

I

THE GIRL IN THE RIVER

ARMENTIÈRES, FRANCE

1916

"I don't have time for this, private. This isn't the first time a soldier's floated in from upstream."

Daisy Parker trod down the communication trench towards the front line, the boy shadowed her.

"I understand that, corporal, but this is different," he pleaded.

"And why's that?" Daisy said.

"I believe this might have been a murder."

Daisy glared at the boy, and kept walking. Her face said it all: *that's the dumbest shit I've ever heard.*

His cheeks flushed red, "I mean, obviously it was a murder," he said, with an uncomfortable breath of what could be called laughter, "but, I think she was killed by one of ours, a digger."

The pair squeezed to the side of the trench to allow a group of soldiers carrying a stretcher to pass.

"You got any proof of this... what'd you say your name was again?"

"Private Hickit, sir," the boy said, straightening his stance, "and yes, I technically do."

They passed a few lounging boys, barely awake, and continued

towards the front line.

"Let's hear it then," said Daisy, sliding her hands into the pockets of her trench coat.

"Well, as you were saying," Hickit explained, "there *have* been a few bodies making their way downstream. But those soldiers are British, from the battalion up north. The girl we found, she was Australian, and her colour patch shows she's a part of our battalion."

Daisy stopped, and leant against the side of the trench.

"The girl had no bullet wounds, or any discernible injuries when I found her, and since the German line doesn't extend to the river, makes it hard to believe that a German killed her," Hickit continued.

Daisy thought for a moment, "All that does is rule out the Germans. That doesn't prove it's a murder. Could the girl swim? What makes you think she didn't just drown?"

"Her identity disc is missing. It's incredibly unlikely that something fastened around her neck and placed under several layers of clothing would simply slip off."

"You're proposing that someone killed the girl, took her ID, then threw her in the river?" Daisy asked.

"Respectfully sir, I think you should come look for yourself."

Daisy pinched the bridge of her nose, and let out a sigh, a puff of condensation wisping out into the cold and dark morning.

"Fine, but first I need to find Lance-Corporal Smith. Stand-to's in an hour"



The river was quiet. Its icy water flowing calmly to Daisy's left. She pulled a small tin out of her trench coat pocket, and procured a cigarette. Lighting it provided less light than the little she had expected, making no dent in the expansive darkness of the field she was standing in.

There were a few other soldiers about, two boys were by the bank of the river, arguing over who should swim out into the freezing water to fetch the body of a British soldier. Hickit was further up the bank, conversing with a woman, both of whom were leaning over the body of the girl Hickit had found. Daisy took the cigarette from her mouth, exhaled, and headed over to them. The woman, a nurse,

noticed her approach, and got to her feet.

"Good morning corporal," she said, saluting.

Daisy returned the salute, "Morning doc," she said, kneeling down beside the body, "this the girl?" she asked Hickit.

"Yes sir," He said, "a sorry sight I'd say."

He was right, there was nothing about the girl that was remotely violent. She laid there, almost peacefully. She could see no blood, no bruises, no injuries of any kind.

"So doc," said Daisy, "do you know what happened to her? Could you tell if she drowned?"

"Not without a proper autopsy," she said, "but I think it's more likely that the girl was strangled." The nurse shifted her stance, and pulled down the girl's collar, there were light marks around her neck. Barely noticeable, but present. "Though it is possible that she survived the strangulation, but was thrown into the river afterwards. Also," the woman said, "from what I've gathered, there's a high chance she was sexually assaulted."

"Shit..." Daisy said, "So it's a man we're after?"

"Yes sir."

"Well... There's our motive."

"Do you know when she died?" Hickit asked.

"Well, rigor mortis has just begun to set in, so I'd say at least four hours ago, probably longer. Most likely sometime last night."

"Is there anything else you found? Anything on her?" Daisy asked.

"No sir, I think it's pretty clear what happened here."

"Alright then," Daisy said, getting to her feet, "thanks doc."

"Of course, sir," she said, "and if you don't mind sir, I'd like to head back to camp. There are other soldiers I need to see to."

"Sure, you're dismissed."

The nurse saluted, before hurrying off.

Daisy took another puff of her cigarette, and stared at the poor girl's body.

"Hickit, did she always have one boot?" she asked. She had noticed it earlier, but didn't think it was a question for the medic.

"I'm not sure sir, I wasn't the one who got her out of the river." Hickit knelt down beside the body, and placed a hand on the girl's boot, it was large - probably not fitted properly - and had mud covering up half the leather, her sock on the other foot however, was

not muddy at all.

"If you didn't pull her out of the river, then who did?" asked Daisy.

Hickit got up and pointed to the two boys who were still arguing by the banks. "Blake's the one who fetched her from the river."

Daisy walked over to them, and their incessant arguing grew louder.

"I'm not going back out there! It's freezing!" the boy on the right said to the other. He was presumably Blake, considering the only part of his uniform that wasn't wet was his cap.

"Come on, your body's probably used to it by now, it'll feel less cold than if I go out there!"

"You know what would feel less cold? Me sitting here, while you go out there, and grab the damn body!"

"Privates!" Daisy called out. They both turned to her, and quickly saluted. "Why didn't you just get the other body while you were out there fetching the girl?" she asked.

"I, uh, I didn't see it sir. It's quite dark." Blake said, embarrassed.

"Did that come from the river?" Daisy asked, pointing to Blake's boots. They had a small amount of mud on the bottom, it looked similar to that that was on the girl's boot.

Blake looked down, "I think so sir."

"You," Daisy pointed to the other boy, "get in the river."

"What?"

"HA."

"And go get the other body while you're at it." Daisy said.

Blake looked defeated, and slumped over to the edge of the river. When he took one step in, Daisy made him stop.

"Now show me your boot."

He stepped out onto the edge of the banks, his boot was covered in the same layer of mud as the girl's boot had. For whatever reason, the girl had stepped into the river before she died.

"Right, now go get the body."

Blake tried to hold in his laughter as the other boy reluctantly waded out into the cold river.

"Why do you think she went out into the river?" Hickit asked, "do you still think she drowned?"

"I'm not sure," Daisy said, "if she was strangled, and thus, unconscious, she would have been placed onto the water's surface by

someone else, most likely the killer. But the mud on her boots means she stood on the banks. On her own two feet."

The two thought for a moment, watching the boy swim across the river, and make his way to the rocks the British soldier was caught in. One thing Daisy recognised, was that the soldier must have come a long way to end up where they are now.

"One thing's for certain," said Daisy, "this wasn't where the girl's boots were muddied." she turned to her right, "She was flowing downstream, from somewhere up that way."



They had walked about three hundred feet before they came across a small wood. Hidden in the centre was an even smaller cabin. More of a shack, really, Daisy thought. Though the darkness made it difficult to pick out details, she could tell this shack was not free from the toll of war. There was a sizable chunk of the roof missing, and through it, Daisy could see the orange glow of a fire.

Hickit turned to her, "You reckon this is the place, sir?"

She shushed him, and crept up to the door of the shack. Quietly and carefully pushing the door open, she peeked her head in. Her eyes were drawn to the corner of the room, where three girls sat around a fireplace, two were writing letters, while the other was reading a book. A pile of small animal bones sat in front of them, on the stones next to the fire.

Deeming them not a threat, Daisy pushed the door open, and stepped inside, making her entrance known.

The girls turned around, noticed Daisy was their superior, and got to their feet, with their hands behind their backs.

"Have you three been here all night?" Daisy asked.

The girl in the middle answered, "We- We weren't here *all* night sir, we arrived around midnight."

"And was anyone here before you?"

"We think so sir," The girl pointed to the large table that framed the centre of the shack, an assortment of items lay around the outside edge, cards, candles, cigarettes. "These were all on the floor when we came inside, most of the candles were still lit too."

Hickit moved over to the table, and began sifting through one of

the three piles of items.

"So, chances are, he left right before you got here," Daisy said, "would he have heard you coming? Were you speaking especially loud?"

The middle girl looked to the girl on her right, "Well, Fox here fired her rifle, she caught us a squirrel," she said, Fox lifted her chin up, proud, for some reason. "they must have heard that," she continued, "we were close by."

Daisy did a circle, inspecting the shack. She noticed there were two doors on either end of the building.

"Which door did you come in?" she asked.

"The same one you did sir," the middle girl said.

Daisy then headed over to the opposite door, and opened it. She looked back at Hickit, who was still looking through the items on and around the table,

"Tell me if you find anything," she said.

He nodded.

Daisy dismissed the privates, then headed outside. There was a clear path headed out towards the river, she followed it till it turned to be parallel to the stream, and stopped. She spotted footprints, two sets, to be precise, trailing off from the path, heading directly towards the river. Stepping in the centre showed Daisy that the sizes of the boots were one smaller and one larger than her own. The larger boots were the girls, so whose were smaller ones? Another woman? Daisy followed the tracks to the edge of the banks, and looked down. The ground steeped down into the river. In the dirt, she could see clear boot marks, not foot prints, but tracks of feet skidding down the slope. Daisy mimicked the action, sliding down the dirt, and landing in knee deep water at the bottom. Lifting up her boot showed the same mud both the girl and Blake had. She looked around her, what was the girl doing here? Where was her strangler at this time? Was she even strangled yet? Daisy was missing something, she knew that.

Just then, Hickit peaked his head up from the bank of the river. "Corporal!" he said excitedly, "I found something!" He extended his hand, and helped Daisy out of the water.

"What?" Daisy said.

Hickit handed her a tobacco pipe. "It's a tobacco pipe sir."

"I can see that."

Daisy traced her fingers over its smooth, glossy surface. From what she could gather, the pipe seemed relatively expensive, not likely to be left behind voluntarily. Upon flipping it over, she saw two, crudely engraved letters on the side, reading: "A.B."

"I think those are the owner's initials sir." Said Hickit.

"Excellent observation." Daisy said blankly, not looking up from the pipe.

Hickit smiled. "I found it amongst the other stuff on the table, meaning it belonged to someone there, possibly the girl?"

"Maybe."

"I also noticed another thing," Hickit said, "although they were moved from the floor, I did notice three distinct piles of cards around the table, making me think there was a third person present. That pipe was near one of the piles, and there were cigarettes near the other, What do you think?"

"A third person?" Daisy looked again at the tracks around her. There were only two sets of footprints leading up to the bank, but of them, only one slid down into the water. The girl had to be among them, but then where was this third person?

"The plot thickens," said Hickit, seemingly deep in thought, though he snapped out of it immediately. "I think we should head back towards the trenches, chances are, our culprits will be there."

As the two of them made their way along a worn out part of the bush towards the nearest trench, Hickit looked around at the forest they were currently passing through. It was one of the rare swathes of land that still held nature's beauty, though he was worried that it wouldn't stay like this forever. His mind wandered to his time in Gallipoli. The dusty terrain, blown out hillsides. He imagined with enough time, war would turn this place into something similar.

Despite Daisy being content with their silence, as it gave her space to think, she could tell Hickit found it slightly uncomfortable.

"Have you ever heard of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* sir?" he asked suddenly.

"Nope," Daisy said.

"Well, it's a book sir," He clarified, "actually, it's a collection of short stories originally posted in magazines, except for *A Study in Scarlet* of course, that one's an actual book, which preceded-"

"Why are you telling me this?"

"Oh. well, the main character, Sherlock Holmes, is a detective - well, a consulting detective, actually - but I just thought he reminded me a little of you."

Daisy kept walking, eyes forward, "Is that so."

"Well, he's incredibly smart, and able to make accurate deductions using observations one wouldn't even think to make. Like the dust patterns on floors, the smell of someone's breath, the taste of tobacco. All the little things," Hickit said, "In fact, 'to a great mind, nothing is little.'"

"Hate to break it to you private, but I'm not the 'master deductionist' you - for some reason - make me out to be."

"But I reckon you could be sir," he said.

Daisy rolled her eyes. "The way I see it," Daisy said, "It's a whole lot easier to get information out of *people* than it is dust on the floor."

Hickit thought for a second, "But what if they don't tell you anything?"

"That, in and of itself, *is* telling you something," Daisy said. "People, they're predictable. It's the way they react, the way they try to hide things, the way they *lie*. It's all just to protect themselves. That's the most telling."

"You seem like you know what you're talking about," said Hickit.

Daisy considered whether she should even respond, and ultimately, decided not to.



The two of them spent less time than expected searching for their culprits. They had mainly just been asking soldiers around various parts of the trench if they recognised the pipe, or knew anyone with the initials "A.B." Surprisingly, it wasn't long before they got a hit.

"A.B..." The girl muttered, bringing the pipe closer to her face, "Yeah, I know her. Her name's Booker," She handed the pipe back to Hickit, "Audrey Booker."

Hickit turned to Daisy, "A woman?" This may very well belong to the girl who died, but Hickit can't say for certain until they find - or, realise they have already found - Booker.

"Do you know where she is?" Hickit asked.

"Can't say I do."

"I can," Someone said from behind them.

The two of them turned around. A girl, stretched out on the ground, of whom both Daisy and Hickit thought was asleep, lifted her head up.

"She's not too far from here, about two segments east. Short girl, brown hair, sitting with three other guys."

"On your feet, private," Daisy said, "and take me to her."

The girl let out a sigh, and stretched her legs out, before getting to her feet. She led them to the segment, and pointed out the group Booker was in.

"That's her," said the girl, yawning.

"Thank you." Hickit said.

The girl left, and Daisy and Hickit turned their attention to Booker. If this was in fact the owner of the pipe, that meant that she was at the shack at the time of the murder, and, based on the tracks, was with the girl when she went to the river bank. She could tell them what happened, if she was willing to talk that is. The two of them sat down on the opposite side of the trench. The group took notice of Daisy and Hickits entrance, except for the boy to Booker's left, who was fiddling with his laces. Booker elbowed him in the ribs, and he looked up, taking notice of Daisy.

Daisy looked at the three of them, one of these boys was the killer, that she was almost certain of. Now that she had people in front of her, here came the easy part.

"What are your names?" she asked bluntly.

There was a moment of silence, with them all looking at her nervously, before one of them answered.

"It's White sir." The boy on Daisy's far right said.

"Private Clarke." Said the boy next to him.

Next, the one Booker jabbed, "Marley, sir."

"Private Bo--"

"Yeah- I know who you are." Daisy said.

"W-What?"

Daisy leant forward, "Say Audrey, do you smoke?"

Booker's eyes flicked between Daisy and Hickit, not sure of how to react. Daisy watched her response intently, now that she knew something was going on, Booker had to consciously think about her answer. Unfortunately for her, there was no correct one.

"No sir," She said.

"Not a pipe?"

"N- No sir."

"What do you suppose this is then?" Daisy said, pulling out the pipe. "It has your name on it."

Booker's eyes widened, it wasn't obvious, but Daisy caught it. She glanced at Marley, the boy beside her.

"I've never seen that before."

"Really?" Daisy said, "I find that hard to believe. A.B. *are* your initials, correct?" Daisy waited for an answer, but the girl said nothing. "Also, a girl specifically said that this was your pipe, she brought me to you and everything."

"It's not my pipe," Booker said again.

Daisy turned to look at the other boys, "What about you three? Do you think this is her pipe?"

They all just looked at her, said nothing. White shook his head.

"She said it wasn't hers," Clarke said.

From this, Daisy assumed that, in some way, they were all in on it. At the very least two of the boys just know what happened, and want to protect Booker, and the boy who murdered the girl.

"So what you're proposing," Daisy said, "Is that this pipe belonged to someone else with the initials A.B?"

Booker nodded.

"Hate to break it to you, but there's nobody else in B company with the same initials as you. This is your pipe." A lie, but a necessary one. Daisy already knew this was Booker's pipe, she just had to prove that to *her*.

Hickit shifted where he was sitting, he admired how Daisy was able to exercise such control over this group of people, even without them realising that she was leading them on.

"There's a shack just west of here, do you know it?"

Booker shrunk further into the back of the trench, she was scared. her breathing quickened, her eyes unable to maintain eye contact.

Daisy got up, standing over the girl. "Well, I have reason to believe that a girl was murdered there last night, do you know anything about this?"

"W-What are you saying?"

"Are you suggesting that she killed someone?" Clarke exclaimed.

The way he said it told Daisy that he knew exactly who did it, and that accusing Booker was, in fact, ridiculous.

"I'm saying, that when I went to that same shack not thirty minutes ago, I found this pipe, *your* pipe Booker."

"I- No-"

"Here's my current understanding of the events, - feel free to correct me Booker, you *were* there after all - At around zero hundred hours, You were at the shack. I know for a fact that there were *three* people present that night. The girl who was murdered, you, Private Audrey Booker, and one other. As you all know, the severity and manner of the assault was not something that could have been committed by a woman. Meaning that the murderer was the *third* person" She turned, and glared at the boys, "One of you three."

"That's ridiculous!" Said Marley, jumping to his feet. "You can't just go around accusing people of murder! Do you have any proof at all?"

"Isn't it interesting that, when I was grilling Booker, you were *completely silent*. Then the second I even *suggest* the possibility of one of you being the killer, you're all up in arms."

Marley stomped over to Daisy, till he was near centimetres from her face, he was a fair bit larger than herself, but he didn't scare her. She looked him up and down, and reaffirmed what she already knew. Not just the fact that Marley was terrified, but also the presence of key evidence currently attached to his body.

Daisy laughed, a long, hearty laugh, that caused Marley to take a step back.

"You know," Daisy laughed, "I had It all wrong!"

"What?"

"I gotta give it to you Marley, you *really* had me stumped. I was so caught up in the who was where, when the answer was so obvious!"

"*What* are you talking about?"

"Your boots." Daisy said, matter of factly. "they're not yours."

Hickit looked at the boy's feet, and noticed his boots were in fact, two sizes too small.

"Originally, I thought that the girl had somehow made her own way along, with Booker, to the edge of the river. Based on her boots, they were covered in mud, which she could have only gained from standing in the water on her own two feet. But I understand now, It

wasn't her boots that were muddied, it was yours."

As enthralled as Hickit was with Daisy's exposition, he couldn't help but notice that the surrounding trench was beginning to liven. The sky was brightening, and officers had begun calling soldiers to get ready to stand-to.

Marley glared at Daisy, "You're not making any sense."

"Let me make it crystal clear for you then. *You* raped and murdered the girl inside that shack. She and Booker didn't walk off, and you didn't leave the scene as I originally thought, she didn't even live to make it out the shack."

Though none of them said anything against Daisy, or in support of Marleys for that matter, Daisy could sense the disdain they had for her. Marley was practically fuming, though he was doing a good job at hiding it.

Booker shifted away from Daisy slightly.

"After you heard a gunshot - Fox and her girls had just caught a squirrel - you knew they were on their way there, you fled. In a hurry, you left an absolute mess, and more importantly, Bookers pipe. You took the girl's body with you, and - as the boot prints show - you and Booker walked along the track to the river bank. Once you were there, Marley, you skidded down the slope, and landed in the water. Before you were about to place the girl's body in the river, you realised that your boots were covered in mud. Figuring that this would link you to the girl's murder, you took off your boots, and put on the girls. Unfortunately for you, they were two sizes too small, and uncomfortable for someone of your size." Daisy stared at Marley, "Go on," she said, "just *try* and explain why your boots are too small. You're fucking *wearing* the smoking gun."

Marley glanced around him, assessing the situation, Daisy knew what this was, he was looking for an escape route. Before he had a chance to do anything else, Daisy drew her revolver, and stuck it under Marley's chin.

"You'll be sentenced to death for this anyways," she growled, pushing the barrel further and more forcefully onto his jaw, "personally, I don't see any reason why I can't just put you down *right now*."

A whistle blew, and soldiers began climbing up along the fire step. As Daisy turned to Booker, their eyes met, another whistle blew,

and Booker took off.



She scrambled to her feet, shoved past two spectating soldiers, and sprinted down the west side of the trench. Daisy turned to Hickit, but before she could even call out, he was already on his feet.

"I'm on it sir!" he said, running off in pursuit.

More whistles blew, and most soldiers had been called to stand-to, they were all lined up on the fire-step, their guns ready. Because of this, Booker had a clear path down the trench, she dashed down it, glancing behind her. Hickit wasn't far behind, and was gaining on her. She skidded to a stop, and turned down the next segment of the trench.

Hickit ran round the corner, and just barely caught a glimpse of her scrambling over the backside of the trench, leading above ground. Hickit hesitated, if he went out there, he'd be in clear view of the Germans in the opposing trench, he could be shot at. Apparently, that was a risk Booker was willing to take, and so Hickit followed. He clambered over the top, and found easier footing on the soft grass of the field. Booker wasn't far ahead, he could see, as she glanced back, that she was terrified. Booker pressed on, she was tired, she was sore, her body ached, but she forced herself to keep running, *willed* herself to keep going. Tears ran down her face, she didn't want it to be like this.

A loud crack filled the air, and ahead of Hickit, Booker fell to the ground.

Hickit skidded down next to her, another shot whizzed by, and he pressed himself closer to the ground.

Booker was lying on her side, her left hand clutching her hip, blood pooling out from beneath her uniform. Hickit rolled her over onto back, and saw she was crying profusely. He assumed it was due to the pain, but the anguish he saw when their eyes met said otherwise.

"He- he just said I could watch," she sobbed, "I- I didn't do anything- I swear!"

Hickit reached into the girl's tunic and pulled out her field dressing, "I don't know if that's true or not," he admitted, "but either way, that's not an excuse." Hickit lightly lifted Booker's hand from her

hip, and pulled up her tunic. He grabbed the cloth and pressed both hands on the wound. Booker cried out in pain, and grabbed Hickit's wrist.

"I don't wanna die!" she wept.

"You're not going to die," Hickit said, "it just grazed your hip."

Booker sniffed, "Not from this," she said, "I'll... I'll be... *executed*... won't I?" She could barely force the words out, and it sent her into another fit of sobbing, worsened by the pain of Hickit applying pressure to her wound.

"I don't know what you did... and I don't know what'll happen to you," Hickit said, "but I don't think you deserve to die for it."

Booker let out a mix between a laugh and a sob, "What does it matter," she said, "You think anyone else would defend me?" She tried to roll onto her side, but the pain proved too great, and she barely moved an inch. She closed her eyes, a tear rolling down her face, "... I might as well die now."



Several minutes had passed before Lance-Corporal Smith arrived. With him, was Captain Yale, and with him, were several other soldiers.

"Corporal Parker sir!" Daisy said, addressing the officers, and bringing her right hand up in salute, her left holding the revolver still trained at Marley.

"Ah, corporal," said Yale, "what's the situation? Lance-Corporal Smith here told me about your little 'investigation', I assume it was successful?"

"Yes sir," she said, "I'm just waiting on one more."

"One more?"

Just then, Hickit came jogging down the line, and ran up to Daisy. He noticed the other two officers, and straightened his stance. "Gentlemen," he saluted.

"At ease, private," said Daisy. She leant closer, and lowered her voice, "what happened? Did you catch the girl?" she asked.

"Technically yes," said Hickit, "she was shot, she's being moved to a field hospital as we speak."

"Jesus," Daisy said under her breath.

"Care to explain what's going on corporal?" demanded Yale.

"Right sir," she said. She retrained her revolver at Marley, who scoffed, and looked away. "This boy, private Marley, is responsible for the rape and murder of the girl in the river. His accomplice, private Booker, is being admitted into hospital after trying to flee the scene." Daisy then motioned to the other two boys, "These two, private Clarke and private White, are accessories to murder." Both boys avoided eye contact with the captain.

"And you're certain of this corporal?"

"Absolutely sir," she affirmed.

"Very well, I expect to see proof during their trials."

"Of course sir."

Yale waved at the soldiers flanking him, who marched past him and up to Marley. They pulled him to his feet, and twisted his arms behind his back. Others were doing the same with Clarke and White.

Before they could take them away, Daisy stopped Marley.

"What was her name?"

Marley didn't make eye contact, just stared at the ground. She honestly thought he wouldn't answer. "Bottom right pocket, inside the tunic."

Daisy looked where he instructed, and her fingers met cool metal. She pulled it out, it was the girl's identity disc. Daisy was as confused as she was surprised, this was damning evidence, but the look on Marley's face showed that he didn't care. He was as good as dead anyways. The soldiers led the boy's off, and Daisy looked down at the disc.

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Captain Yale approached her, "Well done corporal, it's always good to have someone root out the 'bad eggs', folks like that don't represent the honour, and courage of our great military. I'll be glad to be rid of them.

"In fact," said Yale, raising his chin, "I have use of your skills elsewhere. After you display your case, I'll have you two reassigned." Yale procured a small letter from his breast pocket, "You two will be sent down the line to Flesselles, Lieutenant Evans has been on the lookout for more recruits for her new 'Provost Corps', I believe you to

be suitable candidates."

Candidates, plural? Daisy glanced at Hickit, "Is he coming with me sir?" she asked.

"Indeed," he confirmed, "You both contributed to this case, did you not?"

Daisy suppressed a groan.

Yale handed them the note, then saluted. "Dismissed," he said, spinning around and returning down the east side of the trench.

Daisy let out a hefty sigh.

"Looks like you're stuck with me now," Hickit smiled.

"Don't *fuckin*g try me."

"Oh. Sorry sir," Hickit took a step back.

There was a moment of silence, Daisy began making her way down the trench, Hickit followed.

"You know sir, this reminds me of how Watson and Holmes first met, except this was a little bit more involved, don't you think?" Hickit turned to Daisy, she didn't look impressed.

"Oh, have I not told you about Watson?" he asked, "He's--"

"Hickit."

"Yes sir?"

"*Shut up.*"

"Yes sir."