

***Monday, December 12, 2005***

**Missing Person - Episode #8**

**Episode 8: Tracing the Plates**

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“Be careful! She may have broken bones,” the ambulance driver yelled.

I arrived at the accident scene just a few minutes after the police. Anne was already in the ambulance and ready to go to the hospital.

“Wait just one second,” I said to the police officer closing the back door of the ambulance. “I’m a friend of the victim. Can I talk to her?”

“Okay, go ahead,” she said, “but hurry up.”

“Thanks.” I turned and looked at Anne. She had hurt her arm and leg, but she was awake and able to speak. “Anne,” I said softly. “Anne, it’s me, Dr. Reeves.”

Anne opened her eyes slowly. “Dr. Reeves, wha--what are you doing here?”

“I heard about the accident on my police scanner. Anne, what happened?”

“A...a car...red car...going very fast...hit me. Hit me from behind...tried to kill me...” It was difficult for her to talk.

“A red car, Anne?” I asked, hoping to get more information. “Did you see the driver?”

“No...didn’t see...but...I got the license plate...3XZW...4...5..1” she said, running out of breath.

“Anne, that’s wonderful! Good work!”

“Thanks, Dr. Reeves.” She smiled a little and touched my hand softly.

“Okay, buddy, you’ll have to go now,” the policewoman yelled. “She needs to get to the hospital.”

I jumped out of the ambulance and it drove away. I got back in my car and drove to the nearest pay phone. I had to find out who owned that car.

“Hello, police department?...yes, get me Officer Cho.” Cho was an old friend of mine. When I needed a favor, he was always willing to help.

“Cho? This is Darron Reeves. Yeah, look, I need some information on a car registration. License number 3XZW451...right, I’ll call you back in an hour. Thanks, Cho. You’re the best.”

It was now 7:45 p.m. and I still needed to talk to one of the ex-employees of Pardo Computers who worked at a club near the airport. I drove down the freeway and arrived about 20 minutes later.

When I got to the club, I walked inside. The bar smelled of old beer, old cigarettes, and old men. I sat down at the bar and ordered a drink. I was here to speak to Lenny MacKay, an ex-employee of Pardo Computers.

“Excuse me, bartender,” I said to the man serving the drinks, “I’m looking for Lenny, Lenny MacKay.”

“I never heard of Lenny MacKay,” he answered very quickly. “You got the wrong place. There ain’t no Lenny MacKay working here.”

I looked into his eyes, and I knew he was lying.

I got up from the bar and walked to the back of the place. There was a door to the left. The door had a sign on it that said, “DO NOT ENTER.” I entered.

“Hey!” A man yelled at me as I went into the back room. “Who are you?”

“I’m looking for Lenny MacKay. Are you Lenny?”

“Yeah, I’m Lenny. Now who are you?” he replied.

“My name’s Reeves. Look, I’m not here to waste your time. I just want to ask you a few questions. Now, where were you two days ago, at about 8:30 in the morning?”

“I was in Las Vegas with my girlfriend. Ask her. She’ll tell you that I was with her.”

I believed Lenny when he told me that he was in Vegas, but I needed to be sure. “Who’s your girlfriend? What’s her name?” I asked.

“Her name is Tanya. She’s working here tonight. You can ask her!”

I walked over to the table and found a girl sitting by herself, drinking a beer. “Are you Tanya?” I asked.

“Yeah, I’m Tanya. What do you want, bud?”

“I just have a quick question for you: Where were you two days ago?”

“Who wants to know?”

“I’m investigating a girl who’s gone missing, and I just want to clear someone of suspicion, that’s all.”

“I was in Las Vegas with my boyfriend, Lenny, Lenny MacKay.”

“That’s all I needed to know. Thanks.” I walked out of the bar and got back into my car. As usual, Kathy was right: Lenny wasn’t involved in the kidnapping.

I got back on the freeway and drove to my apartment. It was now 10:30 p.m. and I was tired. I needed to sleep before I could continue my investigation. As soon as I got into my apartment, I checked my voice mail for messages. There was only one. It was from a man with a very deep voice.

The message was short but very clear: “Darron Reeves, stop trying to find Sarah Salas! If you don’t stop looking for her now, you will die!”