

## All Tied Up

“A plague upon both your houses!” the note read. This was the first in a long line of cryptic clues and nefarious notes that would torment many in the innocent town of Grinlow. This was the first in the tormenting tale of Shakespeare killings.

The journal is open and so is my heart.

The first to fall will be the first you find.

The last body to hit the ground,

Will be met with such a celebration and echoing sound.

This was the second message from the Shakespeare killer.

Each time a clue is found to the next murder, the next killing. It is the police’s job, their trouble, to find the murderer and ensure the people of Grinlow’s safety. This is what we are told.

This is what comforts them when they sleep. This is told to every child, every person doubting their safety.

They should doubt their safety. Every last one of them...

“The Shakespeare Killer Strikes Again!” the newspapers blare, each and every one of them competing for their readers’ attention. Only one newspaper takes a different side, “The Shakespeare Killer – can we predict them?” They claim to have the best scholars and writers on the job, trying to predict what will happen next. They have no idea.

Another body was found. You’re probably thinking, “What was the clue this time?” Well, this body was different. The first was just a resident of Grinlow’s many flats. A nobody to everybody. This time it was the owner of the many flats in Grinlow. To many he was just the name on a piece of paper demanding the rent. But, he was also part of a circle, a group in contact with the law on cases of national security.

“The King comes here tonight” the scrawled piece of paper read. To the common eye, this means nothing but, to me, this means everything. Macbeth, scene 5, line 31. Lady Macbeth is greeted by a messenger who bears great news. A quick google tells me that Macbeth is only playing at one theatre in Grinlow tonight.

I sit in the audience waiting for scene 5, line 31. Lady Macbeth is greeted by the messenger. Who is this Harbinger, aside from the obvious, and what does he want of the people of Grinlow?

To the surprise of the audience and case alike, a masked figure strides confidently onto stage and says the dreaded line, “The King comes here tonight!”

Suddenly, a man drops from the ceiling with a noose tied tight around his neck. To the gasps and screams of the audience the man is untied and revealed to be the actor who portrayed the King Macbeth.

The knot is a funny one, a monkey’s fist tied tight to secure the man. There’s only one climbing centre that is licensed to use this knot, Grinlow Monkey Knot Climbing Centre. I practically run there, leaving the police to clean up the mess.

When I arrive I can clearly spot a shadow running around the corner – I sprint to follow it seeing the tell-tale rope dangling from his pocket. Ha, a schoolboy error. We run around corridors, through doors and finally into the climbing wall area. The murderer turns around and I can only stop and stare. Mr Graves, my old English professor turns and looks at me. He was the first man to truly understand my love of the Bard as he himself found so much pleasure in him.

“Well, Theo, we meet again,” Graves announces. I instinctively reach for my gun. He spots me.

“You wouldn’t be needing that with me, Theo.” Using my name again! He always knew I hated it.

“Why?” I ask him.

“Because I wanted to show you that the Bard has more use than just a tool in the classroom,” he replied.

“By murdering people to raise awareness,” I spat, “Yeah, really great plan, and now you’ll hang for your idiocy”.

Graves looked at the floor, “I only wanted...” he mumbled.

“Only wanted to murder innocent civilians?” I raged, “Brilliant, just brilliant. You’re sick Graves, sick.”

The sirens took him away and the case was wrapped, but something was left, something I couldn’t quite touch on but, that is a story for another day...and that story had nothing to do with Shakespeare.