

## 42. The Killer

*(In an apartment. There is a sheet covering a body on the couch in the middle of the room. The apartment is pretty much a mess. #1, a cop, is on the phone.)*

- #1: No, there's not much more to do here. Forensics has done its preliminary and I'm just waiting for the coroner's van to get here. I'll be in as soon as they pick up the body. *(Hangs up and heads into another room.)*
- #2: *(Enters and looks around the room.)* Well, someone needs to get a better maid service. *(Goes to the couch and takes a peek under the sheet. #1 comes back into the room.)*
- #1: Put it down, Kelly! *(This startles #2.)* What are you doing in here? Don't you know what the tape on the door means?
- #2: The glue didn't work?
- #1: Cute. Always got a smart answer, don't you?
- #2: I try.
- #1: Well, answer this. You can leave now. There's nothing to report.
- #2: Dead body on the couch, why don't I believe you?
- #1: Because you're an incredible pain.
- #2: Maybe, but I'd like to think of it as good reporting instincts. That's what made me decide to come over here this morning. Or was it the 700 cops outside not letting anyone in.
- #1: So how did you get through?
- #2: I know the manager of the building. I called her and she came down and let me in the back.
- #1: I want to talk to her.
- #2: After she let me in she went to find the guy in charge downstairs.
- #1: Well, you're wasting your time here. It's nothing. A dead body in this city is hardly an unknown entity.

- #2: That's true except this one looks like it might be number fifteen.
- #1: You're not gonna give me that "Tenement Terror" stuff, are you?
- #2: It's not "stuff" and you know it!
- #1: We've got some ladies that are being killed, I'll give you that. But you're the one who tagged it and made more of it than it is.
- #2: Really? Who do you think I'm writing for? The Idiot Gazette? You've got fourteen, now fifteen, murders of women who appear to be in their twenties, done the same way, all in tenement buildings and you really want me to believe that it's random? And as far as the name goes...it sells papers.
- #1: And that's the bottom line, right?
- #2: Selling papers? Yeah, it is. Yours is to solve crimes and keep the peace and we both get paid for those bottom lines. Let's not make things out to be any more grandiose than that.
- #1: I'm not being grandiose. Then again I'm also not causing a public panic by being irresponsible.
- #2: Irresponsible? You tell me one fact that I've reported about this case that isn't true.
- #1: It's not the facts you know. It's the facts you don't know that can hurt and are causing a panic.
- #2: Fine, so fill me in. Let me know what's going on.
- #1: At this point it's none of your business.
- #2: Of course it's my business. It's every citizen in this city's business. We have a right to know!
- #1: FACTS! Yes you have a right to know FACTS! Not speculation. That's the main difference between us. You can speculate on what's going on and report it. We can't. If we do...
- #2: If you do...what?
- #1: Someone innocent could get hurt or someone guilty

- might go free. *(Pause)* There was a guy we picked up and questioned in a child molestation case about a year ago. It turned out he was perfectly innocent, but someone in the press got his name and...
- #2: Wait, is that the guy who just sued your department...last week?
- #1: Yeah, it is. He claims that because of all the notoriety, he was evicted, fired, and so on.
- #2: I had nothing to do with that.
- #1: I'm not saying you did, personally, but it was one of your colleagues. We didn't make a mistake by questioning someone. We had good reason, but you'd never know that now.
- #2: You've got a point there, but this case is different.
- #1: How?
- #2: You know these murders are similar and they're happening in a specific area. So what else do you know? That's what the people around here have the right to know.
- #1: Why, so that every tenant in every one of these buildings can report everyone they see that they don't know? Do you know how much manpower is wasted if we have to follow up every report?
- #2: What if one of those reports is the guy you want?
- #1: What if it's not?
- #2: That's the chance you'll just have to take.
- #1: No, that's the chance you're making us take. And unlike you, we don't have the luxury of being wrong.
- #2: *(Pause)* No, I guess you don't.
- #1: It's not just you press people. You happen to be the worst...
- #2: Coming from you that's a compliment.
- #1: Well, none intended. See, if you have a police chief who wants to be mayor, or a mayor who wants to be governor, or a governor who wants to be a senator, crap pours in

- from all sides. Then you wonderful people add your two cents in and a case like this gets raised to a much more dangerous level.
- #2: Why dangerous?
- #1: It gets done too quickly and carelessly. More people could get hurt.
- #2: You sound like you're saying you're in a no-win situation?
- #1: No, what I'm saying is this city is full of jerks who won't let us do our job our way. And again, present company included.
- #2: May I quote you on that?
- #1: Why ask, you will anyway.
- #2: True, very true. *(Starts to exit.)* I will tell you that you have given me something to think about.
- #1: So, you're not going to report this one.
- #2: Sure I am. That's front page news. But I'll try and avoid any...speculation. OK?
- #1: Whatever.
- #2: But if you get any solid leads, give me a call. Then I won't have to speculate.
- #1: *(Ponders this for a moment.)* We'll see. Now get out of here before I have you locked up for disturbing a crime scene.
- #2: Has anyone ever told you how pretty you are when you're gruff? The way your eyes twinkle...
- #1: *(Yells out.)* OFFICER! I need some assistance.
- #2: OK, I'm going. What a grouch. *(Pause)* Take it easy. *(Exits.)*