. They were merely looking to understand the correlation between these men and what drove them towards killing them. This correlation led them back again and again to the asylum but what had happened there that is of interest happened over 15 years ago and was poorly documented.

They headed back downstairs descending the 8 stairs once more and returning in the lobby. The last employees were being guided outside by some police personnel and some were sobbing while others were just complaining on how long this would take.

As they stepped outside the coroner was preparing the gurney to put the body on. The other policemen surrounding the body had stopped taking picture and were now sifting through their collection on their digital camera's and comparing to each other making sure they all got the same details but from different angles.

Yuki circled the body while Yocco followed but kept a distance to Yuki so she wouldn't bump into her. Josef's head was cracked open quite far from which blood was still sipping out. He was lying there in a 3 piece suit which didn't strike anyone as the fitting for the occasion of a suicide. You could tell there was a strange vibe going on the scene. Everyone had some mixed feeling towards this Josef Weinstein. It was like they would kill for what Josef had achieved and yet he pissed it all away. What a douche, they must be thinking. Of course there was more going on that they could grasp yet and for that matter we couldn't grasp either but they were closing in on it. Slowly but surely the pieces were falling in place and with this new victim and it would be of high interest to speak to the Ms. Weinstein. Both Yuki and Yocco

sensed it would be quite similar to the cook widow. There was something going on behind the curtains of this freak show and someone didn't want them to find out. It felt like they were watching some illusionist going through hoops and corners to make sure no one would find out his greatest of tricks.

The coroner had finished setting up the gurney and instructed some policemen to help him out lifting the body of Josef Weinstein into a body bag. The few policemen at the scene itself weren't all too eager and were looking for excuses until the coroner appointed 2 specific men to help him. The coroner lifted the body at the shoulders while the two policemen both took a leg for their responsibility. The blood kept dripping from his head and continued into the body bag when the coroner zipped the bag shut and lifted the bag on to the gurney with the help he had acquired. The coroner asked the officer to sign of the body so he could go and continue his daily doings. When the officer did so and handed the coroner back his pen he came over to Yuki and gave her the first draft of the case file and said,

"There's not much in it but then again you must be getting used to that by now in this case."

Yuki gave a smile while Yocco chuckled in the back. "Thank you sir, were on it."

Yuki opened the file and started skimming through the text looking for the home address so they could start paying a visit to the Ms. There it was on the second page at the bottom. She turned to Yocco and said,

"Let's go, you're up again."

Back in the car Yocco was skimming through the documents but could find anything she didn't already know. The file was so meagre it basically said the victim committed suicide as its main conclusion. Not many new angles to the case could come from that as it was clear at this point that if there would be a 6<sup>th</sup> and a 7<sup>th</sup> victim they would die of suicide too. Yocco started writing down something's on a note.

**The victims,**

Jonas Bell  
Matthew Hoit  
Richard White  
Andres Morgan  
Josef Weinstein

All victims are male, 33 years of age and have been under the care of DR. Yamamoto over 15 years ago in the asylum. Their current social achievement vary to a great extend.

She kept looking at the names as if there was a cryptic secret hidden in the letters. It all kept leading back to the asylum 15 years ago. What the fuck did this Dr. Yamamoto pull to make healthy men kill themselves at such a fixed age. Could it be part of his research into the mind of young boys. Maybe he found a way to manipulate them or something, hid something in their brains that was waiting there for 15 years to come out resulting in their deaths.

Yuki was now back on the main road and drove a little less aggressively then before. The occasional by-passer would honk at them and some even flipped them the finger but Yuki was

used to it and didn't care about it. Often she even threw in a sarcastic smile leaving the by-passer with a strange sense of the current events. The address of Ms. Weinstein wasn't that far and that didn't surprise them. A wealthy man like Josef could probably buy half of London if he wanted to so finding a comfortable location close to the job shouldn't have been too much of a difficulty.

Yuki took the next exit and headed into some smaller streets with shops on either side. There were people doing their daily grocery shopping but it wasn't that crowded as in London Centre. She was scanning the area for an available parking space and when she found one she manages to squeeze the little yellow car in an even small parking spot.

They got out and had to search for a minute to find the address. It was in the back of some street straying away from the mains street. The house was big but not obviously from the outside. Yuki rang the doorbell and waited till footsteps coming from behind the door confirmed someone heard it. Carefully a woman opened and pushed her face through door opening. She was crying and her make up had run down all over her face making her look like some kind of witch. Yuki introduced herself and politely asked if they could enter and ask her some questions concerning her late husband. She opened the door and let them in and guided them to the living room where they sat down on the couch. She came in a few seconds later with to tissues and was frantically wiping the tears from her face and tried to get rid the black stains from her make up. She apologized on several occasions and finally put down the tissues and asked what Yuki wanted to know. Yuki took out her note book and flipped some of the pages looking for some empty space to write down new notes.

"Can you describe the day starting from yesterday?"

"It was just like any other. Josef was always busy managing the company but he loved doing it. I never heard him complain about work. He left in the early morning to work and called me later that day to say he would be back early and that I didn't have to prepare dinner for him."

"Did he often work late?"

"No more then he had to to make end meet with the company. He tried to come home as much as he could especially since Emma was born he wanted to be more at home than at work."

"Did your husband suffer from any stress or something else that would drive him towards.....well you know...."

"Not that I know of. Josef was a good man, very driven and passionate in everything he did. I didn't think he would even be capable of doing such a thing."

"Did he ever tell you about the time he spend in the London Asylum as a teenager? Did you two ever talk about his past up that far?"

"We talked about the past of course but Josef always wanted to avoid that period in his life. I sometimes demanded he would talk to me about it but he always refused and even got hostile with me. He would delve himself in his work and would not come home sometimes for days so at some point I figured I should leave it alone. I hoped he would bring it up when he was ready for it but he never did."

“Ok, thank you for your time and I’m sorry for your loss ma’am.”

“Thank you”

“Oh and one final thing that comes to mind. Did your husband leave anything a note or something?”

“mmm, yes he wrote something on a piece of paper but I didn’t understand it.”

“Can we see it?”

“Ill have to get it from upstairs, if you have a moment please.”

“Sure, ma’am”

Ms. Weinstein walked out still sobbing a little in the midst of her grief. As she left the living room Yuki turned towards Yocco and said,

“These are no crocodile tears; even I can see that...”

“Yes, she is not faking anything. She really is grieving and she really must not have known about her husbands plans to commit suicide.”

After a minute or so Ms. Weinstein re-entered the living room with a piece of paper in her hand and handed it over to Yocco. Yocco unfolded the paper and read the sentence out loud so Yuki could hear,

*“The fall of one empire will cause the fall of another empire, may my death have a minor contribution to what will be major”* Yocco read.

“It doesn’t mean anything to you?” Yuki asked Ms. Weinstein.

“No, Josef often called the company his empire but I don’t understand what he means with this.”

“Ok, do you mind if we take this note?”

“No, that’s fine.”

“Ok, thank you. Well find our way out and again I’m sorry for your loss.”

“Thank you”

Yuki left the living room and Yocco followed her through the corridor back to the street. Once outside the headed back to the car and got in. Yuki started the engine and backed the car up so that she could make a 180 degree turn and head back to the main roads. Yocco sat there just reading the note over and over again. The fall of an empire, what could it mean.

## The empire

The next day Yuki got a call from the precinct officer who informed her something strange was happening with the company of Mr. Weinstein. Apparently the whole structure was setup so that if Mr. Weinstein wall fall out if this structure the whole thing would come down like an unstable house of cards.

Apparently no one new about this but everyone could now clearly see the consequences. Employees were being let go one after the other and the local news got to the scene immediately interviewing one after the other. Behind the curtain major foreign corporations were eating away at the company as they were major share holders. The company was being divided and split up in smaller sections and then sold again to whoever wanted a piece of this late legacy. Even the parliament was asking questions now as the Weinstein Corporation even would affect the economy if not handled well. It was such a big corporation that many smaller companies depended on its funding and though the years the corporation had set up many fundings for all kinds of causes and research.

The first news bulletins reported that there was a contract in place which prohibited any outside interference with the company as long as Mr. Weinstein was leading the company. It also said when his leadership would come to end no matter what circumstances, his stocks become available again. Of course the first to pick up on this were the major companies who pecked at it like vultures until the remaining stocks were divided once more. In one day one of the biggest and most influential companies had fallen and with it many more would fall.

Yuki could not grasp the nature of it all but understood the seriousness of it through the tone of voice of the officer. When the conversation was over she explained it to Yocco who tried to understand how this would impact the case but couldn't find any angles. Could this have been Mr. Weinstein's plan with his suicide or was it a mere side effect. Whatever the case was they knew it all found its roots with the asylum 15 years ago and needed to find out what had happened there as soon as possible or they would find themselves lost in the case once more.

Together they went over the files again and tried to find new angles worth exploring but nothing productive came from these sessions anymore. A little over an hour later the phone rang and Yuki answered. It was Rose returning her call from the other day. She explained she had done quite some research into the names she was given and had found that the assistant named Aiko Nishimura had changed her name to Madeline Brown and had been granted the British nationality and actually was living in the UK. She even came up with her last registered address under her new name. Yuki was thrilled from excitement. This could be a break in the case. There was actually a person in the UK who might know what had happened in the asylum 15 years ago. She thanked Rose over and over again and confirmed how indebted she was to her but Rose didn't want to know about it explaining it's what friends do.

Rose also told she could not find any information on Dr. Yamamoto which struck her as odd since he apparently was a Japanese resident and thus had to be registered in some kind of database she searched in. She explained she had informed some more and heard from a colleague a story about how there are some loop holes in the legal system allowing persons to take over identities which might be an explanation but could be far fetched too.

Yuki wrote it down and thanked her again for her support and hung up the phone. She turned to Yocco and started explaining what she just had heard which had a similar effect on Yocco as it had on Yuki. This could be the turning point in the case. They gathered the files and prepared to head out and follow up the last address on Ms. Madeline Brown. It was quite a drive as it wasn't in London itself and took a little over 2 hours by car. When they were all packed up and ready to go they headed downstairs and entered the parking lot where she parked the car. They threw the files in the back and drove off into the main street.

While driving Yuki asked Yocco to turn on the radio so they could follow today's events concerning the Weinstein Company that was now causing quite the ruckus. Yocco flipped the radio switch and turned the knob until a voice spoke in a serious matter about today's events. The car engine's sound was quite loud so Yocco turned up the volume until the noise coming from the engine was drowning out in the background.

“The Weinstein Company was set up 7 years ago and made an unremarkable success for that time. It grew from a small company into an empire in under 2 years and started taking over smaller company. It is estimated Weinstein Company controlled over 200 smaller companies and funded over 300 other companies and projects. With the death of CEO Josef Weinstein the future of many of these companies and projects has become unsure under the new foreign ownership.”

The man's voice coming out of the radio kept telling the story over and over again and reassured the listeners they would know first if any new facts were to come in.

The highway wasn't all that crowded and they made progress quite fast. In no time they had reached the outskirts of London and were heading in the direction of the most crucial interview in the case.

Once outside the busy streets of London the drive went even faster and it the expected to arrive a little earlier than previously thought. The town they needed to be was a small one and seemed to have a little over a 1000 inhabitants which was weird for a town so close to London. Yuki drove through a little shopping street and fiercely looked around her searching for a street name that would give her a sense of reference on the map. Finally when she did she turned into some street and explained they could better go by feet from this point on.

They got out and headed into the small town. Yuki took lead with a map and a note with the address in hand and occasionally had to stop to find out where they were on the map. After a while she had found the right street and put the map and note away in the pocket of her coat. It was a small five minute walk to find the house.

Yuki knocked on the door and peeked through the window on the side of the door. Someone was coming and the door was opened. And woman looking Asian opened the door and asked what we wanted. Yuki explained about the case and the asylum and asked whether her name was Madeline Brown but used to be Aiko Nishimura. The woman nodded and agreed to the interview and opened the door to them. She took the lead and headed into the living room and showed them a table where they could sit down and offered to take their coats. Yuki and Yocco complied and handed over their coats. When Ms. Aiko returned back into the room she offered drinks before they would begin. She put three tea glasses on the table and put water on.

Five minutes later they sat at the table sipping from their cups of tea. No one said a word for a while and they all just enjoyed their tea in silence when Yuki finally placed down her tea and asked,

“If I may be so rude, can I ask why you changed your name?”

“Sure, that’s fine. After I was Dr. Yamamoto’s assistant and the court case got started I got harassed a lot and even though I quit my job as his assistant I could find a new job anymore under the name Aiko Nishimura. I changed my name 10 years ago and relocated here where I try to rebuild my life.”

“Ok, and how is that going for you?”

“Quite well, I can’t complain. On occasion a journalist manages to find me but usually if a company they don’t make too much noise. But I’m sure you didn’t come here to talk about me.”

“Yes, I’m sorry. What can you tell me about your work for Dr. Yamamoto and the court case?”

“I started working for Dr. Yamamoto from the start when he came to the UK and applied to the asylum. I have a background in Psychology and Sociology so I was perfect for the job. At first my job was nothing more than taking care of the files on Dr. Yamamoto’s patients.”

“What kind of research was Dr. Yamamoto doing?”

“At first it was targeted at changing behaviour but later I noticed his research shifted to more experimental fields and Dr. Yamamoto started pushing me out more and more. He regularly stayed late and dismissed me telling me I should go home. So after that I couldn’t really follow anymore to what direction his research was heading into.”

“Did you ever notice something weird about him?”

“No, not about Dr. Yamamoto but I did notice something weird about his patients. Basically it seemed like every patient treated by him was going downhill. I remember even one of his patients hanging himself.”

“Was this Jonathan Davids?”

“Ah yes, I forgot the name but I remember now. I think he hanged himself on his lamp in his room. I remember the days leading up to his suicide he was crying all day long, from early morning to deep into the night. It was awful to hear.”

“What was he like in the last days, did you see him?”

“Occasionally, when Dr. Yamamoto did his check ups, I would join him. The days leading up to his suicide he was getting physically worse. He had bruises all over his body and was limping when he walked. He had lost a lot of weight and was paler than the walls. Dr. Yamamoto said it was due to his neurological problems, that he was hurting himself but I remember one time something weird. Jonathan was walking in circles around the room showing the doctor his physical state and as he passed by me I could see a burn in his neck so

I stopped him and took a look but then Dr. Yamamoto got all angry for some reason and told me to leave the room. Ever since I doubted the nobility of Dr. Yamamoto and his program, it was just too weird but I guess you had to be there.”

“What do you think he was doing then with his program?”

“I don’t know but in line with the court case I suspect abusing the boys for some reason would be plausible. But then again it was never proven and I never managed to find out more. After the incident I was given less and less tasks by Dr. Yamamoto until the court case started and I quit the job all together. But at that point I was already on the sinking ship with the asylum.”

“Did you ever see some evidence of visitors coming to the asylum late at night?”

“I saw on occasion some unfamiliar cars in the parking lot but never the people who came with the cars. I figured Dr. Yamamoto allowed them in because Dr. Greenway never worked that late and other employees aren’t allowed to let anyone else in.”

“Did you ever inform Dr. Greenway about your suspicions?”

“No, that would mean suicide to my career and as long I didn’t knew anything for sure I never informed him about it.”

“OK, thank you.”

The conversation fell silent and the three were back to sipping their cup of tea. When Yuki put down her cup of tea Ms. Aiko offered a refill which she agreed to. With her cup refilled she tried to go over the case in her mind thinking she might forget something important she could ask her. After a while she still came up empty and took another sip of her tea when Ms. Aiko out of interest asked how it was going with the case. Yocco explained it was getting better as time passed and this interview was of great value to the progress of the case as it confirmed from an official source that their suspicions surrounding Dr. Yamamoto are true.

It was still unclear to how exactly the entire picture correlated amongst the individual elements but the pattern was become clear now. It was safe to say that Dr. Yamamoto had done something 15 years ago that was the cause to men now killing themselves. All, once, patients of his. It was key now to find out each and every patient that had been treated under Dr. Yamamoto and find them where they are in the UK and find out what was driving them towards suicide before the commit it.

After some more small talk and sipping tea the conversation ended and Aiko got them their coats. Yuki expressed her thanks for the tea and the interview and took lead in leaving while Yocco followed. A minute later they were outside and headed back to where they had left the car.

It was a five to ten minute walk in which they debated the new angles of the case and what their next step should be. Once they had arrived back at the car their debate had ended and they agreed on the next steps.

Once they were back on the road in the direction of central London, Yocco turned on the radio again. The host of the radio program was still talking about the Weinstein Company and was wrapping up an interview with a professor. They had been talking about the effects the death of Josef Weinstein could have in several worst case scenarios. The host explained the Weinstein Company was being sold in parts now that the primary owners were foreign companies. They expected it would cause a bubble effect and several smaller companies dependant on the Weinstein Company would fall victim to the foreign conglomerates.

Then all of a sudden the host went into another direction based on new information that just got in. The UK parliament was dealing with an unusual situation. One of the ministers had taken the entire parliament into a hostage situation.

## The parliament

Yuki stepped on the gas until it couldn't go any further and they were going way over the speed limit. The radio host was narrating the situation like a noir movie from the eighties and explained the minister of foreign affairs had taken out a gun and was waving it around like a maniac. Rumours went around that he was high or at least affected by some kind of drug but no one could confirm this as of yet. Twenty or so ministers were locked in the room with him and some were hiding under their tables while others were ordered to remain in their chairs.

A negotiator had been arranged and tried to communicate with the minister but so far he didn't respond to his phone calls and was still frantically waving around his gun and ordering everyone around about what to do and where to go.

The first traffic signs pointing to London Central came into sight and Yuki hadn't released the gas pedal from the floor with even an inch. At this speed it would take a little over an hour before they were back and in the meantime they zoned in on the radio host's voice.

The host reported the negotiator couldn't get through still and there wasn't any progress in the matter. The minister had locked the doors and could only be seen through the scopes of some sniper rifles from a building opposite of the room. All people in the room were sitting down now in their chairs around a table with the minister at the head of the table waving the gun from person to person. The phone was ringing over and over again but the minister didn't respond and then all of a sudden he stood up and got to a colleague minister and putted the gun to his head and ordered him to answer the phone.

"This is George Torres, minister of agriculture..."

"Hi George, this Roger Jefferson, I am the negotiator in this matter. Is everyone doing okay?"

"We are ok, a little scared..."

"Ok George, that's normal. Could you give the phone the Carl?"

George hesitated for a moment but then informed Carl that the man on the phone wanted to speak with him. Carl refused for a moment but then pushed George back down in his chair and ripped the phone out of his hands.

"This is Carl Whitaker, what do you want?"

"Hi Carl, this is George. You will be talking to me if you want to get anything done. I want to make a deal with you ok?"

"Deal, I don't need a deal..."

"What do you mean, you must want something out of this, Carl?"

"No, no deal!"

Carl hung up the phone and unplugged the cord and threw the phone on the ground and returned back to his seat at the head of the table and put his head in his hands. For a moment everyone in the room thought this was their opportunity to act but it was too late as Carl got back up again and walked around the room and said,

“Everybody out except for Jones, Watson and Morgan. Out, out, out.....LEAVE...” he screamed to the face looking at him not sure he was pulling a practical joke or seriously was handing back their freedom. Slowly one by one got up and left the room and even minister Morgan got up and headed over to the door. Carl got in front of him and smacked the bud of the gun in his face and screamed,

“NOT YOU, GODDAMMIT!”

Morgan fell to the floor and started bleeding from his nose. He got up and held his nose in his hands trying to stop the bleeding but it oozed all over his suit and dripped on the floor. Carl ordered him to get back into his seat and took place across the three gentlemen.

Carl picked up the phone from the table and plugged the cord back in. It took a little over 3 seconds before it started ringing.

“I released the majority of the ministers as a sign of good faith get your snipers down and the remaining three might live also...”

“Ok, Carl, as soon as they are safe ill see what I can do about that.....now listen.....”

Before he could finish his sentence Carl unplugged the phone again and picked the phone up and threw it against the back wall behind Jones, Watson and Morgan and sat back down in his chair.

“So you think you might get out of here eh?” he said to the 3 grey old men sitting across him.

“Well your not!!!” he Carl said while spitting in excitement.

“What are you doing son, what do you want from us?” Jones asked.

“You don’t know me?”

“Off course we know you. Carl Whitaker, Minister of Defence.”

“No no no, I mean before I was minister.”

“How could we have known you before you were minister, it has only been 3 years.”

“I see, well maybe this will refresh your memory. Remember the name ‘Jonathan Davids’?”

The three grey men grew pale and were looking at each other as if the answer could be seen on the face of the other. None of them spoke for a while until Morgan said,

“Never heard of the name”

Carl's anger climaxed and he jumped over the table and pushed Morgan in his chair back to on the floor. He landed on top of him and started beating him in the face with the gun. Morgan tried to stop him and dodge the blows with his hands but Carl was gone into a deep rage. When he finally snapped out of it and got of Morgan and walked back to his chair Morgan didn't move anymore. He just lied there on the floor occasionally twitching his legs. The blood from his head was now oozing out of his nose, ears and the crack in his skull. His eyes turned blurry and his leg stopped twitching.

Jones and Watson said nothing but felt what was coming. The tension in the room as bigger then they could grasp and grew even bigger when Carl asked them again,

"So, you gentlemen remember the name Jonathan Davids now or do I need to remind you like Morgan needed...."

They didn't speak feeling the question would lead to the same result anyway despite their formulation of the answer. They were right.

Carl got up from his chair and walked around the table sat on the table in between Jones and Watson. His feet rested on their chairs while his gone was pointing from head to head.

"You fucking cowards. We were boys; goddammit. What were you thinking.....huh....."

They didn't speak again and Carl draw his own conclusions. He wouldn't get more from these gentlemen anyway. He looked at Jones and said,

"Open your mouth!"

He didn't comply and Carl hit him with the gun in the eye making him scream in agony and opening his mouth. Carl took the opportunity at heart and stuck the gun in his mouth and pulled the trigger. The bang shook up Watson who started shaking uncontrollably, aware of what was coming. Jones had fallen back in his chair and smoke was coming from his mouth while he bled out from the back of the head. Carl looked at Watson who looked straight ahead of him hoping he would turn invisible.

"Open your mouth! It's your turn."

Waston started crying and sat in his chair like a little girl who had fallen down and needed to be comforted by his mummy. Carl took a firm grip on his gun and beated him in the face.

"You don't get to cry mother fucker....."

The pain to his face must have struck a nerve as he stopped his crying and looked Carl in the eyes and opened his eyes. Carl put the gun in his mouth and said,

"What comes around goes around, it always will...." and pulled the trigger. BANG. Watson fell back in his chair and started smoking like Jones did. Carl got on his feet and leaned over the body Morgan. He was rolling his eyes uncontrollably and although it wasn't much of a sign of life it was one too many and Carl placed the gun on his forehead and shot the eyes to silence.

There were men in the corridor moving around and instructions were handed out. Carl walked over to the window and put the gun to his sleep. The men in the corridor were banging at the door and as if each second was stretched to minutes Carl could see a team of 5 men dressed in black and equipped with MAG-4's divided over the room. They pointed their rifles at him but it was too late already. The bullet from his gun had forced its way into his brain and was shutting down function after function. His hearing was gone and the black men in front of him turned to white. Then his knees caved in and fell to the floor surrounded by the 5 men.

Yuki and Yocco had reached London Central and hurried out of their car and into the motel. Once they had reached the motel room and got in, Yuki turned on the television and sat down on the bed. With the remote she switched to the first new channel.

A woman started explaining the event that had just occurred and how the nation was in shock loosing three of their finest ministers. Everyone was baffled to what had led up to these events and how someone would find them selves capable of doing such a horrific thing. The first 3D renderings of the room where the killings had taken place in were already done and showed the 3 bodies next to each other. Then she switched to a journalist at the scene.

It was a young woman who stood behind the yellow tape calling out the name of some man who stood with his back to her. When the man turned around Yuki recognized him to be the precinct officer making the hairs in her neck rise up and sending chills down her spine. The precinct officer said very little of interest and concluded he could not make any statements about what happened this early in the investigation. He turned around and started calling someone on the mobile phone he carried with him.

Suddenly the phone in the Motel rung and Yocco answered. Yuki looked at her and Yocco looked back and nodded confirming it was the precinct officer. Yocco handed the phone over and occasionally replied with a yes before putting the phone back on its base and informing Yocco they had to leave again.

## The ministers office

When Yuki had parked her car in the spot pointed out by one of the policemen at the scene, she turned off the engine and got out. Yocco followed her as she in turn followed the policemen into the government building. The protocol for these kinds of things was completely different and they didn't have the freedom they had grown accustomed to through the years in other scenes. The policemen showing them the way had instructed them not to talk to any press and not to go anywhere outside the room. Even if they would need something from the car they had to ask permission to leave the scene to one of the officials.

Yuki signed some papers agreeing to it all and picked up her pace a little more to keep up with the agent. He led them up a few stairs and through some corridors. On each and every corner was an agent guarding his 10 square meters and it became obvious someone was making a career in security of this happening.

When the room where it all had taken place the agent stepped aside and turned around and instructed Yuki to enter the room. Yuki turned 90 degrees to face the room and the door had been forced open and thus was already open revealing the body of Minister Carl Whitaker. He lay there in front of the door opening with a gun in hand and a hole in his head. The bloods had stopped coming from his head as his body must have bled out completely and the floor surrounding him was drenched in it. A yellow scene tape showed how they had to enter the room and guided them around the body into the belly of the beast where the three other men were laying on the floor with holes in their head. The back wall was covered in their blood spatter and the chairs they had sat on sped up the bleeding out process as they were all lying with their feet up leaning over the chairs.

Yuki knelt down at the body of the minister lying at the door and tried to get a peek of what she already knew was there. Carefully leaned over and could see behind the tight tie, that pulled it all shut, the tattoo making him officially part of their case. She got back up on her feet and called for the agent waiting outside. When he peered through the door opening she asked if he knew whether anything had been found on the body to which he replied that the body hadn't been processed yet due to the severity of the case. Yuki thanked him for his answer and got back on her knees trying not to touch the pool of blood the body was lying in. She reached in the pockets of the pants of the body and felt there was nothing in there and so she tried the other pocket.

There it was; the shape of a card and some piece of paper. She took it out and got back on her feet and walked over to the window so the outside light would help out revealing what the card and the piece of paper said. The card was just a normal business card as she had seen many in her lifetime. The note was folded 3 times over and as she unfolded it and turned it towards the light she could read its contents.

*"In sheer delight I did my part and did justice to what wanted to go unjustified, may my death have a minor contribution to what will be major"*

She could understand to what he must be referring to and how the piece of the puzzle now fitted together. Each and every boy that was once in the asylum would kill him self at the age of 33. Each and every boy had tried to climb the social ladder and come closer and closer to what had gone unjustified for so long.

Yocco was investigating the bodies of the three ministers lying all next to one another. They were all men in their sixties showing the process of aging through the grey hair and the wrinkled faces. The way they laid on the floor implied they were shot from the other side of the table though distance was hard to determine at this point without the analysis of a blood spatter analyst. The third body from Minister Morgan, though, looked much more havocked and his face was bruised and bluish. She decided she had seen enough and headed back to Yuki who was standing in the window reading a piece of paper.

When she came closer to Yuki she noticed her and handed over the piece of paper to Yocco and said,

“Were closing on in it all don’t you think...”

“No, were running after the evidence.....we understand what is happening but there is now way we can stop it.”

“True, the count is now at 7 suicides if we count the first as a suicide.”

“7 suicides and 3 murders”

They stood there for a moment thing what would come next but there wasn’t anything to wait for. No major conclusion to be drawn. They realized from all the boys that were taken in the asylum under the care of Dr. Yamamoto there would be no way in determining who would commit suicide next and if the would or wouldn’t take someone with them for the cause. Though they new for sure they couldn’t know who would commit suicide next, they were sure Dr. Yamamoto was on someone’s list.

Yuki signed some documents allowing her to take the card and the piece of paper with her and requested the agent at the door to guide them back to their car. The agent complied and walked in front of them through the corridor and the staircase. When they were about to enter the parking lot he turned around and said it would be fine if they continued from this point on and headed back into the building.

Yuki and Yocco crossed the parking lot and approached the car and got in. They would head back to the motel and make a list of names of all boys that were in the asylum and then run them through the precinct database and see who was still residing in the London area. This way they could maybe hope to get a step ahead in the case instead of waiting for a new suicide to occur or maybe even another murder.

Yuki turned on the radio before she put the car back into gear and backed the car out of the parking spot. The engine noises coming from the car in first gear drowned out the host on the radio but when the car picked up speed and Yuki switched to a higher gear. The radio host explained the latest updates in the Weinstein Company case as these somewhat got pushed to the back with the hostage situation in the parliament.

Twenty out of a total of 230 small companies had been taken over by foreign companies and some of them had been broken up and resold. The damages to the local economy were estimated at a total of 320 milliard pound. It had an effect on the national stock indexes and several economic professors gave their opinion about what would happen next which didn’t sound much promising.

The motel wasn't that far and I took a little over 10 minutes before she turned onto the motel parking lot where the ever so familiar pink flamingo threw the parking lot in its happy mood lighting. They parked the car close to the motel entry and got out of the car and headed upstairs towards their room.

They immediately got to work once they were back in the motel room and Yuki started going through all her notes and the files they had collected while Yocco noted all the names down that needed to be run through the database. After a while she had a list of 14 names from which 7 could be crossed of. Yocco gave the list to Yuki when she picked up the phone from the desk and started dialling the number of the precinct. She skimmed through the list until she got a response and a female voice on the other end required a formal identification number before she could be of service. Yuki gave her a 10 digit number by memory and then proceeded into explaining what she wanted. She could hear the woman on the other end of the line frantically typing the names she mentioned and occasionally asked her a question on how to write the name.

After a while it seemed to be coming to an end as each and given each database search took a little over two minutes the entire conversation took little more then 20 minutes. Yuki wrote the last know addresses down behind each and every name. One of them apparently was still in the London area while another had moved to eastern England and another had moved more to the south. Three of them had already died and one could not be confirmed by the database. It left Yuki with an unsatisfactory feeling not knowing where that final person was. He could be there right under there noses or maybe he had moved or possibly even died.

With the list in hand they talked for a while and tried to determine where to start first. After a while they figured they would best visit the closest address to London as they had no way of determining who and where someone one commit suicide, so south it was.

They headed downstairs and greeted the man behind the counter who was reading today's newspaper, on their way out. It was getting grey outside as dark clouds drove over the city and hulled it in a dark mood. They got in the car started driving towards the south. Yocco knew the way as she had been there before and explained it was a small local city with less then 500 people living there.

The grey clouds above burst open and released its moist rain over the city making traffic go slower with each minute. The rain was so dense that the only thing you could see was the lights of the cars passing by. Road signs instructed drivers to slow down to a 50 mile speed limit but we could tell most were ignoring it and rushed by as if the rain had no effect at all.

After 20 minutes they had managed to exit London and were now on the highway which was more spacious and less crowded making their safety more guaranteed. The weather was clearing up now and the sun was coming through again though a thick dew was being thrown over the land making several rainbows appear from behind the horizon.

They were over half the distance now and were glad they could pick up the pace now that they were out of the city. The scenery was changing from a industrial grey to mother natures green and was quite the different view for them as they pretty much never left the comfort of the city other then the occasional road trip that came with the job.

About 15 minutes later Yuki pulled off the highway and took the exit leading into the point of destination. It was quiet on the roads leading into the small town and they soon found a suitable parking spot where they parked their car and got out. Yocco knew they way but wasn't familiar with the street names as of yet and so they headed into a local grocery where Yuki asked for directions showing the street name on the piece of paper.

Since it was a small city and everyone probably would know one another she also asked whether the clerk knew the name Francis Bakersfield. The clerk confirmed and told them he was a rather strange figure and always had stuck to himself. Never married, never took someone with him. The address was apparently, according to the clerk, a 3 minute walk from where they were now. They walked in the direction the clerk had pointed out to them and passed by some old little houses, each one painted in a different colour. When they had walked for 2 minutes they could tell they had headed into the right direction by several street signs and the house numbering coming closer and closer to the number they needed to be. When they could see the house a few people were coming from the other end of the street and passed them.

It was a group of 3 women and 2 men with 1 man walking behind the group. The group was in conversation with one another and was laughing abundantly. The man walking in the back apparently wasn't part of the group as the laughing didn't pass onto him and he just looked down to the ground as if he had lost something and was scanning the ground hoping to spot it again.

When they passed each other the man looked up from the ground, surprised by the Japanese female duo coming from the other side. In a flash they had passed each other but in their minds something had been triggered. Yocco had noticed first and nudged Yuki and told her,

“That's him...”

Yuki turned around and put her suspicions to the test and called out his name. The man didn't respond even though the entire group in front of him stopped and turned around not being sure of what was happening. Then the man threw a glimpse at them and started running away from them. For a moment they froze but then Yuki got back to her senses due to the sudden release of adrenaline setting her on edge and making her grab Yocco's hand and tug her along in her chase after the man. She screamed his name again and again but soon found herself growing too tired to call his name again. Yocco grew too tired to run and said Yuki had to continue without her.

Francis was still at the same distance as he had been from the start and Yuki thus was managing to keep up with him despite her short stature and smaller legs. She was running now out of sheer determination and she could feel her heart pumping so hard her temples were beating in sync with it.

When he reached the end of the street he suddenly made a sharp corner and jumped over a little stream and headed towards a tree line leading into the forest surrounding part of the city. They both had to slow down their pacing due to the irregular ground and the trees that had to be avoided. A little way into the forest, Francis suddenly fell down and fell flat on his face. Yuki came up to him and stopped running and tried to take the opportunity to catch her breath for just a second. In the blink of an eye Francis had turned from his belly to his back and suddenly had a gun in his hand pointing it at Yuki.

She wanted to scream but her lungs were refusing such an action and she had to resort to other measures. She shook her hand and backed up slowly making it clear she got the point and this is not where she wanted to go.

As soon as her lungs were reporting for duty once more and were willing to reserve some air for other tasks than breathing she tried to form a sentence. It came out somewhat crooked as her brain was still not on the same page as her lungs. Then slowly but surely it came out,

“Please don’t, please.....I mean no harm.....please don’t shoot me, please.....”

Francis didn’t reply and apparently also was still working really hard to get his lungs back to additional tasks aside from pumping oxygen. He got on his knees while keeping the gun pointed at her and stumbled back on his feet in a clumsy way. Yuki could tell he was trying to say something but had difficulty finding the words,

“What.....wha...t...do you want.....from .....me...”

“Nothing, I just want to talk for a moment.....nothing else”

“What do you want from me....” he said lowering the gun a little.

“My name is Yuki and I am a private investigator in London, I’m investigating a series of suicides which led me to the London asylum which in turn led me to you.....so we really need to talk to you about this....”

“You will never understand what happened. It is way bigger than you can imagine....”

“Please try....please.....”

He lowered his gun and held it hanging aside his body and started looking around the forest as if someone else might be there watching them. When he was don’t looking for eaves droppers he turned to face Yuki and started explaining.

“It had started in 1978, when I was submitted to the London asylum for some minor depression I went through at the age of 15. It wasn’t really understood what was my problem and above all I wasn’t really sure what I was going through at the time but one thing I know now is for sure. The asylum just made everyone more fucked up then they already were.”

“What had happened.....please this is the one thing I need to understand...”

## The three men

It was a cold night in 1978 in London centre. The asylum had turned on the big spotlights standing on the roof so the entire front area was well lit. The parking lot was empty now as the few loyal daily visitors had been informed to leave and the last car had just driven off and blended in with the main traffic.

Dr. Greenway was working late in his office after a have done sessions with some new patients. He always liked to read in on patients that were new to the asylum so he could get somewhat of a head start if that was possible. He was reading the file of a young boy, aged 13, who had entered the asylum a few days ago and was suffering from autism and a severe and unknown degree. He tried to do a session today with the boy but he was to shy and unfamiliar to his new environment and so the doctor merely observed and tried to get through to the boy and gain his trust. At the end of the session they were playing together with the wooden blocks and build a tower which they then threw over, to the delight of the boy as the green, red and blue blocks rolled over the table onto the floor. It was not much but it felt like a breakthrough to Dr. Greenway. Establishing such a connection could sometimes take months and now it had worked within a mere few days.

The file read the boy had been neglected from birth on as the parents found out he had an IQ below that of a goldfish. The parents gave him up for adoption but that was hopeless to as no young couple was looking to take care of a baby who could be taught anything. It sounded harsh as he read the file but a decennia ago times were different and people had to save every penny so having someone in the family not contributing to the income but costing it, was not all too welcome.

Dr. Greenway's office was on the right hand once you got through the front door and into the corridor. The office was spacious and he considered it way to much space for just himself and therefore was glad to offer half of it to Dr. Yamamoto when he joined the asylum program a few years ago. But ever since they disagreed on the future of their research Dr. Yamamoto had resigned to different parts of the asylum. On occasion he would work in the cellar where furniture was stored and some old desks and chairs could be found. He had made his own little office there. Other times he would just reside in a small office on the second floor where a canteen used to be but now had been turned into a small office. It had a desk and a chair and that almost filled up the room and even though Dr. Yamamoto wasn't a big tall man that room was small, even for him. Nevertheless they did their own research all in good name of science and therefore neither of them made a bigger problem of their disagreement.

In his office at the ground floor, Dr. Greenway was wrapping up. He was scribbling down the last notes on today's session and gathered the scattered papers from his desk and ordered them back into a neat pile. He took his black suitcase from the floor and unlocked it as it contents revealed a little over 10 more files. He added the file on his latest patient and slid it in with the others and closed the suitcase.

The night shift just got in was walking though the corridor into the kitchen to get their starting cup of coffee before they headed upstairs. They greeted the doctor and on his way out as he disappeared onto the parking lot. His car was on the side of the building in a small side alley which was kind of his spot. He headed over there and unlocked his car and drove off the asylum premise towards the main street. As he made the corner from the asylum alley leading

into the main street he checked left and right and drove onto the main road when he saw three black cars coming in his direction. They stood out due to their expensive character. These were not cars driven by the common people if you don't count the chauffeur. You could tell these people were officials of some sort. Maybe political of some big company but they usually didn't come into this part of London. The 3 cars drove out of his sight and back as their reflection appeared in his car mirror. He kept looking wondering what they could be doing here and to his surprise he caught himself thinking he saw the cars make a turn into the alley leading towards the asylum.

No, it couldn't be, must have been the distance that is playing trick with the light fall or something. He didn't make much of it further and continued without thinking about it again.

The parking lot was still brightly lit when three black cars drove onto the premise and parked close by the front door. Out of each car came a chauffeur, fully dressed in suit, who walked around the car and opened the door. With a slight delay, as if to make a statement their importance, the man in the back seats of each car stepped out. Out of each car came exactly one person also fully dressed in a 3 piece suit wearing a briefcase. The chauffeurs got back in the car and drove a circle on the parking lot until they found a place suitable to their liking and turned off their engines. They didn't come out of their cars and just waited there.

The front door of the asylum went open as Dr. Yamamoto greeted the 3 men and instructed them to follow him. Together they went inside and headed up the stairs to the second floor where Dr. Yamamoto had his small office. There the three men placed their briefcases on the table and waited for further instruction from the doctor.

"Did you bring the money?" Dr. Yamamoto asked the men. The men didn't answer but nodded and confirmed Dr. Yamamoto's expectations. One man opened his briefcase and showed its contents to the Doctor as he turned it into his eyesight. The doctor nodded and gestured it looked ok.

"That's half, the other half on completion" the man said.

"Fine, let's get to it..." the doctor replied, slightly agitated by the man's tone of voice sounding over confident making him feel like he was not in control of the situation. Dr. Yamamoto walked into the hallway and took a ring of keys out of his pocket and instructed the men to follow him once more.

Two men took their briefcases with them while the third being the one who showed the money, left his briefcase behind. Their footsteps resounded through the otherwise silent hallway as the doctor led them to room 314.

"Jonathan Davids, you have one hour..." The doctor said when he unlocked the door and opened it for the men. One by one they went in and finally the doctor closed the door again and even locked it. He walked back to his small office and opened the briefcase that was still there standing on his desk. From one of the desk drawers he took out a brown paper bag and started getting the money out of the briefcase and put it into the paper bag. The bag was half filled when the bottom of the briefcase became visible. The last stacks of British pounds were placed in the bag and then the briefcase was empty and closed. He put the brown paper bag back into the drawer and slid the briefcase aside so that it didn't take that much space on his desk and started going through some files.

In the first 5 minutes all was quite but then sounds started coming from room 314. A young boy was screaming out his lungs, banging on the door of his room. The sounds travelled through the entire hallway and resounded with a small echo. His screams got higher in pitch as he continued until his voice started to break up. He must have had overused his voice and now his voice wasn't capable anymore to reproduce any sounds other than little growls that seemed harmless. The banging on the door kept going on though and others in the hallway had joined in fear of something terrible that could be scouring the hallways. Some demanded to be let out while others just banged and enforced the feeling of panic.

After half an hour the sounds had died out and the asylum turned back to silence. Dr. Yamamoto walked through the hallway to room 314 and stuck the key in the lock and opened the door. He saw one man standing in the window smoking a cigarette holding a camera directed at the other side of the room. As the doctor walked in he could see Jonathan Davids tied down to his bed naked. He had several burn marks on his chest from what must have been cigarette burns. Another man was standing behind the door with only his pants on and the other was sitting on the bed end also smoking a cigarette.

The doctor walked over to the bed and checked out the burns on the boy's chest. Amongst the burns were several bruises and even some cuts. Jonathan had his faced turned to the wall and seemed to have locked himself in some kind of catatonic stats. Locked inside his own mind, it was a common thing for children to do when they are in extreme pain or fear. The man sitting on the bedside asked,

"Is it bad?"

"Nothing I can't cover up" the doctor replied and turned around to towards the door.

"Ok, who's next..." then man said and got up from the bed.

The doctor left the room and locked the door once more and headed back to his small office on the same floor. When he passed the stairs he noticed two nurses halfway coming up and he asked in a strict voice,

"What are you doing up here...leave it's under control."

The nurses flinched at the cold remark and quickly made their way back to their own floor and continued doing their rounds. Later that night Dr. Yamamoto escorted the three men out of the building and watched the three black cars disappear in the midnight darkness. He went back upstairs and went straight for room 314 again to check on the boy.

Jonathan was still in a catatonic state and was not responding to sound or light. The doctor even shook him to make him snap out of it but he didn't. He fell back on the bed like a corpse. The boy had fled into the deepest parts of his mind in order to refrain himself from actively experiencing what his three evening guests had in store for him. The doctor checked some of his wounds and blew of some of the ashes that were lying on his bed and then left the room again. He headed over to his office and sat down in his chair and took a piece of paper out of his desk drawer. He stuck it in the typewriter on the desk and started typing out a report.

*Jonathan Davids*  
*Age: 12*  
*Progress report*  
*Date: 13 March 1978*

*Tonight Jonathan relapsed all of a sudden into a panic attack and got himself severely hurt. He banged himself against the door, wall and bed and suffered several bruises because of it.*

*I hope the program can help him but his type of neurological disorder seems to make it impossible for his brain to separate fact from fiction as he blends his fantasies with reality and expresses events and happenings to me that are simply not there.*

*I recommend keeping him in the program as I'm sure there is still hope for him and a good change of getting back to normal.*

*Dr. Yamamoto*

He took out the piece of paper and opened his suitcase and took out the file on Jonathan Davids and slid the new report in there and put the file back in his suitcase. He got up from his chair and lifted his suitcase from the desk and headed downstairs. The nurses were doing their rounds some greeted him but he ignored them. When he got outside he made his way to his car and disappeared into the night.

## The tape

1979 in a similar dark London sky the asylum was being visited by 3 gentlemen who had parked their expensive looking cars on the parking lot where the drivers were waiting for them to come back. The ritual was the same though this time a different room and a different boy. It was the asylums best kept secret and Dr. Yamamoto managed well to keep a lid on it making sure each and every bruise was documented and archived in a file under self infliction.

The three men scoured the hallway of the top floor of the asylum and picked there next toy. The doctor opened the door to them and let them in. One man got a camera in hand and turned on the record button as they went in and started aiming the lens at the boy who was sleeping in his bed. The doctor flipped on the lights of the room and spoke out the boy's name who woke up in surprise and squeezed his eyes together trying to adjust to the light. The doctor and the men were going over some things and it looked like the men agreed to whatever the doctor said making him turn around and leave the room. You could hear the key go back in the lock and the mechanisms interlocking making the door shut tightly.

The man holding the camera was kneeled down and zoomed in on the boy on the bed who was still very confused but was too afraid to make a sound. What did these men want and why were they filming him. The two other men approached the boy and one pushed him down on the bed and held his arms down while the other held his feet stuck to the bed.

The boy tried to resist but any attempt he made was futile. He couldn't move in any direction and turn in any angle. The weight and force holding him into place were too big for him to fight off though he felt the adrenaline rushing through his veins in fear of what was to come next. The man holding him by his feet ripped off his PJ's uncovering the boy's chest to which they all chuckled and made some incomprehensible remarks. The torn up pyjama was thrown towards the camera and it fell right in front of the man filming it all.

The boy started screaming and cried frantically like a baby does in high short pitches with few intervals but it was like the three men didn't even notice it as they just continued to rip the boy's pyjama pants off and did the same ritual over again. They laughed hysterically and they seemed to have more fun when the boy resisted more and screamed harder.

When the boy was stripped down and was sitting naked on the bed the men stepped back and went to stand behind the man holding the camera. The boy tried to cover himself up in shame as the three men were laughing at him for some reason. The boy couldn't contain his fear anymore and his body took over and released pressure from his bladder as the boy pissed himself and the bed. The man holding the camera got up on his feet so that the angle would change and it would become more clear that the boy was actually peeing himself in fear. Then he handed the camera over to one of the men standing behind him and took off his jacket which he placed over the chair that stood in the room under the desk. He undid his tie and placed it over his jacket and unbuttoned the top few buttons of his shirt and untucked the shirt from his pants.

He took a step forward and instructed the boy to stand up too but the boy was completely immobilized from fear and his brain was frantically bailing on him under the extreme pressure of fear. The man said it again and this time in a more stern voice but the boy couldn't help himself. The last thing he wanted to do was upset these men more but his body wasn't up for

anything at this point and he just sat there on the bed crying hoping for a miracle, hoping to fade out into nothing so that this fear would go away.

The man was clearly growing impatient with the boy and finally took him by the arm and dragged him on the floor where he fell down. The man bended over and screamed to the boy to get up or he would get something coming at him. The boy tried to beat his fear and stood up on his feet like a young deer that had been born for just a few minutes.

Then out of nothing the man turns around and then turns around again with high speed and lands his fists on the boys face and cries it out in enjoyment as the boy falls into the corner of the room and hits his head against the wall. The boy now seems convinced he is going to die tonight and cries so hard the other boys on the hallway wake up and understand the weekly ritual has past them this time. None the less the form a front and bang their door in protest but it goes unheard.

The man instructs the boy again to get up and face him but the blow to his head has got him confused about everything. Gravity seems wrong, the colours of the room seem wrong, the blood dripping on the floor coming from his head seems wrong. He tries to make sense of it but it's useless. The man's patience runs out again and he is grabbed by the arm and thrown onto the bed as the man sits on top of the boy and starts beating into the boys head. With his small arms he tries to defend himself from the blows but he fails every time.

After a while even the man got tired and got of the bed and took over the camera as the man holding the camera got ready to give it a go. The boy was bleeding out of his ears and tainted his bed red.

Then the key went into the lock again and the men stopped with what they were doing in anticipation of who was coming. The doctor opened the door and checked up on them. For a moment he took a look at the boy's head making sure the skull wasn't cracked and then went outside again and locked the door.

15 minutes passed which were like a blur to the boy. He was passing out on several occasions and then came to again only to be beaten again and passing out again. His brain felt like twice the size of his head pressing so hard against his skull it was about to be squished to pulp.

The doctor came back into the room and informed the men their time was over and he needed the other half of the money on which they had agreed. The men looked at each other somewhat disappointed. They left with each other while the doctor flipped the light switch off leaving the boy in a bed stained of blood and urine half passed out and with a terrible headache.

That night the men left into the darkness of night only to come back a few weeks later. They would come again in their big expensive cars, in their suits with their camera. And it would start all over again.

## The agreement

It was in an early morning in the asylum when the boys from the second floor were having lunch and would have an hour outside for exercise and sports. It was a sad sighting to see them mindlessly perform their daily rituals like brain dead zombies. It was like there were alive but there was no life within them, like the will to live had died in them. Some nurses guided them from place to place and instructed them in what they were supposed to do.

The boys all knew this place would eventually kill them in one way or another and had given up all hope for something better. They had suffered too much and fell victim to a system that was supposed to help them but instead delivered them into a hell unimaginable to the outside world.

That morning they stood in the garden of the asylum. It was more like a prison yard as each direction the horizon was behind a 3 meter high wall that separated them from the outside world and confirmed that they were not fit enough to go there. They were now a group of 12 boys from the once 14, they were. Since two of them had killed themselves they felt their world had turned into hell and now it would eventually be their end to. They heard the screams on occasion and saw what it did to the few boys that lived to see another day. They were broken, mentally and physically and had lost the will to live.

They were sheep waiting inline to be tortured, killed and filmed, and it had them frustrated. They came together in the garden like the used to do and talked to each other about whatever came to mind. Lately though the topics had died out and no one wanted to put the effort in anymore to get a conversation started.

In a circle they stood when one of the boys Francis Bakerfield opened the conversation out of nothing and informed the group he had a plan. It would make no change to them anyway but it would give them the opportunity to find justice. The group seemed interested and the circle grew tighter as everyone took a step closer towards Francis to hear him better.

The plan was that the boys would find their way out of the asylum and survive the Dr. Yamamoto program would go back into society and would blend in like every regular Joe did.

“You will try to make something of yourself, you will become a loving husband, a father, a hardworking employee, a boss or whatever you are aiming for and wait. Wait till you turn 33 and then strike back. Whatever you have build up in those years you will tear it down. You will destroy it and turn it into ashes. Our names will come out and our story will be heard. Justice will prevail.”

Even though the majority of the group had difficulty expressing their enthusiasm lately you could tell Francis had sparked something. It was a way out for them. The asylum would prevent them from ever leading a normal life and it seemed like the things that happened here would go unheard to the outside world.

“But what if we end up like Jonathan....what if we don’t get out of this place...” someone asked.

“Our destiny is not in our hands in this place but if and I stress if we get out we should fight back. Do justice to ourselves.... If not with you then without you I will single handed make the world know what had happened here. How we were treated and what it did to some of us...”

The group looked in admiration to their new found leader and one by one they turned and agreed to his plan. They had nothing to hope for anymore and nothing to strive for. The noblest thing they could do before ending their life is making sure those who had caused them mischief would join them into hell, whatever was there.

That day they made a pact that in your 33<sup>rd</sup> year, no matter what you had reached or who you had grown to love, or how dependant things had become of you, you would take your own life. You would get out and leave with a note and a name card so that each case would be connected to each other.

One of the nurses came up to the group and instructed them to break up and scatter over the garden and so the boys did. But from that day on their mutual fate had been sealed and their cause was secured. Someday someone would learn the truth about what had happened and their names would be known.

Through the remaining years of the asylum’s existence the second floor under the responsibility of Dr. Yamamoto was being visited by the three men though the cries had become lesser and lesser with each boy visited. Their pact made the outcome different then the three men and the doctor could anticipate and it gave them a sense of power. As sense of power over the three men and the doctor which allowed them to endure the pains caused to them. They were in this together now and together they would turn things around eventually.

The pact was refined through the years and then when some journalist endangered the existence of the asylum and eventually the court case made the asylum close its doors, their plans turned into actions and each and every boy on the second floor went his own way in life. They had marked themselves with a tattoo in the neck that would bind them in their cause.

Like they had expected the court case turned out into nothing but they didn’t mind much. Their plan was paramount to whatever kind of justice was written up in books on legal matters. Their plans showed justice in the purest form. An eye for an eye, kill me kill you. That was the code they would live by until the day would come and their plan would reach its final chapter.

Over the years they had not seen each other anymore and had grown apart each going in their own direction but they were bound by their past and their past shaped their future.

## The hardware store

The plane was about to land on Berlin ground when Peter Green fastened his seatbelt and prepared himself for what was to come. He had waited 18 years for this to happen and now the time had come. Justice would be delivered and it would be delivered at his hands. The world would finally know what had happened in the London Asylum. What had been done to the boys that were so in need of help and yet got nothing but treated like a stray dog.

The stewardess did her final checkups on each and every passenger making sure everyone's seatbelt was tight and closed while passing out free and empty smiles. The pilot descended and the wheels touched the ground with a slight bump or two before the entire plane weight rested on the wheels and the planes was back on the ground again.

It took a little over 10 minutes before the plane had come to a stop and was being taxied into its right place. The stewardess informed everyone to remain seated and not to release the seatbelts until the plane had come to a complete stop and the light was switched off. 90 percent of the passengers ignored her and unhooked their seatbelt and started looking for their luggage in the compartments above.

When the plane was being connected to the stairs at the door and the doors went open the people started moving and the plane emptied out. The tube led them into a big hall where someone pointed them towards the baggage hall where they could find their suitcases and such. Peter Green didn't take a suitcase with him, not even hand baggage, he even didn't have a return ticket, no. This was a one way trip for him. It had been planned for 15 years and there was no error to be found in his 15 year old plan.

He headed straight to passport control and was the first to arrive making it an easy process. He showed his passport, smiled a little and passed through the gates where a sea of people was waiting for their loved ones. No one was waiting for him and no one was expecting him so he walked straight through the crowd and headed to outside where he tried to haul a cab.

Once a cab pulled up to him and rolled down the window he instructed the driver he needed to go to Berlin central where his motel was located. The cab driver agreed and opened the door to him. Soon they were on the highway and the drive wouldn't take that long even though the car jumped up like a kangaroo on fire. They didn't speak and Peter just looked outside viewing the grey German scenery. It was not a pretty sight he felt but he couldn't care that much since he silently was so excited this day had come.

In his mind he had been living this day for over a thousand times. They way he would do it, what he would say, when would be the best time and how it would fall out afterwards; it was all part of the plan now.

The driver pulled up in some street and said the Motel was a few minutes from here but he couldn't get there by car. Peter paid the driver and got out and headed over to the Motel. It was a cheap hotel that looked dirty and the lack of maintenance didn't help much either drawing customers in. The clerk behind the counter greeted him and as if he was the first customer in years. He signed up in the register and paid the clerk who handed over his room keys and pointed out to him where his room was.

Peter strolled through the corridors of the motel reading the door numbers looking for his room. It was on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor where he had his room and when he finally found it and had opened the door he was greeted by a virtually empty room.

The room had a bed and but no blankets. There was a chair in the corner of the room under the window that looked out over part of the city until a few taller buildings blocked the view towards the horizon. There was a small kitchen on the side of the room but it was dirty and the water didn't work. The toilet was outside of the room and was a shared facility with the rest of the floor.

Peter said down on the bed and looked outside and rested for a minute after which he got out a piece of paper from his pocket which showed him an address. It was the last know address of Dr. Yamamoto that he had been able to find due to some friends in the German that were willing enough to help the cause. Tonight he would do the first checks making sure everything is set and tomorrow he would set everything into motion and complete the ritual.

For now there was little else to do but get something to eat and start exploring the address. Peter headed downstairs and went outside where he headed into a random direction to find the nearest place to get a decent German meal.

The first place that spotted out was a bar that seemed reasonably empty and offered several variants a sausages and beer. There was no need to be picky for his last meal and so he went in and sat down and waited for the waitress to come over and take his order. When she had spotted him she hurried over and asked in German what the wanted to eat. In his best German he replied a beer and meal of the day would suffice to which she replied it was apparently a good choice and hurried back to the kitchen.

Probably due to the lack of customers, the kitchen was working in warp speed and a few minutes later his meal was being delivered to his table and he started digging into his last meal. The sausages were lukewarm similar to the beer but he couldn't care less. Over the years he had grown numb to everything and stopped carrying about everything and everyone. He had lived towards the end, the moment where he would look his fear in the eyes and would confront it and then kill it taking it into his world where the would be together forever in hell.

When he had worked away his meal and drank away the last bit of his beer he put his hand up showing the waitress he wanted to pay the check. She went behind the counter and typed some digits into the register making a receipt come out which she brought over on a plate with mints. How thoughtful. He paid the waitress and said she could keep the rest as he got up and headed out into the now slightly dark city of Berlin. He got the paper with the address from his pocket and read it again. He knew where it was from the motel. He had checked on several maps before coming here.

It was a 10 minute walk from the motel to the address and it showed signs of life as there were lights burning in the apartment where the soon to be late doctor was spending the rest of his years. On occasion a man of small posture passed by the window from which the details couldn't be seen from this distance but it was confirmed. Dr. Yamamoto was living at the address. He checked his watch confirming there was still time to get supplies and tools for tomorrow's reunion. He turned around and started walking away from tomorrow's crime scene and went out to look for a hardware store.

The beautiful thing about it all was that everything was within a 5 minutes walk of each other. The crime scene, the murder weapons, just four minute apart from each other. Peter headed into a big warehouse that sold hardware in any shape, size or form and all for reasonable pricing.

The first thing he started to look for was a good bag to carry all the rest of the tools in. With that out of the way he went into the aisle showing a hundred different types of hammers. Wooden hammers, rubber hammers, metal hammers, titanium hammers, hammers in blue hammers in green, hammers in red, hammers for adults, hammers for children.

Slowly Peter walked through the aisle letting his gaze drift over each and everyone of the hammers and for a moment imagining him self beating someone with it. There it was, hanging there right in the middle of all the other hammers. A greyish metal hammer, reasonably sized but no too heavy and thus able to deliver a good swing resulting a hard blow. He took one out and placed it in the bag he was carrying and proceeded to the next aisle.

The next showed buckets of paint and had little interest to Peter. Not for lack of trying though as he tried to imaging multiple ways he could kill someone with paint but they all just didn't seem to be satisfying enough and thus he proceeded to the next aisle.

The next aisle showed saws and saw blades in every shape or form and was definitely on his list of things to buy. It would be a great way to make his final statement and he could see him self using each and every one of the blades and using it to separate a limb from its host body and made him chuckle a little. He skimmed through the blades with his finger when suddenly a voice from behind asked him if he was already being helped and if not whether he could use some help. He turned around and was looking into the face of a young teenage highschool girl who was probably just working her as her very first job and spend her hard earned money and make-up and going out. Peter sympathized and allowed her to help, not because he needed her help but it would make her feel good that she could do something for someone.

In his best German he formed some questions to which the girl responded in detailed and technical stories on why one blade was better then the other and it all really came down to the right tool for the right job. Peter felt it was too much for her to handle if he told her what the job was all about and therefore remained in vague terms for short but heavy duty work.

The girl made a few suggestions and showed a few models telling him why this would be a good choice and it made the choice much easier. With a hammer and a saw in his bag he continued to the next aisle and thanked the girl for her expertise and friendly help on making his choice. He now only needed some duct tape, a rope and some knives. The next aisle covered the rope and the tape which were all pretty straight forward and there was little difference among the different types of ropes and different types of duct tape.

The knives were separated over different sections as there were hunting knives and cooking knives which apparently made a world of difference as he was told. He choose to go for the cooking knives and picked a nice selection of a little filet knife that had something of a scalpel and big meat knife and headed with all his supplies to the register where another young highschool girl was waiting to help him further. While each product was scanned the girl started making a little conversation as she probably had been taught to do so in order to charm the customers with their lovely company warmness. Peter replied in vague terms what he was planning to do with the supplies making it sound like he was building his own kitchen instead

of cutting up someone's face. The girl chuckled a few times and showed him the total amount that he owed. He paid the girl and she thanked him and wished him all the best of luck with the tools. It was a nice gesture though luck was not much part of the equation anymore.

He walked out of the store and headed back to the motel where the clerk informed him that the hotel front door would close up soon. Back in his motel room on the fourth floor he sat behind the desk with the tools laid out in front of him. The scenery of Berlin that was visible through the window threw a little light on the tools giving them a strange vibe. Tomorrow would be the day. They would be put to the test and it would all fall in place. Justice would prevail.

## The German

The sun had risen over Berlin and woke up Peter Green at 06:12. He had a good rest and was completely ready to go and do what needed to be done. He got dressed and placed the tools back in the bag and went downstairs where the clerk was signing in some tourists.

Once outside he noticed the odd orange sky that wrapped Berlin in a strange mood and made life seem prettier than it really was. He ignored it and started walking toward the apartment. It was still very quiet on the streets, even for such a big city as Berlin as the only sound was coming from some early birds singing and a garbage truck backing up into an alley.

The apartment was just around the corner now and he would imagine that the good old doctor would be still in sleepy land probably molesting little children in his dreams or destroying someone's future. He turned the corner and noticed the apartment where it was still dark giving him the advantage in this matter. He walked over to the entry to the building and started waiting for someone to come out. He knew this wouldn't take long because around this time most people were on their way towards their jobs and the people in this building were no different.

Without drawing attention to himself he waited a few meters aside from the door and acted as if he was reading the newspaper that was sticking out of the mailbox. The door went open and an old woman with her dog came out but closed the door behind her and she didn't proceed until the door had fallen back into its lock. He turned back to his newspaper and waited some more as the woman and her dog disappeared into the city. Next, came a young man who rushed out the door and ran towards the bus stop that was across the street. He didn't see Peter standing there even and it happened in just a few seconds.

He now stood in front of the staircase that led to each floor and started climbing the stairs towards the third floor where the doctor should be. At the third floor he checked the numbers on the door and some doors showed a name tag giving double confirmation they were not of interest to him. When he stood in front of the door of Doctor Yamamoto he put his back down and knocked on the door. Nothing seemed to happen and so he knocked again and then again until he could hear movement and someone was telling him that the door would be opened soon but he needed to be patient. The locks were released from the door one by one and finally the door was opened showing a small man with greyish hair, dark brown eyes and thick glasses on asking him what he wanted.

He had imagined this moment over and over again and in his dreams the doctor would recognize him and stumble back into the room in fear but none of this was happening. The doctor was impatiently demanding to know why someone had disturbed him at this hour. Peter snapped out of it and intense rage took over as he punched the man in the face, so hard that the man fell back on the floor. Peter grabbed the bag from the floor and tossed it into the hallway and entered the apartment and closed the door behind him. The doctor was moaning in pain holding his nose with both hands. His glasses had fallen off and Peter stepped on them making the glasses snap like little twigs. He leaned over the doctor and sat on his stomach and started punching him some more in the face and into the chest. He placed his hand over the doctor's mouth so that he couldn't scream but then noticed he had beaten the doctor unconscious.

He got off from the doctor and dragged his body into the bedroom where the position of the sheets showed the doctor indeed had just woken up when he came to the door to meet his destiny. In the bedroom he lifted the body from the doctor up and placed it onto the bed and got his bag from the living room. He opened the bag and got out the tools and placed them at the feet end of the bed.

Then minutes later the doctor woke up from his dream and came back into his nightmare and found himself duct taped to the bed. His head was also wrapped in duct tape leaving only his eyes and nose exposed so he could see and breath. He was frantically looking around him and in his chair at the bed and he saw the man from the door again, drinking a cup of coffee in one of his cups.

Peter took another sip from his coffee and then looked at the doctor who was staring back with big eyes of fear. He tried to scream but nothing came out other then dull sounds that couldn't surpass the sound of the alarm clock radio that Peter had turned on. It played some tune from the seventies and was quite nice of you were into that kind of music.

When his cup was empty he went back into the kitchen and poured himself another cup and came back into the bed room and stood beside the bed looking at the doctor who had tears running down his face. Sipping at his cup of coffee he walked around the bed and touched the tools laid out on the bed and held them up one by one so that the doctor could see them. It made him go crazy judging from his breathing as it got a lot more irregular and he tried to resist the tape by moving around as much as he could.

When Peter decided the playing was over he put his cup of coffee in the window and took a small camcorder from the bed and placed it on the matching tripod. He looked trough the lens several times to make sure the entire bed was in focus and the images would be sharp. He then hit the record button and a little red light flicked on as a tape started rolling. Peter grabbed the chair and placed it aside from the bed so that he and the doctor were now in the frame and captured on film. He looked at the doctor and asked him if the doctor could recognize his face and instructed the doctor to nod his head in confirmation of shake his head when he didn't know. The doctor shook his head and thus Peter felt the need to start out with a little introduction so that even the viewers eventually could understand the context of the scenes that were scheduled next.

“My name is Francis Bakersfield and I came all the way from the UK to pay my respect to your work as a doctor in the neurological field. Especially your ground breaking work in London Asylum in 1978 and 1979 are of particular interest to me. Do you recall any of this Doctor?”

“mmm.....mmmm.....mmmmnnnnmmnm”, the doctor went shaking his head.

“Your not going to tell me you don't remember doctor.....maybe I need to refresh your memory a little....”

Peter got up from the chair and leaned over the bed and picked up the grey hammer and placed the cold metal at the doctor right knee cap. He looked the doctor in the eye who was still trying hard to resist but it was futile. Peter lifted the hammer over his hand and landed it with all the force he could put into it on the doctor's knee cap. It shattered like twigs and the actual breaking of the bone could be clearly hear over the dull muffled out cries of the doctor

who was apparently screaming in agony but all that came out were moans that blended in quite well with the seventies song playing on the radio.

He placed the hammer back on the bed and sat back in his chair and looked into the camera and suggested to the future viewers we all should check again what the doctor could remember about his past career in London.

“Did that do anything for your memory Dr. Yamamoto? Do you remember now? Your beautiful career as a neurological doctor in the London Asylum..., do you?”

Though the tears the doctor gave little tears in confirmation which was the first thing that need to be cleared before Peter could continue to the next steps of his plan. He took the rope from the bed and cut it into several pieces and tied a knot in one of the pieces and placed it around his neck. It was good enough and he took it off again and checked the bedroom roof for opportunities. Steal beams ran from side to side and were perfect for the job at hand and Peter got on the bed and tied the rope to one of the beams and checked if it could support his weight. After that he did the same thing with another rope leaving 2 ropes hanging from the roof where he would execute his final part of the plan.

The doctor had now given in to the situation and had realized his past had caught up with him. He had stopped trying to resist the tape and stopped trying to scream, he now just sat there like a child crying his eyes out.

Peter got back down from the bed and took place back in his seat and looked at the doctor crying and had to chuckle a little. What a sight.

He took the saw from the bed and explained to the doctor that what was about to come next was for Jonathan Davids and would most likely hurt like hell as it did hurt them back in 1978. He rested the saw blade at the ankle of the doctor and placed it in the right angle. The doctor tried to wiggle his feet around but it the tape had him completely stuck to the bed and he could only twist his foot a few degrees back and forth.

The saw blade pressed into his flesh as Peter added pressure and started driving the blade back and forth. The doctor turned pale at the sight of it and was screaming in agony under the grey tape covering his mouth.

The metal cut deeper and deeper until it hit the bone of the leg and Peter had to work harder to get through it. After a while the foot had come off and Peter placed the saw aside and picked up the foot and placed it on the doctor's stomach. The doctor passed out at the sight of it and since Peter wasn't done yet he stopped the leg from bleeding by tying several belts around the leg acting as a tourniquet.

He walked over to the window and got his cup of coffee and took another sip from it while waiting for the doctor to regain consciousness. On occasion it seemed like the doctor regained consciousness as he twitched a little but it must have been a side effect of the beatings to his head.

Peter saw the bottom of his cup of coffee and felt his bladder acting up. He headed through the living room into a small bathroom where he took a leak and then returned to the bedroom

where the good old doctor had come to. Peter leaned over the doctor and tossed the foot on his stomach next to the doctor on the bed.

“How are we doing Dr. Yamamoto?”

The doctor didn't reply and seemed to have given in to what was coming. Like the boys, in the asylum were once victims of circumstance and had accepted their destiny, so the doctor had accepted his now.

The video was still recording and had entered its 20<sup>th</sup> minute. There was no point in going any further in his torture now, Peter realized. He wanted to but when the doctor had accepted his fate it was better just to bring him his fate. With the kitchen knife he cut the tape loose and the doctor could move again yet didn't. His body was frozen as if in a deep shock and refused all instructions from the brain. Peter lifted the doctor up and got him to his feet. Well foot to be accurate. There was a little blood coming from his ankle where the foot had been severed but overall the belts acted as a good tourniquet and at this rate it would take hours for the doctor to bleed out which was more than enough time for Peter to kill him first.

Peter took the doctors arm and put it around his neck so he could help him towards the chair where he sat the doctor down. He went into the kitchen where he had seen another chair and took it with him back to the bedroom and placed it facing the doctor and sat down on it.

Looking at each other for a moment while no one spoke a word, they could guess each others thoughts. Peter finally gave a tap on the doctor's knees as if they had been comrades for years and let the doctor know that this was it. It would be over real soon now.

Peter adjusted the chair of the doctor so that the rope hanging above him was directly above the chair and did the same with his chair for the other rope. He then lifted of the doctor and placed him on the chair where the doctor tried to keep his balance on his remaining feet. Peter stood on the other chair and took the rope from the ceiling and pulled it down further so he could place it around the doctor's neck. He then did the same with the rope hanging above his head and checked the ropes on final time.

There they stood on the chairs in the bedroom with ropes around their necks connected to the beams running over the ceiling. The doctor had stopped crying and it seemed like he was ready to die. Peter looked more determined then ever as he had been ready for this the last 15 years of his life.

“See you in hell, doctor”, Peter said and kicked the doctor's chair and his own from under him making gravity take over and pulled their bodies straight along the rope around their necks. The distance from the chair to the ground was too little making them both choke to death instead of breaking their necks.

The doctor was turning reddish and was fighting it while Peter just let it come. The sweet release of death came over him. He kept looking at Dr. Yamamoto struggling but then the doctor too stopped fighting it and looked back at Peter.

Slowly life was being pulled out of them and left the room with two pieces of meat hanging from the ceiling.

## The forest

Time had passed yet it felt like the last hour nothing had happened like they were trapped in some kind of twilight zone. Francis was sitting on the ground with his head between his knees and his hands hanging over his knees. The gun was still in his hand and waved around on occasion. Yuki could tell he was crying but she couldn't come closer as long as he was still carrying the gun around so instead she tried to talk to him and tried to comfort him but it had a different effect. He had carried the pain around for too long making it an intrinsic part of him now. It was no longer just his life's baggage, it had become his blackened heart. The capability to care had been drowned out and the only thing his heart did was beat the force of life around through his veins though all emotions had grown numb.

His emotions were running wild again after being forced down for so long. It made him unstable as he wasn't able to direct his feelings in the right directions and all emotions just flooded over him as if he was drowning in an emotional ocean.

Yuki wanted to do something but felt so unsure and in doubt that she ended up becoming the passive bystander. Francis got on his feet and looked Yuki straight into her eyes and slowly approached her. Yuki shivered for a second in fear of the unexpected and wanted to take a step back but reason told her it would make a difference anyway and so she stood firm. Francis reached into his pocket with his free hand and got out a card and a paper and handed it over to Yuki. She took them from him and looked at it but already knew what they were and what it meant. He was completing his part of the ritual.

Francis instructed her to turn around but Yuki refused making Francis put the gun on her head but she still refused knowing he wasn't a killer. She was hoping it would prevent him from completing the ritual and buying her more time to talk him out of it. Francis tears grew more intense along with his frustration of Yuki's refusal and he reassured her he wasn't afraid of killing her as he had nothing to lose.

Finally when he figured she was too stubborn to listen he took a few steps back and looked her straight in the eyes as he put the gun to his temple. Yuki's heart was racing as a million questions ran through her mind. Was he bluffing? Was she ready to see someone commit suicide a few inches away from her? Would this end the case? Was there something she could still say to make him change his mind?

In the end she concluded there was nothing in the world she could say or offer to take away his pain. There was only one cure for him and it was to forget. To return back to the blackness of nothingness where he would find a piece of mind.

She said nothing and closed her eyes and held her breath. Francis pushed the gun further into his temple until it started hurting and found courage in Yuki's attitude believing she agreed with him. He closed his eyes and added pressure to the trigger. He could hear the gun mechanics moving and added more pressure.

One last and deep breath of fresh wet forest air hurried up his nose and down into his lungs where he held it locked and .....

BANG.

The bullet rushed through his skull into his brain and shut down every function needed. The blood had splattered onto Yuki's face and stood there horrified watching the body of Francis Bakersfield fall into the moss of the forest. The blood oozed out of his head and painted the ground red while the gun still smoked in his hand.

The ritual had come full circle and justice had been done in their eyes. The price they had to pay was high but for them it was a fair and reasonable price. Life and death had become equally attractive after the asylum and thus taking ones own life seemed more like a sweet release from their bitter lives.

Yocco had come running into the forest at the sound of the gun going off and approached Yuki from the back. Yuki couldn't hear her and just stood there frozen with her gaze fixed on the lifeless body of Francis Baker. Yocco, not sure of what had happened, carefully placed her hand over Yuki's shoulder and turned to face her. When she saw her face was half covered in blood she sighed and tried to get through to Yuki who was still gazing into nothing and it seemed like she wasn't aware of the world around her.

Yocco shook her at the shoulders hoping she would snap out of it and then Yuki turned her gaze onto Yocco and started blinking and snapped out of it. Though recent event proven to be too much for her she fell through her knees and sank to the ground but Yocco took her by the arms and lifted her back up. Together they headed back to the city and approached the forest edge where they had entered the forest.

Several people had gathered around the entry point into the forest and were watching Yuki and Yocco coming out. Some people soon offered to help and a woman took Yuki by the arm and helped her walk.

The owner of the local dinner offered them to rest at his place where he could whip up some breakfast and some coffee so they could take a moment of rest and regain control again.

Some locals were entering the forest and Yocco turned around and told them not to do so or she would arrest them. It did the trick and the locals backed out of the forest and joined the majority again as passive bystanders.

When they finally sat down in the dinner the owner locked the door and closed the blinds so that the over eager locals could peek in anymore and lost interest in the whole matter. He brought some coffee over and asked if they wanted to eat something.

Yocco asked for the phone while Yuki just sat there in her chair. The owner showed Yocco the phone and she began to dial the number of the precinct. The phone rang twice until a woman at the other end picked up and asked what she could do to be of service. Yocco explained she needed to speak with the precinct officer as soon as possible and the woman on the other hand had noticed her tone of voice and understood it was apparently a serious matter.

After a few seconds she was patched through to the precinct officer who answered the phone and asked who this was. Yocco explained what had happened and that she thought Yuki had unfolded the case mysteries but she was in need of some professional help now before her thoughts would go suppressed under the stress of the late events.

The precinct officer said he would personally come out there and it would take him a little over 30 minutes to there. Yocco confirmed and hung up the phone and returned to the table where Yuki was staring into her cup of coffee as if it was the first time she had seen one.

Yocco sat down next to her put her arm around her and leaned in close to Yuki and said told her in a motherly way to come back to her. Try to focus. Drink some coffee. Talk to me!

Slowly but surely the words were processed in her mind while the dinner owner handed Yocco a wet towel to remove the blood of Yuki's face. The towel turned to pick when she was done removing all the blood from her face and handed it back to the dinner owner.

Slowly Yuki came back and took a sip from her coffee and looked at Yocco as she said,

"I....."

"What.....what is it" Yocco asked.

"I..... understand it now...."

"What, Yuki. What do you understand.."

"Everything.....The suicides, the murders, the asylum, Dr. Yamamoto.... Everything...."

"Ok, I called the precinct officer and he is on his way over now, do you think you can explain it to him when he comes."

"Yes....I'm okay now...."

Yocco hugged her best friend as if they hadn't seen each other in 20 years and were reunited after all this time for the very first time.

The dinner owner had whipped up some eggs and bacon and brought them their breakfast which was on the house as he emphasized. They ate their breakfast and got another cup of coffee as time passed and about 30 minutes later a series of London police cars could be heard in the distance with the sirens on.

They drove past the dinner and then stopped and turned off the sirens. From the last car came the precinct officer from the passenger's seat and judged that we had to be in here as the majority of the locals were still gathering around the dinner. He rushed up the small stairs of the dinner and knocked on the door instructing who ever was in there had to open the door immediately. The dinner owner unlocked the door and let the precinct officer in along with two agents and then closed and locked the door behind them though the two agent said that wouldn't be necessary as they would make sure no one would come in.

The precinct officer sat down at the table where Yuki and Yocco were sitting and looked at them both for a second making sure they were ok according to his standards. He asked Yocco some questions concerning Yuki whether she was really ok since she sounded a bit upset on the phone and when Yocco confirmed they were ok now he got out his note book and flipped it open to an empty page. He took a pen from another pocket of his jacket and clicked it a few times making sure he could write with it. Ok, Yuki whenever you are ready you can start.