Dear Fiona,

From what I can understand, your story follows a solicitor, Mr. Riley, who is relaxing in his office before a large legal meeting with oppositions solicitor Mr. Penny. There they discuss the death of a Miss Kane, a house maid who was killed in Mr. Moore’s manor with the prime suspect being Mr. Moore himself. As Mr. Riley says he believes Mr. Moore killed him and presents his evidence such as the testimony of a young girl and how the affair between the two is the prime motive. At the end, we are told that that 2 people are involved with the murder with Mr. Moore and Mr Penny being the culprits. Mr. Penny buys out Mr. Riley’s silence after confessing and, fearing for his life, Mr. Riley accepts it.

What I enjoyed in your story was the genre, tone and characters of which I’ll expand further now. To start off with the genre, I personally love a good mystery an trial of sorts genre in any medium. You effectively built up the case, laid the groundwork and let the reader also make their own assumptions along the way as any good mystery should. You played the big reveal towards the end beautifully (albeit with a few issues in which I will touch upon later) and presented an interesting moral dilemma. The setting, albeit very cliché, was a safe choice that worked rather well. Although, it would’ve been a nice change of pace if not set in Britain/England but it isn’t detrimental to the story. The tone set throughout the story was perfectly intertwined throughout the story and weaved well into the story’s very fabric. The fact the tone was consistent in the tense despite the grim, yet relaxing tone was done rather well without feeling tonal whiplash. As for the main characters, the fact they take a backseat in most of the story is perfect in a mystery/detective genre as the case itself is the main priority. However, you still take the time to give a basis and personality to the main characters which is thoughtful and appreciate.

As for what I couldn’t enjoy throughout the story, my major point is Mr. Penny himself. Despite not being tonal whiplash and a great reveal involving him, it still felt rather weird for him to be the culprit as there isn’t much hinting or clues that pointed to him till the girl’s account and then he confesses. It felt too fast for what the genre is aiming to be and maybe adding a bit more hints to him would make the reveal a bit more believable. Following the witnesses and clues, I felt it was a bit weak as we only had two witnesses and no clues whatsoever. Generally, there are a few clues to help lead the reader yet not too obvious or could be used as red herrings. However, this doesn’t need to be included but it can help and make the read even more fun. The moral dilemma felt a tad shallow, to me personally. While he know Miss Kane, the dilemma still felt shallow. Is he a generally moral human being? Corrupt? Maybe just add a bit more to make it feel even heavier when he accepted the check (one source is the Phoenix Wright Games in particular Phoenix Wright 2: Chapter 5 if you wish). Finally, there were a few cliché parts(Britain, affair etc.) but this can be largely ignored as you wished to get out of your comfort zone but just a little note if you choose this to submit

Overall, this was a well written story Fiona . It had a built up a lovely case for start to finish and easily guided the reader along the way. As a fan of a good mystery, your story was amazing and was an amazing read from start to finish Good Luck!

Sanad Masannat