

Late in the night, as John Holyknight was sleeping on his own desk-as usual, at his empty detective agency (and also a room of his home) the phone rang resounding in all the three-bedroom flat. Still half asleep, John picked it up.

"'llo. Detective Holyknight's Agency. What's the matter? He had mumbled the last words after seeing the time on his watch. It was only four in the morning.

"Henry Kangooroo. Professor Henry Kangooroo!"

His voice was halfway a tense murmur and a pointless entreaty. John had heard about him. He was a quite famous scientist. But, famous or not, he didn't have to call this early in the morning! It was clear for John. All he wanted to do was sleeping, but the pleading of the man ended to wake him up:

"Please! Help me! I need your help, detective Holyknight. S... someone is trying to... trying to kill me! Without your help I'll be ... murdered for sure!!"

Instantly awake and proud as a peacock, John began to get some interest in the man's request.

"Calm down ant tell me why you're thinking that someone wants you to be killed."

The man took a breath and told him everything about his last misfortunes and the strange phone call he received which ordered him to be quiet. He explained he couldn't tell the police so he opted for a private detective.

When John hung up the phone, he looked really serious. After a few seconds, he finally leaped for joy.

"I finally got an investigation!" he sang happily, combing his short brown hair. All of a sudden, the door opened and a dark-haired girl came in the desk room.

"Dad, what on Earth is going on? Are you drunk again?"

"Hey! I am not!! And what's with this "again"?! I have been drunk only once since your birth... Well, I don't mind: your father is leading THE investigation!"

"Really... I just can't believe it. Couldn't you sleep instead of making jokes in the middle of the night?"

John, outraged by such lack of consideration, told his daughter the how and the why of what happened.

"Well, I am really proud of you, dad! Maybe mother will be impressed by how busy you are."

"Pooh! Don't talk me about my ex-wife when I'm full of joy..."

"You're sure hopeless, dad..." she stopped before adding: "In fact, I am really happy that your business is doing better but maybe you should sleep to get ready to do it correctly, shouldn't you?"

"You're right" he admitted, stopped in his surge of delight. "Sleep well, Sharon."

He finally went to his bedroom while the seventeen-years-old girl casted a glance at him. She eventually went to bed, wondering if everything would be ok for her father.

In three days of work, after having tracked all the time, John realized it was a little boring and repetitive, but he kept doing his job seriously. As if he wanted to prove he was a great detective to anybody who had thought the opposite. He just felt like he was Sherlock Holmes.

He was standing inside the residential building facing the car park where the professor Kangooroo had stopped to get his car repaired. When John talked to him on the phone, they decided not to talk to each other if it is not by phone. John began to shadow professor Kangooroo. Not too close, not too far. There was no need to hear what Kangooroo said to the other people but just close enough to see what they were doing. And he was there, reliable, with his magnifying glasses, watching for each movement in the car park.

Right now, Professor Kangooroo was talking with the car park owner. They seemed to know each other very well. John knew it wasn't only a car park because it was also a car repair shop.

After a while, waiting for the car to be repaired, Kangooroo would leave as soon as he got his bag back. John was wondering if they were going to be much longer. A few minutes later, the car park owner gave to Kangooroo his bag and waved at the professor. A smile on his face, Kangooroo went to his car.

John, tired, stopped to watch over Kangooroo and his eyes turned to the exit of the car park. A man was up to something. When he looked in the magnifying glasses, John thought it would faint: the man, smiling with a creepy look, was holding a detonator! Without wasting time, John reacted and took the stairs down. Without having time to reflect, he ran as fast as he had never done. He forced the professor Kangooroo to get out of this car. Kangooroo seemed really surprised and tried to resist, but John dragged him as far as he could. Suddenly he felt something like a blast-effect that pushed him forward. Even so, he didn't let go of professor Kangooroo.

The car had exploded and they had been flung three meters further. Shocked, Kangooroo first couldn't say a thing when John brought him in a safe place. Later he screamed:

-“You are the stalker who followed me since Tuesday morning?! Why did you explode this car?!”

John couldn't believe his ears! Not only what he had just said but the fact he had an Australian accent also that he was accusing the detective he took on.

-“What are you saying?! We talked by phone during the night of Monday to Tuesday! I am John Molyknight, the private detective you asked to track you because you thought someone was trying to kill you! I didn't make this car explode! I saved you!”

Kangooroo had opened his eyes wide: “But ... I didn't tell anyone about my thoughts and I did not call a private detective.”

-“It's unbelievable!” John cried out. “So, who called me then?”

They looked into each other's eyes... Someone who wanted John to protect Kangooroo? Or the murderer? Who called?!

-“What's the name of the car park owner?”

-“Edgar Sparrow. He's my best friend and I totally trust him.” If he wanted to kill me, he had a lot of opportunities to do it before.”

-“Hum... I see.”

So, it wasn't the culprit. In fact it couldn't be someone who wanted to help the professor Kangooroo. It was bound to be the one who wanted Kangooroo to die.. But who was it? John was pretty sure that the man with the detonator had been taken on and had already run away.

-“Hey mister Molyknight, your phone is ringing” Kangooroo told him. John was surprised he was so concentrated that he didn't hear the phone. He picked it up. It was a call from home.

-“Hi, dad! What's up?”

-“Ahem! Sharon, I just saved someone and you?”

-“ You're the best dad, well, you see, I come back home and have something on my mind...”

-“Go ahead...”

-“Hum, in fact, there is a boy in my class who...”

-“STOP!” he yelled in the cellphone, giving Kangooroo a start. “What's the Hell are you going to tell me! I don't want to! I am totally opposed to this!” He was spitting like a cat at the mobile phone.

-“Dad... Huh, what the heck! You're jumping to conclusion. I meant that one of my classmates talked to me about you.”

-“How do you mean?”

-“He asked me about your investigation if everything was going well with Professor Kangooroo.”

Amazed that this kid knew about the professor Kangooroo and the investigation John didn't understand everything.

-“ Of course, I didn't tell anyone about it” Sharon explained; “so I asked him how he'd known. And he told me that his father was talking about it on the phone: “Kangooroo may had a lot of personal matters”” That it.”

-“Sharon, what is this child name?”

-“Maxim... Maxim Hauntedwood.”

-“ Thank you.”

-“ Da...?”

He put down the phone and looked straight in Kangooroo's eyes.

-“ What have you done to Hauntedwood?”

-Oh, Patrick? Who were friends years ago, we also worked together in the past.”

-“ I see, can you go to your house and wait for me there?”

-“ Yes I can. But I don't have a car anymore...”

John sighed... he had no choice: -“ Here, my keys. Take my car and be really careful.”

-“ Thank you” he smiled.

As Kangooroo had leaved, John leant against the wall. He needed to meet him. This Patrick Hauntedwood. One hour later, after taking the bus, John arrived behind Hauntedwood's house. Thanks to Sharon, he had found it easily.

He rang Hauntedwood's doorbell. A man, in his late forty, opened the door.

-“ Can I help you?”

-“ Yes you can. I am John Molynght, how do you do?”

-“ Please, take a sit.”

John did so. Everything was almost clear. There still remained the motive.

-“Mister Hauntedwood, or should I say Professor? I will be frank with you.”

-“You know everything, don't you?”

-“Hum... something like that.”

Hauntedwood looked so calm and kind.

-“I saw it, at Kangooroo's finger. A ring. He didn't have it three days ago.”

-“Yes, he's going to marry my wife, I mean my ex-wife.” Apart from the fact he stole the result of my work while we worked together and I didn't notice, but he became famous. Thanks to what I had discovered... And now my ex-wife who wants the right of custody of Max! It's the straw that broke the camel's back!” It was too much for Hauntedwood and he was about to cry.

-“You didn't even take the trouble to change your voice when you called me. Plus my phone is recording all of the calls I get...”

-“Too bad.”

John fell silent. A sudden silence. A bull in the conversation.

-“But, there is something I don't understand. You called me because you I was a failed detective and also because you needed witness to accuse Edgar Sparrow. You took on the man who pressed the detonator and...”

-“Bill Quack. It's his name.”

-“ Is that so... But you knew Sparrow wouldn't be suspected and that I might save Kangooroo, so why did you call me?”

The man who would be nicknamed “the failed scientist” answered:

-“Maxim told me that your daughter didn't look happy because of your business going down. She was really worrying herself sick about it. I didn't want another child to be shameful because everyone is telling that her father is a failure as a model.”

He went to the police by himself, accompanied by John. A few days later, John Holyknight made the headlines. Since the “scientist trial”, John got a lot of investigations. He became a pretty well-known detective.

... This Friday night of insomnia, when John was sleeping on his desk again, Sharon was looking through the windows, smiling at the moon.

She was pretty sure that somewhere, in the darkness, someone was pulling the strings of this ridiculous fable.