

## Winter murder

' I'm going to tell you the whole story from the beginning ' James Mac Kensis said. 'The story began on December 9th 1961. I received a letter from my father, John Mac Kensis, who said that all the family was invited at the family's mansion on February 6th 1962. I hesitated a moment but I had not seen my family for a long time.

When I arrived at the family's mansion, the snow was falling and the wind was howling. I crossed the forest and at last I saw the mansion. Romuald opened the door for me, my mother's servant. I didn't like him because he was so strange but he did a good job. He brought me to my mother's bedroom because she wasn't feeling well. Her name is Mary. I talked with her during 20 minutes.

After, I went to see my sister Lisa and her husband Henry. I appreciated him because he was very kind and funny. Then, I talked with John my father. Around 9 p.m, we began to have dinner that Romuald had cooked. It was delicious and there was a good atmosphere... Suddenly my father fell off his chair on the floor and he started to convulse. I ran to him but he wasn't moving. Henry was a doctor so he tried to save John but in vain, John was dead. From that moment on, everything changed... Desperate, Lisa and I tried to call an ambulance but the snowstorm might have cut the phoneline and the snow blocked the road. One hour later, I caught Romuald leaving discreetly the bedroom where my father's corpse was. At that moment, I began to suspect Romuald of killing John but why did he do that?

Next morning, after a night spent thinking about it, I told Henry my suspicions about Romuald. ' I don't like this guy either. I'm sure he killed John for revenge because John treated him like noone. Furthermore, he may want to get Mac Kensis's inheritance by killing John and then Mary.' Henry answered. I didn't know about any tensions between John and Romuald but it wasn't a bad motive to convict Romuald of killing him. All day long, I thought about how Romuald could have killed John.

The evening, I consoled Lisa who was crying. Suddenly, I heard a cry! Henry's cry! I ran where the cry was coming from: Henry's room. I broke down the door and I saw Henry out of breath, his shoulder bleeding. The window of his bedroom was opened and his wardrobe was reversed.

' It's Romuald. I'm sure! He stabbed me from behind while my back was turned over! I managed to defend myself and hit him before he ran out the window!' Henry said.

' But how are you sure it's him? We can't see anything in this room.' I answered.

' Who else? Trust me James, you're not stupid and I'm sure to have recognized Romuald's face in the dark!' Henry told me.

' We will discuss this later, in the meantime we have to heal you.' I said.

After a short night, I decided to investigate in the mansion to find out how Romuald could have killed John. I searched all day for clues in almost all the mansion's rooms but in vain. I waited for Henry to feel better to inspect Romuald's bedroom. He was the only domestic but he had a large bedroom on the top floor of the mansion. There were lots of trinkets in his room but all were carefully placed on small dressers. We looked for clues that could prove that Romuald was the murderer. At that moment, Henry opened a dresser and began to laugh. ' At last, I finally found !' Henry exclaimed. I ran to see what he had found. ' You see I told you James, I told you that was him' Henry said showing me a small flask of cyanide half empty.

It was the perfect piece of evidence! I had already known that Romuald was the culprit, but the poison confirmed my suspicion.

Directly, I thought to my mother who was alone with Romuald! I ran to my mother's bedroom,

telling Henry to go and check if Lisa was well. I went downstairs very quickly, and I rushed in the bedroom. My mother was not moving! I took my mother's pulse and... thankfully, she was just sleeping. I woke her up gently and asked her: 'How are you, mummy?'

'I feel better, James. I'm just very tired.' she answered. 'And you James?'

'I'm fine mummy, I'm fine.' I answered. 'I've got a question, please. Do you know where is Romuald?' 'James, why do you want to know where he is?' she asked me.

'I know that you don't get on well with him, so I don't want you to annoy him, especially after your father's death!'

'Mummy, I have to tell you something' I said. 'Henry made an autopsy and daddy's death is not natural. He was killed!!'

'Stop your delirium James!' she yelled. 'Romuald isn't a murderer.'

'It's true mummy! Trust me!' I told her. 'This night, Henry was attacked with a knife! And also, he found poison in Romuald's bedroom!'

'James' my mother said, exasperated. 'I don't know how Henry could find this poison, but I know three things. Firstly, Romuald hadn't any advantage to kill John, apart from losing his job. Then, even if Romuald was our servant, John and him were very good friends, but, that, you didn't know, I think... To conclude, it was impossible that Romuald had attacked Henry, because he stayed with me all evening and night, since I didn't feel well, because of John's death, and my fever too. And also, when you saw him left John's bedroom, he had come to collect himself near John. So, I think that you have to change your accusation.' she finished.

In a few minutes, she had destroyed all my convictions. If Romuald was not the culprit, who was it? Who could easily procure poison? Who knew how to stab somebody without any danger? The answer was easy. Right in front of me. A doctor. Like Henry! Henry was the murderer!! Henry had killed my father. I felt the anger coming. I had to prove that Henry was the culprit.

To find a piece of evidence, I decided to search in Henry's bedroom. I saw that he was speaking to Lisa so I took advantage to search. After ten minutes, I found a letter from Henry to his mistress who said that Henry would earn a lot of money by stealing Mac Kensis's inheritance. For this, he might have to killed someone.

'James? What are you doing here?' Romuald asked. 'Shhh! I found a letter which proves that Henry killed my father.' I answered. I showed him the letter. We went downstairs and we looked for Henry. I was afraid, sad and shocked but also angry against myself because I did not see anything but we had to find him as quickly as possible.

Suddenly, I saw him in the living room. He was trying to strangle Lisa!! Without thinking, I took a vase, I ran into the room and I knocked him out.

During Romuald tied him up, I checked that Lisa was well, but she was very shocked... We left her with my mother, and we came here as soon as possible, but it was very hard to go to the police station because of the heavy snowfall...

'I've finished my story.' James concluded.

'Ok' the policeman said. 'We put Henry in detention, and we keep your testimony, but we have to listen all versions of this story. I send a police team to investigate at your mansion, about your father's death.'

'Thank you very much, Mister policeman.' James answered.

**The end**