

Mystery unfolds

Mystery unfolds

By : molly125

A retired teacher has an accident and finds himself involved in an unusual mystery.

Published on
Booksie

booksie.com/molly125

Copyright © molly125, 2015
Publish your writing on Booksie.com.

Mystery unfolds

Jim Williams a retired headteacher had been stuck in his house for the last four days because of heavy snowfall and he was running short of food. The short journey he was about to take to get some food supplies would change the way he looked at life.

He closed the front door of his cottage and looked out on the fields surrounding his property. The cottage was around four miles from the main road and the village of Penamman with its small shop and garage. He had purchased the cottage some 3 years ago after his divorce but his abrupt and forceful manner, the result of 21 years teaching, meant that he had found it difficult to be accepted and had become something of a recluse.

His Mini Clubman was not the best car in snow and ice but he was reassured that the local authority had gritted the road. After ten minutes of driving something ran in front of the car, he swerved but the front tyres lost their grip. The car started to skid towards the kerb. He began to panic; he knew that behind the trees to the left there was steep fall to the valley below. He tried to slam on the brakes but it made no difference, the right side of the car hit a wooden fence pole as the car skidded towards the edge. His head bounced against the top of the car and he lost consciousness.

Sometime later Jim woke, he felt slightly woozy and the right side of his head throbbed but apart from that he felt OK. He noticed the mini had become stuck between two large oak trees. As he looked out he could see the river flowing quickly just below him. He craned his head around to see if there was anyone that could help, but there was no-one in sight. As he undid his seatbelt he began to wonder how long he had been unconscious. The clock on his front dashboard had been smashed in the crash and he had forgotten his mobile phone in the house.

The car creaked as he slowly twisted and pushed himself up into a seating position. The passenger front door was undamaged so he leaned over and opened the door. The door opened easily and he felt the cold chill of the wind and heard the river rushing noisily only feet away. As he grabbed the trunk of the oak tree the mini started creaking and moving. Just then a hand grabbed him and he was dragged unceremoniously out of the car.

“That was close”, said a young girl with bright red hair.

“Thanks for that”, you’re pretty strong for a girl” he replied

She laughed and said “Us girls have our uses”.

She explained that her name was Susan Norris and that she only lived a mile up the road. She helped him walk the steep hill but by the time he reached the main road he was exhausted and flopped down out of breath next to an old milestone.

“I’ll be back in a minute, I’ve just left something down by the river.” she shouted as she ran back down the slope.

A white transit van with bold green writing “Bounty Supplies” sped past, the driver and passenger didn’t see his weak wave at them.

“I’ll take you to my house and you can get nice and warm and decide what to do next. Susan said after returning.

Mystery unfolds

Jim thanked the girl and the two of them walked together towards her home. The conversation flowed easily between them. She explained that she lived with her mum and dad but they were in work. She wasn't working at the moment but that she kept herself busy by painting and sketching. Jim noticed that she carried a small sketch pad and asked if she would mind him seeing her sketches. She seemed reluctant at first but eventually gave Jim the sketch pad. He looked at the sketches and was impressed by how realistic she had sketched. The book contained sketches of trees, people and landscapes but what stood out were her detailed sketches of horses.

"You can see I love horses," she said with a smile on her face. "I have just one wish and that is to be able to sell one of my horse paintings and see it displayed in someone's house. I would die happy."

Susan's home was a large farmhouse with many outbuildings and sheds. A gravel path led to the front entrance.

"We have visitors," exclaimed Susan pointing to the front of the house where the white transit van was parked.

Susan turned off the main path and led him into the back garden.

"Stay here for a second," she said. "I'm just going to find out what they want."

He agreed but after about ten minutes he began shivering so he opened the door to one of the outside sheds. As soon as he opened the door he realised that the shed was Susan's studio. The place was filled with art equipment, there were four rows of paintings to the right, all framed and wrapped in bubble wrap while the left side of the contained her easel, brushes and paints. He looked at the easel and saw a painting of a magnificent brown horse eating grass while leaning over a small wicker fence. In the bottom right hand corner was Susan's signature *Susan Norris*.

He sat down on a crumpled brown settee and closed his eyes.

"Mr Williams, Mr Williams Are you OK?"

He opened his eyes but closed them quickly as he experienced the glare of lights.

Where was he? He was no longer on the settee. He squinted his eyes and looked around him. A bright smile appeared on the lips of a nurse that was gently holding his hand.

He exclaimed "Where am I?"

"You are in hospital and my name is Nurse Goodwin," the young girl answered "You were brought in last night a bit dazed but I've just called the doctor and he will be with soon."

His doctor turned out to be experienced Indian doctor, Dr Ravi Sharma who explained to him that a couple had found him asleep in one of their outside sheds and rang the police. The police had found his mini still wedged to the two oak trees and put two and two together and phoned for the ambulance. When he started asking questions the doctor closed his hand and said there was plenty of time for answers, what he needed now was some sleep.

.When after three days Dr Sharma allowed to him to go home the first thing Jim did was to make himself a strong cup of tea and put his feet up on the wooden coffee table. Tomorrow he would go and see Susan and thank her for her help.

Mystery unfolds

The weather had turned for the better the sun was out and there was a feeling of spring in the air. He was looking forward to seeing Susan and telling her that he would make her wish come true by buying one of her horse paintings

He was slightly nervous driving to Susan's house remembering the last time he had driven. As he passed the scene of his accident he felt nauseous and he gripped the steering wheel tight. The entrance to the house came quickly and he drove the car slowly onto the gravel courtyard. There was a large family saloon in front of the house which he assumed to be Susan's parents. He knocked on the door and a tired middle aged woman opened the door.

Oh! My gosh, It's you. How are you feeling? the woman said.

Jim was taken aback with the reaction but continued

I'm very sorry to disturb you but I just wanted to come and thank Susan, your daughter for helping me four days ago when I had the accident down the road.

The woman put her hand to her mouth.

I don't know what sick joke you're playing but my daughter died seven years ago. Please will you leave now?

She turned her back and slammed the door.

Jim couldn't remember the drive home, his mind was still reeling from the woman's words that Susan was dead.

He paced up and down the room at home trying to work out what was happening to him. Had he dreamt the whole thing. He decided that two heads were better than one and knocked on the door of his neighbour. Rachel Parry was a 40 year old widow, who enjoyed baking and brisk walking but was also a qualified reflexologist. She had only moved in a year ago but he enjoyed their little chats over the fence.

Rachel greeted him with a cup of camomile tea and asked him if he was feeling better. He thanked her and told her he was much better but wanted her advice on another matter. She listened intently to the story and gasped when Jim recounted the words spoken by Susan's mum.

She got up quickly and pressed one of the keys on her laptop that was lying on her armchair. She brought the laptop over to Jim and told him I'm going to Google some words and see what comes up. She pressed car accident Penamman. 2006. The laptop took its time to boot up and in the meantime Rachel told Jim what she had been thinking. She told him that she felt that Susan was a spirit and that she had appeared to Jim for a reason.

Google showed no results that seemed to be relevant. She tried again, this time Susan Norris 2006 Penamman. This time the first result looked to be what they were looking for.

Jim read the first result

Susan Norris, a promising artist was found dead by side of the road, some 500 metres from the house where she lived with her father and mother near the village of Penamman, Glamorgan. Police believe that she returned to the house unexpectedly and found men stealing items from the house. There was evidence of a struggle in the front room and it looked as if she got away and was running to get help. She was hit a couple

Mystery unfolds

of times on her head and died instantly. Police are appealing for any witnesses.

Jim put his hands to his head and sighed. Rachel put her hand on his shoulder and told him. "We need to find a way to tell the police about the van you saw. Don't worry; some people have dreams similar to what you experienced. I have a friend that occasionally helps police. I'll give him a ring and see what we can do."

She carried on "Jim listen carefully. You are in a privileged position. Susan saw in you something special and decided to ask for your help."

The next few days passed slowly, his mind thinking constantly about Susan, the car accident and blaming himself for not going into the house with Susan. He wrote down all he could remember about the driver and the passenger in the van. As he looked out of the window he saw the registration number of the Ford Fiesta and suddenly remembered that the van had the same number 57. He always remembered cars and vans that had his birth year number. Eventually Rachel called over to his house with Archie Spelding. He was a professional psychic who sometimes helped the police find missing bodies or relatives. His work was kept very secret and he listed a number of high profile cases he had been involved in. This reassured Jim and when Archie suggested they go to see the police he didn't feel as uncomfortable as he thought he would.

This confidence soon disappeared when he arrived at the police station and was taken into one of the interview rooms. The overweight detective that interviewed him looked weary and tired and when Jim mentioned the word spirit you could see his expression turn to boredom and annoyance. Archie however sat steadfastly with him and urged him to divulge what he knew about the Transit van. The detective opened the file in front of him and noted down the name on the van, the registration number and a brief description of the men. He thanked Jim for his time and promised they would get in touch.

The spring was turning to summer when there was loud knock on the door. He opened the door and found a beaming Rachel and Archie at the door carrying a large package.

"They have caught them," exclaimed Archie. "The transit van was traced back to two known criminals and they have confessed to Susan's murder."

Rachel carried on, "Susan's mum Melanie Norris rang me two days ago and asked me to go and see her. She explained that when you left her three to four months ago she didn't know what to think but when the police visited her last week and told her that the perpetrators had been caught she asked whether you had been involved. The police refused to confirm or deny your involvement so she rang around her friends and got in touch with me.

I told her your story and she said that she will be forever grateful to you and wanted to give you something to show her gratitude to you. I think you'll like it."

Jim unwrapped the package. He had guessed what it contained but it was extremely emotional to see the painting of a magnificent brown horse eating grass while leaning over a small wicker fence with Susan's signature at the bottom.

Mystery unfolds

Mystery unfolds

Created from Booksie.com

Generated: 2015-01-26 15:32:55