A PI’s Moral

Context: A PI, Rose, is hired by a client to investigate the unusual death of their brother. The police have written of the death off as an accident but the client claims otherwise. Rose sympathized with his plight. After finding clues, despite the police’s desperate insistences not too, the PI returns to her run-down office to gather her thoughts when her client walks in.

Scene 1

Rose: Hmm, this is quite a conundrum. These clues seem to have no meaning at first glance, but they are part of a greater picture. Yet I can’t grasp the connection nor the picture it even forms.

[She turns to her ancient cabinet, the one clean object in an infestation of dust and papers, pulls out a glass and bottle of wine. She kicks away a few papers to return to her makeshift desk, and pours herself a small amount, attempting to stimulate any thoughts to help, even drunken ones. Before she takes a sip, she hears a timid knock on the door.]

???: H... Hello, Ms. Detective are you in there?

[Realizing it’s her client, she proceeds to grab a second clean glass and once she has grabbed one, she yells back]

Rose: Doors, open Tom. Come in.

Tom: Hello Detective.

Rose: Ugh... for the last time, I’m not a detective anymore. I guess it does roll of the tongue more. As I said the last time, please call me Rose.

Tom: Oh…Sure, thing Rose.

[Tom turns his head in a mixture of embarrassment and shyness. He is too used to addressing people by titles rather than by name. Rose realizing that he is still uncomfortable pours him a glass and says]

Rose: Fine, just call me however you wish, I do prefer Rose though. Speaking of that, you want some Rose Wine, freshly made and great to boot.

Tom: Sorry Detect…I mean Rose, I don’t drink.

Rose: Oh? Well, I’ll save it for later then. [She then pours the glasses contents back into the bottle, spilling a bit in the process. She then takes a sip from her glass before switching into serious mode]

Rose: Had you waited a minute, I was going to call you myself. I managed to gather several clues regarding the death. However, none of this means anything to me nor the information about your brother that provided me. Could you take a look at this and see if anything holds any meaning to you?

[Rose motions to a small board. The boards 2 ‘important clues. The 1st clue is a shard of an ocean blue glass, as if one crystallized the ocean. Rose thought it could be from a bottle, but the coloration was too weird for a bottle. The final clue is a weird one in her eyes. It was an old painting done by a child but couldn’t tell what exactly it was. She unsure why, but those pieces stood out to her for some reason hence why she took them.]

Tom: Where did you find this? [ A mix of nostalgia and horror coat his once shy face]

Rose: You know what these are! Tell me, any information is good information. [Pure shock and desperation take over her face. She needs something to link the clues and it turns out her client is the cypher]

Tom: These are all items from our childhood home before our parents died. The first item is a shard from a window which my brother and I designed. The last one…is a birthday present I made for my brother.

[Tears begin to well up in his eyes but he wipes them away in determination]

Tom: I can show you there, it isn’t too far. It is actually a few blocks from here.

[Rose has a bad and unshakable feeling that didn’t sit right with her. Why were those 3 in the scene of the murder? Why did the police ignore these clues? Was this planted after the murder. Something was fishy in this whole case. The autopsy report she made vastly differed from the one that she ‘borrowed’ from the police. Supposedly no one has seen this person before his death. The police ‘concluded’ he has an accident at this factory. But why was he there? Why was the blood-splatter so little? Something nags in her head but she can’t tell what. Has her senses died down over the years? All she knows is, that home is the clue to all of this. Yet this all feels like a trap? This is way too convenient. Is the killer taunting her? This leaves her with two options, go to the house now].(For going to the house, go to scene 3. Otherwise go to scene 2.)

Scene 2

Rose: Something does not feel right, it’s almost as if the killer is taunting us. Tom let’s leave this till tomorrow. I need to gather my thoughts on this matter.

Tom: But Detective, we know the potential site of the murder. Why not go there now! We don’t know this is a trap! [The once timid kid was getting riled up. This is bad Rose thought, no good decisions can be made when one is emotional]

Rose: Listen to me kid, I get your ….

Tom: Get what! My only family just died! What happened to you will help me no matter what![He interjected her, growing more frustrated by the minute.]

Rose: I am. But what good would it be if we died. Calm down for a second and think. You find things from your childhood home conveniently lying at the ‘scene of the crime’. Don’t you think that’s strange. How could anyone but you know the meaning of these things.

[Realization slammed into Tom’s face upon hearing that. He took a few seconds to breathe and think rationally.]

Tom: You’re right detective. I think I may need a bit of time to comprehend things, I will head home.

Rose: That’s a smart move, I need to go see my fiancé about these matters as well. It doesn’t hurt to get a third opinion on things. See you tomorrow. Try not to do anything reckless till tomorrow.

Tom: You too detective.

[The two leave the shambled office 5 minutes apart and each head back to their respective homes. Upon entering her house, she is greeted by her fiancé. She begins to explain her day today alongside a fragrant floral tea prepped by her fiancé.]

Forrest: I think you made a good call there, it’s too convenient and dangerous. Knowing you however, you would’ve charged head on thinking you could have solved the case.

Rose: And you would have chased right behind me.

[The two share a hearty laugh with each other. They knew each other since they were kids and only recently did they get together. Not even their own parents knew them as well the other half did.]

Forrest: Oh Rose, about the other…

[Forrest is cut off by a doorbell.]

Forrest: Who would come by this late? Did you have any guests.

Rose: No? I don’t think so.

[Forrest goes to open the door while Rose remains seated. She has a horrible feeling something was to happen. Who would come by this late? Lost in her thoughts, Forrest returns holding a package. The parcel was addressed to the ‘esteemed detective Rose’. Several red flagged and alarms were blaring in her head.]

Forrest: Ominous right? I’ll open it.

[Upon opening the parcel, there’s a note on top of something. The note read, “You should have come detective. You failed to protect one before and now time repeats itself. Catch me if you can!]

Rose: What…What is this?

[Almost possessed, she reaches out for the note and takes it out of the parcel packaging, underneath the note lies an ornate, blood-red box. Hands trembling, she opens the box]

Rose: Gyaaaaaaaaaa!

[Letting out a glass shattering scream, she drops the box and out of the box rolls out the head of Tom, her former client with a note taped on his head saying “You should have come” in blood.]

Forrest: What’s wrong….Oh Dear God! Is that the client!

Rose: What…have…I ?

[Rose clearly shaken and tears flooding her ghostly face, Forrest rushes in and embraces her.]

Forrest: Don’t you dare finish that! That psychopathic killer did this. This was nothing like back then!

Rose: But, I could have done something…

Forrest: Like what?! What if you had died? I can’t and will not imagine a world without you. Look, hope may seem lost now, but never forget your motivation and goals are. The killer may seem out of reach, but they are human. They will make a mistake and when that happens, we will get them together. No one else will die.

--End of Scene 2--

Scene 3

Rose: Tom, I need to you take me there right now. However, once we get there, run away as fast as possible. This is too convenient so I can’t exactly guarantee your safety here.

[Before Tom could say anything, Rose interjects]

Rose: No buts! This is too dangerous and I can’t live with myself if you get hurt.

[Dejected Tom nods and proceeds to walk out the door with the detective in tow. About 5 minutes of walking in dead silence, they arrive at an abandoned house. The once lovely cerulean windows became a murky brown from the collecting dust. The roof looked to collapse any moment and Rose could almost hear bats screeched just to match the ominous almost haunted building in front of her. Her mind was screaming at her “Run” but her heart wouldn’t allow it.

Rose: Thank you Tom, I can handle it from here.

Tom: Are you sure I cant be any help?

Rose: I need you to look after the office. You are the only one I can count on. Go there and lock yourself in there. Do not open the door to anyone unless you hear the words “The seeds are planted”. Now go!

[Upon uttering those words, she walks into the house. To her surprise, she sees a woman, no younger than 40, sitting near what appeared to be a kitchen, sipping a boiling cup of tea.]

???: Hello Rose dear. Please sit down, we have much to discuss.

Rose: Who are you? What are you doing here?

???: That very killer you are looking for dear. As for what I am doing here, can’t a woman enjoy her own house? [She smiles like a child making their first wisecrack]

Rose: No way? Your Tom’s mother? Didn’t you die?

[ The woman shakes a finger at her and clicks her tongue]

Tom’s Mother: There was no body? How could a person be dead if no body was ever found for 10 years? Aren’t you supposed to be a detective? What do they teach you at school these days? I digress, I have come to you with an offer.

Rose: Why would I make a deal with a killer in a haunted house? I could call the police right now!

[ The woman laughs in response]

Tom’s mother: The police are under my thumb, if anything they would arrest you! Speaking of police, it is a shame that they are on their way to that quaint little office of yours due to a body being found there with some very ‘conclusive evidence’.

Rose: Body? Evidence? There is nothing… [Before she can finish, she realizes what she meant, her client is now her former client]

Rose: What did you do to your own damn son!

Toms Mother: A pawn who outlived his usefulness, now please detective. Take a seat.

[Rose grits her teeth, she fell into a trap alright, a pitfall trap filled with spikes and this woman has the only means of saving her. Upon that realization, she begrudgingly sits down]

Tom’s mother: That’s more like it! The deal is this. I want you to join our cause. We have been watching you for a while now and you are easily the best detective in this rotten city. It was unfortunate my sons had to die, but the eldest knew too much and the youngest was hot on his trail. I can make you the greatest detective this has city ever known, you never need to worry about anything and you will have the most powerful allies at your beck and call.

[She pulls up a bag of money and hoists it on the table]

Tom’s mother: A down payment upon joining.

[Rose can’t believe her eyes. There was so much money, and she needed all that. The office can no longer afford to remain open, especially one run by a former detective involved in a scandal. Rose was not even involved yet who would the people believe, her or the government. She desperately needs the money, yet in her very soul, she knows she can’t accept blood money.]

Tom’s mother: Your choice? There is not much time remaining you know. (For taking the money, go to scene 4. For refusing, go to scene 5)

Scene 4

Rose: Listen you hag, I will never accept blood money. Not on my pride as a detective nor as a PI. You go back to whatever grave you crawled out of and take a nice dive back to hell. I don’t think even hell would accept a mother killing their own child.

[Rose then proceeds to spit on the floor and turn around. She has little time and needs to return to the office before the police arrive]

Tom’s mother: Your making a big mistake here. You’ll never make it back in time.

Rose: Watch me!

[Rose begins to bolt back of the house. She runs to her office as if her life depends on it. Which it did.]

[Rose knows she can’t save her office but she can hopefully save its soul. Thank god her father had another secret place to work from. Her father may have disappeared mysteriously but he was still a big part of her life. She instantly knew that would have to be her new office and home. On the plus said, it was newly renovated and unused. He had her fiancé work on it and even had him set up various new things. Oh god, her fiancé! Just as about she was about to call him, she runs into him outside the office.]

Fiancé: Hello? Rose what’s going on?

Rose: Perfect, Forrest! Things took a turn for the worse and I need you to help me get everything out of the office ASAP! Ignore the dead body.

Forrest: Body? What exactly happened with the case!

Rose: I have no time to explain! Load everything you can into the car and head to the house we have been working on.

Forrest: Got it! But you better explain what the hell is going on.

Rose breathes a sigh of relief; fate was looking up on her. Curse that old hag, had she known this would have happened she would’ve waited to go into that cursed building. But know she has a new target, bigger than anything anyone could even think of. She finally found the perfect prey to play with.]

Scene 5

Rose: You aren’t giving me much of a choice here. I’ll take the damn money only because I need it.

Tom’s Mother: Perfect, I knew you were a smart person. As promised, I’ll call the police off. I’ll come see you tomorrow with your new tasks.

Rose: I never agreed to take on tasks!

Tom’s mother: How else will you become this city’s greatest detective? Either way, I have places I need to be. I look forward to our partnership.

[Tom’s Mother walks out the drop with what seems to be a spring in her step. A few minutes at staring at sin incarnate, she takes it and walk back to the office. Once she arrives, she stares at the door a few minutes and then walk in. She sees the body lying on the ground. He died painlessly it seems. Tears well up in the PI’s eyes].

Rose: Tom. I’m so sorry, I couldn’t protect you. I even took a payment to join your messed-up mother. I feel utterly horrible. [She knew he couldn’t hear her but it gives her the closure she needs]

Rose: Walking back here, I thought of a plan of vengeance. That crazed killer is coming tomorrow. This is case is bigger than we thought, so I figured out, what better way to catch our criminal that destroying them from the inside. The police, government everyone. I cant trust anyone other than my own fiancé. For now, I must mentally prepare myself for sin incarnate and not fall into temptation. Please, wish me luck kid. This is for you and your brother’s sake.

[This was a case for a lifetime, and she needed to be smart. She couldn’t catch Tom’s mother while being on the run. Being inside her corrupt system will help her immensely. She can maybe find out what happened to her father. Her head is now yelling at her to run away but she knows she need to do this. For everyone’s sake].