

Missing Person - Episode #2

Beer and Cigarettes

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Some of my students know I'm an amateur detective. Before I became a university professor five years ago, I had a real job. I worked for a security agency that protected private homes, and also important people like famous actors and politicians. I learned a lot about criminals. I had also learned a lot about police work from my father, who was a cop for 34 years.

I had wanted to become a police officer, too. But that was impossible. I got into some trouble when I was a kid. It was a stupid high school trick, but because I was 18-years-old, I was treated like an adult. I was arrested by the police, convicted, and now I have a police record. With a criminal record, I can never be a cop.

I worked for awhile as a bodyguard. One of my cases was protecting a famous history professor. He and I became friends, he helped me go to college and now I, too, am a professor.

As I said, when Anne came to see me this morning, I told her I would be happy to help. We came over to the apartment building where Sarah and Bill live, and that's when this mysterious man tried to stop us from going in.

"Let's see if we can get into their apartment and take a look around," I suggested.

We walked into the large, white building, and up to the third floor. Anne got an extra key from the apartment manager so we could go in.

"Apartment number 306, Anne?" I asked her.

"Yes. Here's the key," she answered.

"Let me open the door." I took the key from her. I opened the door very slowly. One thing I learned from my work as a bodyguard: Be careful when opening a stranger's door. You never know what's behind it.

I opened the door slowly. I went in first, making sure everything was okay before Anne followed. The living room was large and full of expensive things: a big-screen television, a fancy stereo, a CD player, two big, brown leather chairs, and a comfortable-looking sofa. The living room alone was bigger than my entire apartment.

"My God, it smells like beer and cigarettes in here! Bill and Sarah don't even smoke," Anne said.

I walked to the back of the apartment, and saw myself in the mirror. I am always surprised at how I look: I'm 42 years old, five feet eleven inches tall, blond hair, average weight. But when I see myself in the mirror, I look 3 inches shorter and 5 years older.

I checked the windows and the closets on each side of the apartment, and went into the bathroom. Then I saw something move.

I quickly turned to Anne and put my hand up in the air, meaning: "Don't move." I put my finger to my lips, telling her to be quiet.

Someone was in the bathroom.