

Monday, November 21, 2005

Missing Person - Episode #5

No Police!

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“When does he want the money?” I asked.

“Tomorrow. He said he would call me this afternoon and tell me where to make the drop,” Bill said. “He also made it crystal clear that we were not to call the police. If I don’t hand over the money by the deadline, he said he’s going to kill Sarah!” Bill put his face in his hands. He turned to Anne, “Geez, Anne, I don’t know what to do!”

“We’ll get the money, Bill, don’t worry!” Anne said. “You know that my parents left Sarah and me a lot of money when they died.” Anne put her hand on Bill shoulders.

Anne and Sarah’s parents owned a very large computer company in Los Angeles, Pardo Computers, Inc. When they died a few years ago, Mr. and Mrs. Pardo left their two daughters a very large pile of cash. That’s how Anne got the money to go to USC, and could afford her cell phone, her Mercedes, and her apartment on the beach.

While Anne and Bill comforted each other, I called the young waitress over and asked for another iced tea. She wasn’t very friendly, but then again most waitresses in L.A. aren’t. They all really want to be actresses.

Drinking my tea and thinking about the case, the thought occurred to me that the kidnapper must know Anne and Sarah or at least know that they had a lot of money, and could get it quickly.

“I know this is a difficult time, Bill,” I interrupted, “but I need to ask you and Anne a few questions. Does your family have any enemies? Anyone who might want to hurt you?” Anne looked at Bill, and they both began to think.

The two of them spent the next 20 minutes coming up with a list of people who might want to harm them. They got the list down to two prime suspects, both of whom used to work for the Pardo computer business before they were fired. They gave me the names of the two ex-employees.

“This will be a good place for me to start,” I told them. “Now, you two need to get some rest. I’ll drive you both back to Bill’s apartment.”

“No, Dr. Reeves, I want to go with you!” Anne insisted. I found it very hard to say “no,” but I had to. I needed time to be alone, and to get some advice from an old friend.

“I’m really sorry, Anne,” I apologized, “but you need to rest and I need time to look into these names you gave me.”

“No police!” Bill quickly added.

“Don’t worry, Bill,” I told him, “there’ll be no police involved. Not yet, anyway”

The three of us got up and started walking toward my car. I had a funny feeling that there was more to this mystery than any of us thought.