

The Investigator

Daniel Hollands

Ian Semme is a private investigator. Quite how he ended up in this career is unknown, even to him. But he has been doing it for the past nine years, ever since his mid-life crisis, before which he was an accountant for a large firm in London.

He brought his doctorate on the internet, giving him the title of 'Doctor' in name only, to appeal to his ego, but in reality, more often than not it just gets him in trouble as he isn't really that bright.

He does have a talent though, a paranormal gift of seeing into the past. All he needs do is walk into a room and he can sense past times of strong emotion, and then just 'tunes in' until he can see what unfolded.

As a result of his gift, most of his work is as a consultant to the police who often call him in on homicide and kidnapping cases, in which he's able to give full descriptions of the perpetrators, with over 90% accuracy.

Chapter 1 – Well, do your stuff

You wake up to the sound of the telephone ringing; it's the police chief; they have another job for you. You pull yourself out of bed and glance at your watch – 4:34 AM! What do they want you this time in the morning for?

You arrive at the crime scene approximately an hour later and are promptly escorted to the chief:

"You took your time!" he barks at you.

"Sorry" you reply with a yawn "it is silly o'clock in the morning, what do you expect?"

"A little bit more professionalism for a start, we only keep calling you out because of your exceptional gift."

"Maybe I should stop working for you?"

"Maybe you should, but you know you'd not last without us; we're the only work you're able to get; we're the only people dumb enough to suffer you!" he says before walking into another room.

As you follow him you grumble various insults under your breath. You admit to yourself that he's right, but he doesn't have to be so harsh about it.

"Well, do your stuff" says the chief

As you enter the room you get that familiar feeling of emotion that always precedes a vision. You prepare yourself to see what the room is about to show you, expecting the ghostly figures to appear around you, acting the final moments. But this time it's different; everything you see and hear is

distorted. You've never had a vision like this before. You start to panic, but no matter what you do you're stuck, unable to do anything other than watch.

The scene that unfolds in front of your eyes is one of terror. You recognise the room as the one you're standing in, but where your visions are normally as clear as you would see normally; although slightly faster, this time everything has a grey wash to it. You also can't help but notice that everything is moving very slowly.

You see a two year old playing in the middle of the room. He has a bouncy ball in his hand and is having fun randomly throwing it around. Retrieving the ball is a taller figure, but not tall enough to be a parent, so you are assuming either a babysitter or older sibling. Both figures appear to you as if made of mist. Their forms are a bland gray lacking all form of detail other than general human shape. The forms quiver in the air as if a wind was blowing through the room. The only sound you can make out is of the child laughing at the obedience the older person is displaying by retrieving his toy. Everything else sounds alien.

Suddenly a shadow exits from the far corner. This figure lacks all detail as well, but instead of being gray, it is all black and is not affected by the apparent wind. It stealthily walks over to the older person, neither they nor the child seem to notice it. You expect you are about to see the crime taken place but when the intruder and figure collide, the entire room flashes in a bright light, the child's laughter still echoing throughout.

When the light dims you are back in reality, your vision having ended. You glance around to find the chief staring intently at you, waiting to hear what happened so he can get out of this place...and your presence. It is obvious your ability disturbs him, whether he is afraid of what you have the potential to do, or if he is merely jealous. Unfortunately you had nothing to go on. You could tell how many people were here, but not any detail that would be useful in identifying them. It can easily be found out who owns this place and who was here last night, therefore identifying the boy and older person and someone had to have called the police and therefore must know of the crime that took place as well...or what they believed happened. But that is not what the chief wants to know, he knows all that already. He wants to know who did it.

A sudden panic hits you. This has never happened before. Are you losing your touch? What will happen to you if you have? The chief hates you; he would love to have a reason to fire you. He is also right about no one else wanting you; your visions are your only skill. What are you going to tell him?

Paths

- Stall him, ask about evidence and any other information in hopes it will strike another vision.
- Tell him you need more rest, in the morning you will come back and get more details.