

THE CASE OF PROFESSOR RICHARD

‘**Jim**, check who’s outside?’

‘May be the paper boy. I hadn’t paid him his money for the last two months!’ said Jim closing his lowermost button of the shirt.

Crick rushed instantly to the window and gazed towards Jim, ‘Yeah, it’s him only.’

‘Say him that I am suffering from like- ‘

‘Hey boy...’ Crick clapped and cut short Jim, ‘look up, here’

A small boy with a cap of the company Jancover, dressed filthily, had transparency at various patches on the red knitted jacket. It seemed like he had been frustrated with his present job and wished to serve for another master. One fact to be noticed was that he had a pair of torn shoes which indicated that the cap which mimicked a crown was a stolen one. At present he looked up.

‘Sir? Eh...’

‘Come inside, hurry up’ shouted Crick.

Till now, realizing his future condition Jim had already locked himself in his room and was peeping from the gap of the closing door, it was as if he feared some alien invasion!

‘What’s your problem, son?’ asked Crick with utmost politeness.

‘Nothing, only if you would pay me just the requisite money I wouldn’t bother again’ replied the paper boy.

‘Where is that cap from- **Standstud** or **Faston**?’

Sir, Faston, from stall ...’

‘B-21, between 2 to 3, or some time near that’

‘But how do you know so much?’

‘Clearly it’s a case of theft, when the shopkeeper **Samson** had gone for his lunch, he had mistakenly left the back door open, you were observing his shop from noon and took a small risk to break into the shop and stealthily picked that cap from the second row and rushed out of the back door. Moreover, you have erased the label of Faston’ said Crick in a contiguous manner.

‘You really amaze me, sir!’

‘If you ask for money again then you would be fired from job’ threatened Crick.

‘Sorry sir, I would never again enact this type of behaviour. If you wish take this cap but please give me the money’ replied the paper boy.

‘Okay, don’t fear boy, what’s the money?’

‘Sir three dollars in total’

‘Take this’ and capturing his money the paper boy rushed out of the house.

Jim slowly came out of his hiding place and without making any foot noise quietly bolted the door.

‘I didn’t wanted to gaze upon the face of that wretched fellow!’ replied Jim looking at the visage of Crick and both burst into laughter.

Crick went into the kitchen and brought out two plates and laid them down on the table.

‘Are you going to serve today?’ asked Jim.

“Yeah... what? I mean no, never, I am not going to serve. I am just showing that I am starving a lot. Have you prepared the breakfast? Or shall we order from Casey?”

‘Casey... Oh! Casey. Poor fellow he prepares food for us but never demands remuneration’ sighed Jim.

‘For your kind information Mr. Jim Macpherson, I have paid him all the money he deserved. Only yesterday night, I crawled out, you know that new muffler you had bought from San Desmos, I had carried that. You were in deep slumber when I walked into your room and rest you should be able to deduce’ replied Crick with a sense of pride.

‘You had carried that! Say No!’

“Yeah dear, I had used that and had even sneezed in it thrice.”

‘You have sneezed...’ and Jim was again cut short.

‘If I remember correctly, once as I came out of the house and again when I was standing in front of Casey’s house and finally though deliberately, again when I returned inside the house. You know, the weather was too cold the last night’ replied Crick.

‘You have sneezed in that poor thing? Say yes and I will thrash your head’ threatened Jim.

‘But now it is safe inside your drawer...’

‘What!’ exclaimed Jim ‘You have again put that into my drawer? Oh god! I just can’t believe this’ and Jim fell flat upon his chair.

Before Crick can handle the state of affairs, the door bell rang and Mr. Robert entered.

He looked upon the chair and asked ‘What’s up Jim? Are you all right?’

‘Yeah... (Jim rose with a jolt) yeah, I am all correct’ and muttered something else looking at Mr. Robert as if all his acting proved to be in vain!

“Hey Crick! There is an important case in my hands; you know professor has gone...”

‘Where? To India? Oh, he should have asked me, I wanted to escort him’ sighed Crick.

“No forever, he has gone forever” stressed Mr. Robert.

‘Ha ha! You are joking. He had sent me a wire only day before yesterday about some chemicals’ said Crick.

“Yeah may be but definitely he is dead’ Mr. Robert stuck to his words.

‘I think you two are talking about different professors’ suggested Jim washing his face in the wash basin.

“I am saying about **Professor McLarry**’ pounced Crick with his words.

“No Crick, I am informing you about **Professor Richard**, of **The Erwin University**’ said Mr. Robert.

“Oh! I see. The chemistry professor, (Crick continued after a brief pause), excellent in his behaviour, a man of courage, had attempted to pipette hydrochloric acid (though it was a close shave)! He has excellent knowledge of his subject, and what more he is extremely principled. He had also tried to disprove one of the theories- The theory of internal combustion, I have never agreed with him on that. A fat bellied, pointed nose, sharp eyes, single and wished to remain as bachelor, loved to eat Chinese. Am I correct or not?’ Crick finally asked looking at the gaping mouth of Mr. Robert.

“Yeah you are correct but how do you know so much?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘I maintain a diary of persons who amuse me, but are not within my vicinity’ replied Crick.

“Yeah, whatever but he is dead’ said Mr. Robert

‘May be one of his courageous experiments’ mocked off Jim.

‘No I don’t think so’ said Mr. Robert.

‘Better you explain the matter’ said Crick and Jim came out with his notepad.

‘Only yesterday in the evening I came to know this shocking news. A phone call came from The Erwin University, more specifically I should say from a female. On the phone call itself I heard a few voices. One was rude and other was too submissive. May be that was between the **Principal, Mr. Traveroy** and **Mr. Walter**’ said Mr. Robert.

‘Who is this Mr. Walter and what is his work there?’ asked Crick.

“Oh, he is the security guard of Professor Richard. I at least know this much that while professor was killed; he was at the canteen, taking his lunch. Thus the professor was killed between 2pm to 3pm. When I arrived in the University the first glance I got was the scolding that Mr. Walter was receiving-

‘You nasty scoundrel, cannot you take care of such a personality? So careless, you went to eat lunch when he was in his room?’ asked Mr. Traveroy.

‘Sir, I was waiting outside, when my friend arrived from academics block and invited me for the lunch. I just couldn’t resist that temptation’ replied a submissive guard.

“Still, you are fired from this job’ shouted Mr. Traveroy.

‘Sir believe me, I would never happen to indulge in any such mistake in the future. Forgive me, please. I have over me the burden of three families. Fired from this job I would not be able to the stand up to their hopes. Please allow me to stay’ begged Mr. Walter.

But Mr. Traveroy was not a person to melt so easily.

‘You are fired and moreover if you realize that you have a great responsibility then you should have been a bit more heedful’ and saying this Mr. Traveroy rushed from the outer hall to the inner hall where I was waiting.’ said Mr. Robert

‘Mr. Walter seems to be a fellow of great interest. What about him? Could he be a potential suspect?’ asked Jim.

‘Nah! He was actually at the canteen. I have confirmed that already. He is of no use’ said Mr. Robert.

‘Okay you continue’ said Jim.

‘Yeah, after he came to me, he said that this incident is too a bad impression for the undergraduate students. They would feel insecure after this incident. Some may also go back to their homes. This is really devastating.

I agreed to him with a nod and asked him to take me straight to the room of professor.

We went through a path if I remember correctly comprised of C-block and two offices.

We entered a room, enough for a person to sleep and do his daily chores. May be this was because he spent most of his time in the laboratory. Oh I forgot to describe laboratory. I will do it later. The residence of professor was in seclusion from the other apartments and that was why he was provided with a security guard. While he slept in the afternoon, he kept the door open.’ said Mr. Robert.

‘Why was that?’ asked Crick.

‘May be that was because he wanted air. The room had two windows and in the afternoon, when it is the time to stop the sun rays coming through the windows the only source of freshness was door.

Further when I examined the body, I came to a standstill- no bullets, no knife, no blood nothing, only additional thing was that no respiration. As I kept my fingers near the nostrils, no air intake and no air output.’ said Mr. Robert

“Did you check his heartbeat?” asked Crick.

“I was barred from doing that” said Mr. Robert

‘And why was that?’ asked Crick.

‘They have some sort of rites. One who has died in the premises of University should not be touched. It makes the person, the person who has touched impure and the person loses some of his memory and intelligence too!’ said Mr. Robert

‘That’s quite funny!’ said Crick.

‘Leave that, let me continue. I forgot to tell you another one of funny facts there- I was just allowed a span of just five minutes to check the body. So it would be better if we all decide here what to check and it would be better if you two go one by one to check the body so that we can get a time period of ten minutes. Wouldn’t be that a good idea?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘Truly, but this case sounds an interesting one for me’ exclaimed Crick.

“I haven’t even described you the laboratory” said Mr. Robert.

‘Is there anything so special about that?’ asked Jim.

‘Yeah not much but still I want you two to listen to this part also. After that short visit of fifteen minutes with dead Professor Richard I wanted to have at least some time spent there. It was a question on my reputation. I hoped that there wouldn’t be any restriction to see the laboratory of the dead professor!’ and all those present there went into a laughter.

Mr. Robert then continued ‘I asked Mr. Traveroy to take me to the chemistry laboratory and he led me straight to the second floor of the chemistry block. The idea you would get from outside is that, like thousands of students are researching on chemistry, but inside you would find a couple of students on the sidewalks and a few inside the classroom and some in the canteen. All total there were nine students and after the death, I have come to know through telephone that after my departure, one more student has done his admission to the chemistry department.’

“I asked them further if they have told about the death of the professor and they replied affirmatively and they further added that he wanted his name to be enrolled in this university as per his father’s choice and the talk ended.’ Mr. Robert observed a smile that passed through the lips of Crick.

“What’s funny here?’ interrogated Mr. Robert.

‘Nothing, but this was quite a contradiction to the thought of Mr. Traveroy. See students are enrolling after the death of the professor!’ replied Crick.

‘Oh... where was I? Yes, in the laboratory. It is completely tiled. You know, the regular three by three arrangements, the design was like that. Each table was firmly footed to the floor and contained around twenty chemicals- some strong acids and bases were arranged on the lower row and weaker ones in the upper row. Rest of the chemicals required was kept separately in the corners. There were stands which had burettes, pipettes and a lot of test tubes along with conical flasks, measuring cylinders and a lot other apparatus. Each was from **Taskern Company**. Now as I have described you all what I had observed yesterday, I want your immediate acquaintance with the case and the university. So it would be better to come with me now to the Erwin University’ said Mr. Robert.

“Yeah’ said Crick ‘Jim you pack a few of the items for at least some days of stay’

‘What do you think that you cannot solve this case in a day?’ asked Mr. Robert becoming a bit impatient.

“May or may not. I want to be in the safe side’ replied Crick.

Few hours elapsed. It was observed that Crick, Jim and Mr. Robert were standing in front of the house and Crick was locking the door. Mr. Robert called for a cab and they headed straight to the railway station.

The three of them caught the train to **Ransford**, the place where The Erwin University was situated. Jim bought a newspaper and Crick bought some food items. Mr. Robert had already changed himself from his regular uniform in Crick’s house and seated himself next to the window. Crick adjusted himself opposite to Mr. Robert and Jim sat beside Crick showing him the excerpt from the newspaper that showed about the death of Professor Richard.

The compartment was nearly hollow with a few more young ladies seating towards the end of the compartment and some old people gossiping about the happenings in the Faston- about a theft in a house.

At this time a person holding black portmanteaux, wearing spectacles to improve his vision came to sit beside Mr. Robert. He was neatly dressed, completely shaven and had a pen in his upper pocket of Travels Company.

“Hey man’ said Crick ‘could I borrow the pen of yours to write a few words?’

‘Why, I see that you have yourself got one pen?’ asked the stranger.

‘I was in great dread of writing in the pens of Travels Company. I have heard that they are as smooth as one’s thought. Too efficient and write longer than any ordinary pen. But if you don’t wish to give that to me, it’s alright, I wouldn’t cry’ said Crick.

The person smiled and gave the pen to Crick.

‘Yeah, it’s true. It’s too smooth. Thank you very much’ and Crick handed back the pen.

‘Welcome. My name is **Shuckleforth**. Can you speak out yours please?’ asked Mr. Shuckleforth.

‘My name is **Lasker**. He is **Jackson** (pointing towards Jim) and the one you see in front of me is **Mac**. By the way where you are going at present?’ asked Crick hiding their identities.

“Oh, nice to meet all of you, I am going to Ransford.’ said Mr. Shuckleforth.

“We all are going there too. Any special work to complete there?’ asked Crick.

‘No I just wanted to see my in-laws’ replied Mr. Shuckleforth.

‘So have you read today’s newspaper?’ asked Crick.

‘Why... What is there today?’ asked Mr. Shuckleforth.

“I think that you have no idea. Only yesterday, Professor Richard of The Erwin University died. It is really...’ Jim was cut short.

“Repeat the name, please’ begged Mr. Shuckleforth.

‘Professor Richard’ replied Jim.

“What? Professor Richard? Oh dear’ and Mr. Shuckleforth sank deep into gloom.

‘Why, do you know him?’ asked Jim.

“Know him! He has taught me, he is my teacher...’ and Mr. Shuckleforth’s eyes were filled with water.

“Oh we are sorry, we didn’t know that’ replied Crick giving Mr. Shuckleforth some courage to behave in the situation.

‘That’s alright. You cannot do anything about it now. He is one of the finest teachers I have ever read from in my life. Be it any segment of chemistry, once you listen from him, you would find it very easy to understand and remember that particular concept. You know many students

complain about inorganic chemistry, that it is too difficult to memorize, but he had all of that bit by bit, and he taught us in such a manner that for me inorganic was too easy to memorize. You could realize how great he was!’ and Mr. Shuckleforth gave a pause.

‘Really, I feel that he was a great teacher. By the way, I want to ask you one thing – why the university has rules like yesterday when Mr. Robert approached the dead body of professor, he was just allowed for a span of mere fifteen minutes to observe and moreover he wasn’t even allowed to touch the body?’ asked Crick taking the opportunity.

‘How come you ordinary people came to know about this thing? Is that mentioned in the newspaper also?’ asked a surprised Mr. Shuckleforth.

“Why? Would any mishap occur if a lot of people come to know about that?” asked Crick. All this time Mr. Robert observed Mr. Shuckleforth from a close angle and had eyes of uncertainty about him.

‘No, nothing like that, but as far as I know, generally the University people prevent from exposing lot many things about their works, habits. Do you know about the history of the Erwin University?’ asked Mr. Shuckleforth.

‘No we don’t.’ replied Mr. Robert who till now sat quiet. Mr. Shuckleforth looked at him and gave an expression as if he was surprised to see him there.

‘Okay, let me tell that too. But before answer my question that how you came to know about this?’ asked Mr. Shuckleforth.

‘Mr. Robert is one of my friends. He is a brilliant cop of our area. Yesterday after returning from the university, he sent me a wire from Ransford. We are childhood friends and we share any funny incident we have. So, today I am just going to surprise him. We would stay over one of my friends there. But hopefully he doesn’t know that I am coming to Ransford today cause he is in Ransford himself!’ laughed Crick as he finished his answer.

‘That’s nice. So, now I would just speak out a few lines about the university’s history. It was like in some 1830s a person named **Erwin** led the peasants against the landlords. Those days were of great hardship for the poor peasants. They had to pay a heavy interest on the scanty loan they took from the landlords. There was unrest amongst the peasants. This person Erwin arrived in the scenario, if I remember correctly from my first history class at the university; we are bound to do that, to read the history of the university if we join in the first year. And I was a first year student. I had many friends, one of them, **Sachel**... Oh! You see I am diverting from the history. Aw! So

in 1834 this person Erwin arrived at Ransford, educated from London. He saw the situation of peasants, due to lack of education and led a great movement in Ransford which is still remembered today. It was a sheer failure, whenever he wanted to communicate; he found a great difficulty in that. So he built this university and started teaching few subjects alone himself, disregarding the threats of landlords. Then finally the history of how he challenged the landlords again in 1860 aged 46, and how smartly he defeated them in words and in arms also, and finally how he died in the university itself. It was here he asked his friends and followers to prevent anyone from seeing him otherwise they would lose all their memory. So now this has been adopted only with slight changes, by the university' and Mr. Shuckleforth stopped for some moment to inhale enough air.

"So I know this much about this habit of the university people' and he started taking out his portmanteaux.

'Have we reached?' asked Jim.

'No just half an hour more' and all the four people gazed outside the window to enjoy the lush greenery. But the train took about an hour to reach the desired location.

"Maybe, some problems in the engine' and Mr. Shuckleforth picked up his luggage. This he replied looking at the questioning faces of the other three.

The three persons came down from the rail and Mr. Robert was first to speak out.

'I think Jim should follow that person' and Jim on the other hand replied 'I have started his trail. He has taken a cab from the stand. I should hurry lest he would be out of my sights.'

'You two have become quite matured now- a-days.' replied Crick and both Mr., Robert and Crick went into laughter. They booked a cab to the Erwin University while Jim trailed Mr. Shuckleforth.

'He didn't even know about the time length of journey' said Mr. Robert.

'Further, there was no such person named Erwin and it was **Ardraq** who led that great movement. His father's name was Erwin and it was Ardraq who had built the university. But the story he said was marvelous, you can't find a hint of fault in that unless you really know the history' added Crick.

"I came to know about the game what you were playing with him from the very first movement of yours when you deceived him from our names. You Lasker, me Mac and Jim as Jackson. Beautiful names you invented!' said Mr. Robert.

‘Sorry, Mr. Robert, you are deceived again. From the very first movement, when I asked for that pen. What do you think I really wanted to write with that pen? No I just wanted to strike a conversation with him. Seeing that costly pen, I got my chance. I saw that his luggage was addressed to Ransford.’ replied Crick.

‘You are quite observant’ and a shriek came out from the mouth of Mr. Robert as he realized his head had bumped against the top of the vehicle.

Travelling along the dusty and rocky road for about half an hour they saw that the Erwin University stood there, in front of their eyes awaiting them.

And suddenly someone shouted from back.

“Hey Crick. Look back!”

‘Now what?’ Crick turned back slowly expecting none of the fuss making person.

“Jim? You... you were behind Mr. Shuckleforth, nah?” asked Crick becoming amazed at the presence of Jim.

‘Hey Jim! Nice to see you!’ said Mr. Robert.

‘You two should have followed me. I came through a short way. This Mr. Shuckleforth is no more’ said Jim.

‘You mean...?’ and Mr. Robert gazed at the face of Jim.

‘No... he is alive. I mean his name is **Sir Edward Gapon**’ replied Jim.

‘Oh, then he must be the new chemistry professor here. He doesn’t know anything about this university but to fool someone he has enough knowledge. Definitely he must have been sent by someone to fill the void created due to the premature death of Professor Richard’ said Crick ending in a high note.

“Yeah, definitely, you deduce things quite fast. He took straight a cab and I took another and followed him. His cab number was something like 3344. He went through the back of the station and in a short while we reached a rocky way. And in another ten minutes we were here. Then he must have been ordered by someone to do this, lest the normal path was as you took’ said Jim.

‘Jim, you are doing really nice job this time. One more thing is that he must have been asked not to disclose his identity and not to share his real work to any unknown person.’ said Crick.

‘He also went through the back door and further when the security there asked for name he said Sir Edward Gapon and rushed to his room. He searched the board of keys and in a span of few seconds he snatched one key and rushed to third floor’ said Jim.

‘If all this is true then I have some work with him now. What is his room number?’ asked Crick.

‘222, third floor’ replied Jim.

‘What do you wish to do with him? Ask who had sent him?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘That is my work to deduce. If possible I will try that. He is the only person who can allow me to have an entry into all provisions of this institution. Further you two have one work. Just remember your names. You are Mac (Crick said pointing to Jim) and you are Jackson (Crick said pointing to Mr. Robert)’ said Crick and started his movements towards the residential block.

‘But aren’t you muddling the things up? I mean a bit...?’ asked Jim.

‘Whatever I say just do that’ ordered Crick and both of them followed him to the third floor, room number 222.

“Sir Edward?” asked Crick knocking the door.

‘Who are you?’ asked Sir Edward, with his voice quivering.

“Somebody you know’ replied Crick.

‘The door is open!’ whispered Jim into Crick’s ear.

‘Very nice’ and Crick pushed the door open.

“You three...? What are you all doing here? How do you know my name? ’ asked Sir Edward.

‘You forgot...? You yourself had said me that you are Sir Edward Gapon. Further you said that as we were going to the Erwin University, then we can meet you there at this room’ said crick making his voice strong.

‘No that can’t be!’ exclaimed Sir Edward.

“Okay do you remember our names?’ asked Crick.

“Yeah, you are Lasker (pointing to Crick), you Mac (pointing to Mr. Robert), and he is Jackson (pointing to Jim)’ said Sir Edward.

‘I observe that you have too poor memory. How are going to teach these undergraduate students chemistry?’ asked Crick.

‘How come you know that I was going to teach chemistry?’ asked Sir Edward.

‘See Mac, he has even forgot that he had told us he was going to teach chemistry here and that too Organic chemistry! Okay now you two speak out your names to him’ said Crick.

“I am Jackson’ said Mr. Robert.

‘I am Mac’ said Jim.

‘Further could you describe our seats?’ asked Crick realizing he has got him.

‘Definitely, I remember that. You Mac was sitting beside me and I was sitting in front of Jackson’ said Sir Edward.

‘What a poor memory you have! I was sitting in front of you not Jackson’ said Crick.

‘No! It was not like that!’ shouted Sir Edward feeling extremely sorry about his memory.

‘Now would you say us who has sent you here? You had forgotten that to speak to us!’ said Crick.

‘I am defeated. But whoever asked me to do this job was a fat person. He had a mask on his face. He approached my house some three days ago evening and handed me a letter. Don’t ask for that letter cause I have left that in my house’ said Sir Edward trembling.

‘Don’t worry, but If you are going to teach these students, then I am definitely going to complain to Mr. Traveroy. I have the upper hand too. You have a short term memory and further Mr. Robert is my friend and presently here too inside the campus. So it would be better if you would assist me’ said Crick in a threatening voice.

‘But what about the students?’ asked Sir Edward.

‘Don’t worry I will be managing that too. You have to do one work. You have to be the assistant of this person (pointing towards Mr. Robert). You have to guard one house that we are going to show you.’ said Crick ending his well devised plan.

‘Okay, but what to do?’ asked Sir Edward.

‘You become ready, we are standing outside’ said Crick and the three of them came out of the room.

‘Nice play Crick!’ and Mr. Robert patted Crick.

‘But how come do you know that he was going to teach organic?’ asked Jim.

‘He had kept organic book outside, of **Roquefort Publications**, a famous book for undergraduate students. You should observe these minute things. It is interesting that Sir Edward received the letter three days ago!’ said Crick.

‘Yeah, I see’ said Mr. Robert.

‘You have not brought John this time with us?’ asked Jim.

‘I have sent him for that Faston robbery case’ said Crick.

‘Would he accomplish that?’ asked Jim.

‘He begged me for that case and I simply gave him’ said Crick and with a brief pause continued ‘Now, see I am Sir Edward Gapon and this is my assistant, Mac (pointing towards Jim). You are...’ and Crick was cut short.

‘I am Mr. Robert and don’t change my name. People know me here and you shouldn’t change your name, you would be caught easily.’ said Mr. Robert.

‘I have my expert hands to change me and Jim. You just worry about this original one. Let us name him...’ and Crick was again interrupted.

‘Rupert. **Mr. Rupert.** I will manage all about him. The fear of Mr. Traveroy would keep him under my clutches.’ said Mr. Robert.

With the lapse of a few minutes, the original Sir Edward Gapon came outside.

‘Now listen here, sir, don’t create any fuss near Mr. Traveroy. Don’t argue, you will receive what you deserve’ said Crick in a threatening voice.

‘You are Mr. Rupert assistant of this person (pointing towards Mr. Robert) who is under Mr. Robert’s control. I am Sir Edward Gapon and this is Mac (pointing towards Jim). Now, you have to meet us at three in the afternoon, presently it is two, so you can rest for one hour. But if we find your absence at the lobby of this building at three, then you would be fired from here and your death would be soon’ ended Crick in a devilish voice.

With this short interview the three came out from the building and Crick and Jim went to their guest house already booked by Mr. Robert.

‘I can never imagine that you could be so devilish. But now what?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘You wait outside, and see us being transformed in a span of twenty minutes’ said Crick.

Mr. Robert waited outside.

It was a cloudy atmosphere, a typical countryside one. Neither too hot, nor too cold. Birds were chirping in unison. They were resting on a tree, just twenty feet away. Some peasants were returning from their farm work. Really it was a contrast whose foundation was laid by Ardraq!

Along with all these soothing sounds there was one additional one, the voice of people inside the guest house.

‘Bring that wig, Jim’ shouted Crick.

‘Where? I couldn’t find it’ replied Jim.

‘Check in the bag that was mine. Third chain from the back. Bring fast, this glue is going to dry’ again shouted Crick.

Mr. Robert outside just couldn’t control his smiles and was smiling constantly which was interrupted by a sound from behind.

‘Could I know, if the new professor has come or not?’ asked the voice.

‘Eh? Why? Who are you?’ asked Mr. Robert turning back.

‘Oh! I am Sanders. A student extremely grieved at the death of professor and interruption of the studies. I hope soon that a new professor arrives’ sighed Sanders.

‘But why are you asking me?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘Cause, Mr. Traveroy said us that you are Mr. Robert and you had gone yesterday to bring someone who could demolish our pains of departure of professor’ said Sanders.

‘You mean a professor?’ said Mr. Robert thinking happily that at least he was true that people know him here.

‘No some detective’ said Sanders.

‘Sorry lad, but I have got a new professor. Are you happy?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘Yeah! But where?’ asked Sanders.

‘Inside this guest house’ said Mr. Robert.

Sanders came close to the door and made his ears close to the door and then exclaimed ‘Is new professor a lady?’

‘Nah! Why are you asking this?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘You hear yourself...’ said Sanders

‘Give me the facial cream’ the sound came from inside.

‘Oh that’s nothing you just go back to your room, son. When you would see him you will be astonished!’ said Mr. Robert and Sanders bidding a good bye returned towards his own way and Mr. Robert sighed a relief.

After a lapse of few minutes, the door of the guest house opened and came forth Crick and Jim.

‘Whoa! Really I have never seen evolution taking place so rapid. Is this an example of saltation?’ asked Mr. Robert in a mocking manner.

‘You may accept that too, but now could I be distinguished by Mr. Traveroy?’ asked Crick.

‘Even John can’t identify you, Mr. Traveroy is a far cry!’ said Mr. Robert.

‘Shall we move to lobby?’ asked Jim.

‘Why not? Let’s move on’ said Mr. Robert.

‘On the way to library, Mr. Robert described the meeting of him with Sanders.

‘You know, really that chap was looking extremely sorry. I wish poor professor shouldn’t have died’ said Mr. Robert in a sad tone.

At about five minutes to three, they reached the designated place. They saw Sir Edward Gapon was waiting for them.

‘Come on, we have to meet Mr. Traveroy’ said Crick.

‘Who are you two now?’ asked Sir Edward.

‘I am Sir Edward Gapon and this is Mac. You really do have a poor memory!’ commented Crick.

‘God what more have I to see here!’ exclaimed Sir Edward.

‘Okay Mr. Rupert, follow us’ ordered Crick.

A short walk took all the four characters to principal’s chamber.

‘Can we come in?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘Yeah sure’ replied Mr. Traveroy.

‘Sir let me...’ and Mr. Robert was interrupted.

‘Who is the detective and who is the new professor?’ enquired Mr. Traveroy.

‘Sir, he is the new chemistry professor, one of the renowned students of his time and has taught some brilliant students. He is none other Sir Edward Gapon (and Mr. Robert pointed towards Crick and Crick smiled).’

‘But who are the other two fellows standing beside you?’ asked Mr. Traveroy.

‘Sir, this is **Mac, assistant of Sir Edward Gapon**. He prefers to have his classes with one of his assistants. And this is one guard I have brought, he is Mr. Rupert.’ said Mr. Robert.

‘Oh I see! But what is the need of this guard?’ enquired Mr. Traveroy.

‘I have carried him all the way from my station to here only on the request of Crick. You know him sir?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘Yeah, Crick I have heard his name. If I am able to remember correctly, he is the one who had solved that cannibal case?’ enquired Mr. Traveroy.

‘Yeah you are damn correct!’ exclaimed Crick feeling proud at two instances- namely he is renowned here and also he is able to pose as an imposter.

‘But haven’t you brought him here?’ enquired Mr. Traveroy.

‘He is busy in some Faston case, he would be coming here in a day or two’ said Mr. Robert.

‘But how shall I check the validity of this new professor?’ enquired Mr. Traveroy.

‘You can leave this to the students. Allow me begin their classes from tomorrow only’ begged Crick.

Mr. Traveroy granted permission to Crick and all the four people came out of the chamber.

‘You know, if I would be dragged into such unfair means...’ said Mr. Rupert (I shall from now on refer Sir Edward as Mr. Rupert) looked towards Crick with red eyes ‘then I will turn the table against all of you. You an imposter’ and Mr. Rupert lost his control.

‘What can you do to me? You know, there is a big pond some one mile away from here, and if I dump your carcass there not a single soul would be able to know the truth of your disappearance’ threatened Crick.

‘But do you know anything of Chemistry? You silly common fellow’ argued Mr. Rupert.

‘You observe one of my classes with the students; if I don’t satisfy the students then I will remove myself as an imposter’ and Crick gave his word to Mr. Rupert.

The regular class was scheduled to be at nine in the morning, so Crick had to wait till the next day to show his prowess in teaching.

The next day, early in the morning Crick opened one of his chemistry books which he had read during his college times. He directly opened the chapter- ‘Nucleophilic Reactions’.

‘You know Jim; those old days were really very bad days. Those few days before the annual exam of the second year, one girl you know **Catherine**- she came directly to me...’ Crick paused for a moment and looked at the face of Jim ‘Are you listening me or not?’

‘Yes attentive. She came to you and then what?’ asked Jim.

‘Yeah I was coming down from the second floor talking with **Harrison** carrying this book. Whenever I open this book I remember the letter she had given to me. She was standing at the first floor looking fidgety. As soon as I passed she at first whispered my name. I just ignored her. She next called me at an audible pitch. I looked back she said nothing and handed me this letter.’

‘So this is the tale behind this letter’ said Jim holding the letter between his index and middle finger.

‘Don’t disturb me Jim. In college if a boy receives a letter from a girl, especially a student like me who had only a narrow spectrum of friends, then you know what consequences he has to face’ said Crick and took a deep breath.

‘Oh that’s why you are called ‘Catherine’s letter’ by Harrison?’ enquired Jim.

‘Yeah true, but forget that, I tried a lot to make him understand, that it was not what he thought, and when one day, I forced him to my room and made him read this letter, he solemnly ever called me by that name! So now I would allow you to read this letter to me Jim. I bet that you would laugh a lot’ said Crick and Jim slowly opened the letter. The envelope was quite dusty, and as Jim opened it, he started clapping his hands to remove dust particles.

The letter ran-

Mr. Christopher Crick, (Jim chuckles)

I am extremely sorry to disturb you. You know I am extremely poor at studies, even Harrison is ahead of me (Jim again chuckles, cause after Crick, Jim and Harrison, she was fourth in the first year result). I never had enough courage to talk to him. Could you make out that for me? Please reply soon.

Catherine

(A struggling second year student)

And Jim went out into a laughter riot.

‘You see her designation and my specification! Mr. Christopher Crick, that’s too funny’ said Crick.

‘Yeah then I don’t understand the meaning of it- what is then the meaning of giving this to you?’ said Jim as he went again into a laugh.

‘Even I had that question. But let me clear one thing that she stood first in the second year’ said Crick.

‘I remember that and this had such an impact on you that in the third and final year you came first and she third consecutively. I as usual was second in both. Now could you answer my question?’ asked Jim.

‘Yes definitely. One day before the commencement of the annual exam I called her to café, and she soon agreed. I had somehow even managed Harrison to bring with me. I took him to café and asked him to reserve one table and waited outside for Catherine. As soon as she arrived I

escorted her to one table far from sight of Harrison and I straight asked her, though feeling uneasy for being spending time with her that too at a café!’

‘She said with a smile that she would answer this question after fourth year at college would be over. I didn’t like asking her this again. I straight stood up and asked her to follow me. She came trailing behind me and I took her to the reserved table. Harrison was amazed that I could even go to this extent and Catherine thanked a lot for doing his job. I simply replied that I could not concentrate much with a burden on my back and left them at the café. You know the rest. Harrison came fifth and she first and afterwards both never talked to each other!’ said Crick.

‘But then why you came second even if you had done your work?’ asked Jim

‘Simply, because she hadn’t answered my question. I again took her up to that café during the early days of the third year. She again agreed. I asked her the answer of my question and she refused. I kept wandering around her like a pest that soon led me to my answer. She frustrated said, ‘the first line you read of the letter, I was too thoughtful of mentioning that’ and laughed at me and Harrison for making us such fools. I barked at her for playing such a nasty trick and I came back and consoled Harrison. And you the midterm results, Harrison came third and she fourth, **Bill** was fifth’ said Crick and again opened the chapter and went on revising going into solitude.

The clock struck half past seven. Crick closed his book and stood up apparently rising from a struggle of neurons.

“Jim you should have studied a bit of the chapter’ said Crick.

‘It is not me who is posing as a teacher. I am your assistant and would assist you only’ replied Jim and opened the door of their guest house.

“What for do you think you are my assistant. Sit and listen to me. No! You have to study the faces of students, know them closely and further help me to erase the board, and all those works’ said Crick.

“What? I am like your helper?’ sighed Jim.

“Some sort of’ said Crick and started going out of his house. A short walk of ten minutes took both of them to the lobby. They saw someone familiar.

‘Good morning, Mr. Traveroy’ said Jim.

“Good morning! Did you sleep well the last night?’ asked Mr. Traveroy.

“Yeah we had nice time sleeping in those beds. New ones, I hope?” asked Crick.

“Well Mr. Edward, not completely new, but they were from the shop of **Hudson**, one of the finest quilts available here in Ransford. Once you delve into the depth of softness you would want never to rise up from that again” remarked Mr. Traveroy.

“Yeah, those were nice ones. Where is the class?” asked Crick.

“Don’t worry about that. There would be a breakfast at 8 and your introduction. The class today would be at 10 sharp” replied Mr. Traveroy.

“What do you mean? Two hours for my introduction? I am not a movie, I am a teacher. Fifteen minutes is more than enough for the introduction” exclaimed Crick.

“Calm down Mr. Edward. Relax. Beginning with, there would be your welcome ceremony, followed by your introduction and your colleagues. Students if they wish could ask you some questions; even you could talk to them. The breakfast would begin after your introduction is over. The classes would begin at 10. Also you would find your friend Mr. Robert.” Mr. Traveroy asked them to follow him, observing that Sir Edward was seemingly satisfied with his reply.

The banquet hall was at third floor. The walk was dreary and silent. Only the footfalls were audible. Presently they reached the banquet and it was 7.50 a.m.

Crick searched the hall thoroughly. There were students, some well qualified professors and in between all he could identify two persons- Mr. Robert and Mr. Rupert. Mr. Rupert was as usual unhappy. Crick approached Mr. Robert and spoke “What is this fuss?”

“Nothing, only your identification ceremony” said Mr. Robert.

“You hadn’t told me about this” replied Crick.

“I came to know today only” said Mr. Robert.

It was apparent that till now Mr. Rupert was unaware of true identity of Mr. Robert. But soon that was too disclosed.

“Ok Sir Edward” came the sound from Mr. Rupert “looking smart. Believe me this session would be the worst of all your life. You know one thing I am the brother-in-law of **Mr. Kotare**. You know, the mayor of the city **Waltford**. I have even informed to him what is going on here from yesterday. Beware my friend!” and Mr. Rupert patted him in his back and went near the food.

“Sir Edward Gapon, please come to the stage. I request Mr. Robert to escort him” an announcement was made from the stage. It was Mr. Traveroy on the stage.

Crick, with an unwilling smile on his face came to the stage and held the microphone and began- 'Good morning all. I am Sir Edward Gapon, PhD in Organic Chemistry from this University itself. Previously I was working at The Institute of Chemical Sciences, Walford. Now due to untimely death of your honorable teacher, Professor Richard, I was called upon by Mr. Robert (till this Mr. Rupert was able to identify the real Mr. Robert and was reddening with anger) only yesterday and I had to escort him.

And now let me introduce my assistant, Mac, who is not only an assistant but is also highly intelligent and has a vast experience of fifteen years of laboratory and field work.

I hope we would all be having a nice time here during my stay' and Crick receded and handed the microphone to Mr. Traveroy.

'Nice speech, fake Edward' murmured Mr. Rupert.

'Eh!? Did you spoke something?' asked one of the professors standing near Mr. Rupert.

'No. Absolutely nothing at all' exclaimed Mr. Rupert.

'Okay fine' said the professor, adjusting his spectacles 'I am Dr. Albert Horton, Head of Mathematics Department. And may I know who you are? You look unfamiliar to me.'

'Ah! I am Mr. Rupert, assistant of Mr. Robert, and I can well argue that there does not exist a person more unfortunate than me here' said Mr. Rupert and walked away from that place. Dr. Albert was left amazed at such an answer and then gazed towards the stage.

'Well Sir Edward, I Mr. Traveroy, the principal of this University welcomes you for a pleasant and healthy stay' and the words were followed by a loud applause.

Mr. Traveroy brought Crick down the stage and said 'Now let me introduce the head of the Professor Albert Horton, Head of Mathematics Department (he pointed towards a fellow who had a pointed nose, grayish hair, copious and flexible visage and with a plate full of food items. He had red spectacles over his face and looked around fifty or so. While he was pointed he adjusted his glasses and gave an official smile and began munching his food).

Now he is Professor Emanuel Watcher, Head of Physics Department (Professor was busy in completing his breakfast while he was introduced. He too was spectacled and a bit aged, around fifty and five. He had a nose of cylindrical protrusion and a wrinkled face which lacked the energy.

Now you know, Professor Richard was Head of Chemistry Department, so at present there is nobody to substitute his place. But if you are accepted by the students, then you are bound to accept that position.’ With this Mr. Traveroy took Crick near the students and left him there.

‘Good morning sir. I am Sanders, an undergraduate chemistry student. Let me introduce you to my friends (and he pointed them) - this is Alfred, he is Stuart, he is Dennis, he is Michael, who came first in the mid-term examination, Ralph and he is unknown; and took a deep breath.

‘Well nice meeting all of you. But that fellow- has he no name?’ asked Crick.

‘Sir, he only joined yesterday’ replied Stuart. Crick gave them blessings and went near the one who was named unknown.

‘So you joined yesterday’ asked Crick.

‘I am Thomas. Pleasure meeting you sir’ replied Thomas.

‘Well I want to ask you one question- Is the class strength only seven?’ asked Crick.

‘Sir, there are four girls. Sir they are standing there. Ruby, Joanne, Clare and Elsie’ replied Thomas pointing to the table which was set in the corner.

‘Oh! Too interested in girls?’ asked Crick and smiled.

‘No sir, I just wanted to know the names of my friends and their positions. Last night I got this information from Mr. Traveroy only’ replied Thomas.

‘Why don’t you join your friends?’

‘Sir I was just going’ replied Thomas and moved towards the table where the boys were having there breakfast.

This new student within a span of few minutes had gathered the attention of all his friends in the table.

Crick started walking towards the table where the four girls were taking their food.

‘Well, Good morning!’ said Crick in an official manner.

‘Good morning sir’ replied Ruby, a young energetic and ever smiling girl. She introduced her friends to Crick.

‘It is nice meeting all of you here; let’s meet today in the classes and Crick walked away towards Jim.

‘Jim, everything is set, the game has begun’ said Crick softly.

‘What?’ said Jim who nearly dropped the soup bowl he was holding.

‘Ah! Nothing’ and Crick walked away from everyone’s notice.

‘The classes began as usual. The class was one and half hour long. The class was having four by four arrays, thus leaving a total of five seats empty. The class was interesting and even Mr. Rupert was satisfied with it. I observed nothing unusual about the behavior of students. The girls preferred their own companion and boys also the same. Thomas was left alone and had occupied the first bench’ ended Jim after the class was over.

‘Well that was a nice summary of my first class. Jim I hope you should still improve yourself. You have not noted about the pairs of opposite gender who were attracted to each other. Thomas being new was not much miscible. Ruby has definitely a crush over Sanders and Clare on Michael. You must be aware of these matters also’ replied Crick.

‘What the hell necessity is there of noting who has a crush on whom? And by the way how did you know the pairings? I had observed no such sign during the class hours’ asked Jim.

‘Well, if you are given the work to observe the students you must observe them in a befitting manner. I followed them to the canteen and observed their behavior, simple, isn’t it?’ replied Crick ‘further it might be necessary if you wish to trap a student for doing your work.’

Mr. Rupert came panting and said with a heavy smile on his face ‘I am really impressed from your teaching methods. I have even asked Mr. Kotare not to interfere here’

‘Well that’s too nice of you Mr. Rupert’ replied Crick in a subtle manner.

‘Don’t worry; you would be having full support from my side. Why didn’t you applied for the post of a professor?’ asked Mr. Rupert.

‘Well I had applied for, but destiny had something from me. If you wish to be a great help for me, then please guard the house of dead professor. Whenever you feel anything uneasy just report it to me or Mr. Robert’ replied Crick and walked away, shaking hands with Mr. Rupert.

Well till evening nothing happened. In the night Jim observed Crick moving covertly out of their common room and slowly closing the door. Jim also started following him. Crick walked up the stairs to the roof top of student’s residence. He wasn’t having any foot wear, thus securing him of making any noise. Jim followed at a close angle. As soon as Crick was passing through the second floor, he abruptly turned back and ran towards the first floor, and as soon as entered the

room of Alfred, the light flashed and Jim heard a large shriek. Curiosity grew upon him and slowly moved towards the room.

He was just able to protect himself from shrieking, Alfred was dead, stabbed right in the middle of chest with a dagger and Crick bent upon the dead was near the dagger. Crick was sweating and Jim instantly turned back and moved swiftly towards his room, brought out his notebook and penned in brief whatever important happened. He even concluded that Crick had gone to second floor to check if anyone was awake or not. He also noted the specifications of dagger – brown handle and black rear bolster. He threw his notes into bag and kept his eyes half open to observe the behaviour of Crick. Crick entered the room in haste and looked for a bottle of water and approached Jim directly but stopped near him. He turned back bolted the door and covered himself with the bed sheet and delved into slumber.

The next morning, Crick and Jim found a large mob outside the room of Alfred. Students were gossiping that the shout they heard could be this only. Both Mr. Robert and Mr. Rupert were present. Crick directly went near Mr. Rupert and asked if anyone had entered or came out of the dead professor's room but got a negative answer.

‘I know everything lies in that hell room’ murmured Crick.

‘What explanation do you have for this, Mr. Robert?’ asked Mr. Traveroy in angry tone.

‘Sir...’ and Mr. Robert was interrupted.

‘Let me check the details here’ Crick came forward and asked Mr. Robert.

‘Definitely, you can check the body but only five minutes are allowed, remember five minutes’ said Mr. Robert.

‘How could a chemistry professor check these things? Where is Crick?’ thundered Mr. Traveroy barring Crick from entering the room.

‘Sir Edward had helped Crick in solving his first few cases, definitely he could be of help’ begged Mr. Robert and came back to meet Jim. Mr. Traveroy allowed Crick to have a look at the body.

‘Crick is too cunning, you don't know’ said Jim ‘I am damn sure that he has done this and now he is planning for the covering all the incidents. He has prepared himself for this. I followed him

yesterday night and when I peeped into the room of Alfred, crick was holding the dagger himself

‘Eh?! What are you talking? How could I believe you?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘Now see, I haven’t seen the dead body, but I could give you the description of all the details present in the death spot.’ Jim went on to explain all the observation of the night before and Mr. Robert was just gaping at the details.

He took Jim away from that spot and ordered ‘you have to do one work, you observe him. I will synthesize everything and if anything happens, just call me out.’

‘Five minutes over sir, please come out’ ordered Mr. Traveroy.

‘Any notable observations?’ asked Mr. Traveroy.

‘Nah! Nothing notable, only one thing is sure that this is a well planned activity. I will definitely look into the matter after the class hours’ replied Crick and moved away into the balcony.

‘Saw that, Crick had always came with an answer after first investigation, this time he is just covering up’ said Jim ‘you just go and talk to him. Don’t give him any hint lest he would become more secure in covering it up.’

‘Morning, Sir Edward’ wished Mr. Robert

‘Morning, Mr. Robert, well whatever has happened...’ and Crick was cut short ‘Just tell me Crick how could it be that you couldn’t make out anything from your first look’ asked Mr. Robert suppressing his fears which had generated a few moments ago.

‘I just didn’t wish to disclose to Mr. Traveroy. I had observed two important things’ replied Crick restoring faith in Mr. Robert.

‘What are those?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘First the killer had done his work in haste’ said Crick.

‘How is that?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘Well the dagger was inserted obliquely as if someone had sprouted from the ground and stabbed and went away. I am definite it is that way. But my second observation is that the ground is

completely plain and it is also too difficult to push a concrete thick layer of five centimeters' replied Crick.

'Well then?' asked Mr. Robert.

'I feel this is going to happen again and I believe you must be alert in the night and look for possible danger' replied Crick and went away from balcony. Mr. Robert moved back and discussed with Jim the further steps and both of them concluded to follow Crick that night too if they get an opportunity.

After the class Jim noted that Crick instead of coming to the rooms, went to the student's residence and talked with few of them. He even checked the rooms and returned completely drenched and sighed in front of Jim.

'Why planning something for tonight?' asked Jim.

'Yeah! Tonight is going to... Why? What is it with you? I am steering in a particular direction and I hope to explain all of these after the case is solved' replied Crick.

Jim was now full of suspicion and rushed immediately to Mr. Robert.

'You know, he had said to me word like 'game's afoot' and also followed the behaviour of students. Today instead of coming to room he went to student's residence' said Jim.

'I hope today I am going to get a better picture of what's happening at this university' said Mr. Robert and both waited for the night to come.

After the dinner, Crick came back to his room and drank a glass of water and waited for the clock to strike one in the night. Jim followed Crick and met Mr. Robert in the path. Crick as happened the night before started climbing the stairs of student's hostel and this time waited at the first floor itself. Both the followers also waited at the beginning of the steps.

After about half an hour of wait, Crick abruptly stood up and started moving towards Ralph's room and as soon as he clicked the light, both Jim and Mr. Robert heard the shriek and rushed towards Ralph's room. They saw Crick was not even there and searched the whole room but they found the dead body of Ralph stuck with a same dagger and in the same manner.

'Well, I doubted you two' said Crick standing at the door of the room.

Both Jim and Mr. Robert sprung back and were perspiring at a heavy rate.

'We thought it was Mr. Traveroy, you make nice voice copies' exclaimed Mr. Robert.

‘I could never believe that you two doubted me’ gasped Crick ‘well this stinks.’

‘No I was just ...’ said Mr. Robert.

‘Just what? Just confirming the suspicion of Jim? Huh? Nice friends I have who doubt me!’ exclaimed Crick and moved away from that spot leaving both of them feeling guilty for their act. The next day an exact identical scenario of the previous day was found at the door of Ralph. He was brutally stabbed at the centre of chest in a similar fashion. This time Mr. Traveroy was more furious than the incidents of the previous day.

‘Now what? What explanation do you have?’ asked Mr. Traveroy in a furious tone.

‘Sir, I am looking into the matter, this time the second murder was just unexpected me. I had no idea about this. I have consulted with Crick and he had assured me to reach here within two days’ replied Mr. Robert becoming submissive.

‘This means I have to wind up the case within two days’ murmured Crick.

‘What do you mean?’ said Mr. Traveroy.

‘I hope to solve this case before Crick arrives’ replied Crick.

‘Well, I am unsure of that’ replied Mr. Traveroy ‘but still you can take a look into the matter.’

Crick went into the room and checked the floor.

‘Again a similar structure in the ground, someone definitely has made a tunnel underneath to various rooms to facilitate this’ said Crick as he came out of the room.

‘Well there are many underneath tunnel already in the infrastructure of the university. This is a building prepared in 1858 and in those days rather than studies it was used to hide arms inside the university’ replied Mr. Robert.

‘Hey, why had you hid this from me? I think the case is solved’ exclaimed Crick, though audible to Mr. Robert only.

‘What?’ uttered Mr. Robert.

‘Just wait tonight; I assure you there wouldn’t be any death. Tomorrow, I would definitely put the culprit in front of you’ said Crick and headed downstairs.

‘Is it a student? Is it Thomas? He is too secluded, I mean...’ and Mr. Robert was cut short.

‘If I tell you, it would be a hard time for you to believing it’ said Crick and walked away from the first floor.

Crick called Jim, Mr. Robert and Mr. Rupert in the evening near the residence of Professor Richard. The atmosphere was growing dark as if someone was covering it with a dark blanket.

The wind was blowing heavily, making it difficult for the birds returning to their home against the drag.

‘What happened now?’ asked Mr. Rupert.

‘I feel that you doze off after midnight’ said Crick and gazed upon the face of Mr. Rupert.

‘How could you guess that? You draw conclusions too fast’ replied Mr. Rupert

‘Because, the students were dead after midnight’ said Crick.

‘What is the hell connection betwixt these events?’ asked Mr. Rupert gaining certain magnitude of momentum in the speech making it difficult to listen properly.

‘Well that would be clear if we all take a whole night duty tonight’ said Crick. Looking at the silence he continued ‘well I am going to bring some radio and speakers.’

‘Then please bring some of my insomnia tablets’ said Jim and went near the wash-basin to wash his face.

‘Why, speakers aren’t enough for you? Definitely they are more than enough for the dead to arise’ mocked Crick and went outside the house.

He stealthily walked to lobby and talked to a person covered with dark coats and a muffler, hiding his identity.

‘Everything is set. Prepare yourself for tomorrow night. If today it would have been possible, then I would have got him. Still tomorrow, I can assure you of no loss of lives’ said Crick in a grave tone.

‘You are talking as if I am Mr. Traveroy!’ said the person and walked away.

‘Hello friends! This is **Greg** here, your partner till the midnight. No snoring! No sleeping!’ the sound came from the speakers attached to the radio.

‘Hey, that’s Greg for tonight. Get ready, we are gonna have a sense of euphoria! I sound like Greg!’ exclaimed Crick.

‘Whatever, I am now certain that till midnight I wouldn’t be able to sleep’ said Jim feeling a bit drowsy.

‘Midnight?!’ exclaimed Crick ‘I convince you if I remain here, then definitely you would regret in the morning – Oh god! Why didn’t I doze off yesterday noon?’ mocked Crick.

(THE RAIDO STARTED PLAYING – “THE COWBOY”)

‘Hey Cowboy’s there!’ exclaimed Crick

‘Hey Cowboy’s there!’ joined Mr. Rupert

‘Hey Cowboy’s there!’ chorused Mr. Robert

Jim took a deep breath.

‘Join us Jim’ begged Mr. Robert

‘Jim? Who is Jim?’ asked a surprised Mr. Rupert

‘I...I... call everyone close to me fondly ‘Jim’ and Mr. Robert and took a breath of relief.

‘Cheer up Mac’ pounced Crick.

‘We are there in the countryside, countryside, countryside’ chorused all except Jim.

Morning arrived and amazingly, Jim was the only one who was there energized to the tunes of the speaker. Others were either asleep or near asleep. Quite reversal of the scenes!

‘Wake up guys! Its morning’ shouted Jim.

‘Whoa! Morning’ said Mr. Robert.

Others woke up and yawned.

‘I am amazed that you are asleep, Sir Edward’ ridiculed Jim.

‘Yeah, whatever I am confident that there is no death of student for sure’ said Crick and walked out of the room.

‘He was looking a bit apprehensive’ said Mr. Rupert.

Truly there had been no death of students that day. Jim observed Crick to be a bit preoccupied the whole day, while Mr. Robert was busy comforting Mr. Traveroy.

‘I hope no death further’ shouted Mr. Traveroy.

‘Truly sir, tomorrow morning also Crick would arrive. Definitely, no one would be harmed’ comforted Mr. Robert.

‘Well see, I hope, you are set for tonight’ asked Crick in an undertone.

‘Yeah perfectly prepared. Tonight, Dennis would not die for sure’ said the person and moved away from the spot.

Midnight arrived, Jim and Mr. Robert moved out of their respective places behind the registration desk, and as usual Mr. Rupert was asleep.

‘Why the heck are we hiding behind the registration desk?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘You don’t seem to know the importance of it. Anyone wishing to enter the university should pass through the registration desk’ proudly spoke Jim.

‘You mean someone would stroll through here in the midnight? Huh, he is a murderer not a wanderer!’ laughed Mr. Robert and continued ‘your hypothesis is a flaw due to two reasons.’

‘And what are they?’ asked Jim.

‘First, the victim would be a student and hence the culprit would unquestionably not enter through this passage. And secondly, the culprit enters and exits through the tunnel inside the university structure, not through halls and blocks’ whispered Mr. Robert.

‘Yeah, how couldn’t I think of that?’ Jim felt disappointed.

‘Now follow me’ and slowly both of them walked towards the student’s hostel.

Half an hour elapsed and not a single whisper was heard. But all of a sudden, from nowhere, under the moonlit night, a large shout came- ‘I got you, help me now’ the sound came from Dennis’s room followed by sound of a punch.

‘Well what’s that?’ whispered Jim and sprinted towards the source of sound.

Upon their arrival they hastily lit the dimly lit room and were amazed to see the scenario.

There were three persons in the room struggling with each other which worsened as the lights were turned on. For sure there was Crick.

‘Now, smash the shoulder!’ shouted Crick holding one person between his arms. This order was followed by action and the captive felt weakened and fell down.

‘Thank goodness! I had already removed the hell dagger out of his hands when he sprang out of the floor’ said John wiping sweat from his forehead. His hands were bleeding, which was indicative of the fact that he was first to encounter the dagger in the room.

‘That was a nice one John. You have improved a lot since our last fight. I think after that much harm done to the clavicle; he would be definitely lying on the floor for half an hour. Now let’s hell get out of here’ said Crick and turned back.

‘John?!’ exclaimed both Jim and Mr. Robert.

‘Hi guys!’ and gave a two finger salute raising his eyebrows ‘nice to meet you Mac and also Mr. Robert.

‘Thomas?’ asked Jim.

‘What the hell is going on here?’ exclaimed Mr. Robert.

‘I would clarify within a few moments’ walked Crick ‘and yes don’t touch the body there on the floor, just guard it, I say just guard it.’

Crick and John both went out of the room. A few moments elapsed. They both arrived completely freshened and their hands were wet.

‘Well now both of you, the culprit is in front of you and I would be definitely glad if you both don’t shriek. Is that clear?’ asked Crick.

‘Who is it? Mr. Traveroy?’ asked Jim as he was turning the body to see the face.

Both of them were just able to stop their shout.

‘It is Professor Richard!’ exclaimed both of them.

‘How?’ said Mr. Robert ‘he is dead already’

‘Oh shut up! Let me throw a question to Jim. What hypothesis do you have at present?’ asked Crick.

‘Um, professor had a good reputation in the university and these new students were poor at the studies, hence he wanted to get rid of them and enacted as we know’ Jim staggered a bit as he spoke.

‘How did you know that these three were weak at studies?’ asked Crick

‘Well I had observed them in the classes’ replied Jim feeling confident that his hypothesis might be correct as Crick is taking an interest to it.

‘Definitely Jim, you have improved upon your deductions, but you know one thing he is not Professor Richard’ said Crick.

Meanwhile John tied the body with a heavy table and sprinkled water to awake him.

‘Ha Ha, you are joking? Aren’t you? Now you would be saying that he is professor’s twin?’ mocked Jim.

‘Nice one Jim, he is indeed professor’s twin’ replied Crick.

‘I had never had such brilliant guesses’ said Jim.

‘First of all, let me clarify that the smile which had passed my face when in my residence I heard that a new student had joined the university successfully, I was completely sure that Thomas,

that is John was able to enter the university for sure. When dead body of Professor Richard was first gazed by Mr. Walter, he had immediately informed me about that. I thus had sent John to mingle with the students. And of course it was pivotal as only from them I was able to confirm that Professor Richard had a twin, namely **Sidney Herbert**'.

'Now professor had a scar near his mouth, which was due to the pipette which he had used to pipette hydrochloric acid and when it rose significantly, he threw that away and in the process the glass caused a scar' replied Crick.

'Then?' asked Mr. Robert.

'So for the first time when I looked at the face of this dead professor, I observed he had no scar and left me perplexed. I was merely passing my time waiting for anything important to happen. It so happened that the day, I had fixed my meeting with Thomas on the roof top, I heard some noise from the house, I immediately diverted footsteps from the second floor and rushed towards Alfred's house. But before my arrival the work was done and only as I lit the room, he shrieked. I instantly felt your presence Jim, but alas, I didn't have enough on my part to explain the events to you. So in the room I stopped just before waking you up from sleep. (After some moments of silence) Ah! Of course you were not sleeping!' paused Crick.

'I checked that the dagger was inserted as if somebody had done the work in haste and from oblique angle. Thus I realized that the murderer had emerged from floor, which was later confirmed by Mr. Robert. That just created a chain of events in my mind and to confirm the presence of twin of professor, Thomas did the work. Once professor was a bit unhappy, and Sanders being his favourite approached him and asked the cause of his disappointment. At that instance he referred the presence of his twin Sidney, and erroneous behaviour.'

'Now I realized everything and made my own hypothesis. These three students Alfred, Dennis and Ralph worked with Sidney and somehow conned the gang and left them dejected during their plan to massacre the inhabitants of **Dartford Street**. Due to this, their leader **Master Halworth**, the head of Halworth society, infamous for its expert planning of mass massacre was caught. This was the only recent occurrence and hence I connected it with this.'

'Thus I finally asked Thomas to exchange the room with Dennis. He was not able to do that last night, so I thought to disturb the dead professor. But I feel myself small at his patience.'

'Those three deserved that' a murmur came from the mouth of Sidney struggling to escape from clutches of rope.

‘Well then you are awake?’ asked John ‘quite early before half an hour’

‘How was your last night, Sidney?’ asked Mr. Robert and laughed.

Sidney grunted without any reply.

‘Now, where is your twin? I truly require him for tomorrow’s classes’ asked Crick.

‘At my residence, safe’ replied Sidney devoid of interest.

‘Now let me call Mr. Rupert. He must also enjoy this night’ said Crick and arrived with Mr. Rupert after about ten minutes. All the drowsiness expired from the face of Mr. Rupert as he gazed upon the face of Sidney.

‘How were you caught?’ asked Mr. Rupert.

‘There was Crick and John, not Dennis. As soon as I emerged, John kicked the dagger out my hands and gave a heavy punch on my face. I was left weakened further due to presence of Crick’ replied a struggling Sidney.

‘This Mr. Rupert was thinking to terminate his service from you Mr. Robert, tomorrow after Dennis would be dead’ said Crick tightening his grasp over Mr. Rupert’s collar.

‘Why?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘Just because Mr. Rupert is not Sir Edward Gapon, rather he is the escaped prisoner Master Halworth’ said Crick.

‘Really?’ asked Mr. Robert.

‘Firstly, he didn’t hear any noise and agreed to the fact that he slept in the night. Rather he also said that he didn’t hear any noise from inside. How the heck was that possible? The entry to tunnel requires aid of two persons but the exit would be possible only with one person. You know what I mean Mr. Robert? So he himself aided Sidney to enter the tunnel. Secondly, the very first day I had found **Raven Clock**, you know, famous for hypnotizing persons? What would a chemistry professor require to do with it? But I neglected it with the fact that he might need it for meditating, but your yesterday hint flashed everything out. He brought it to hypnotize students’ said Crick.

‘Now why did he then agreed to our terms?’ asked Jim.

‘Master Halworth is too cunning. He realized me from the very first meeting but reacted as if he didn’t know any of us and escaped from us. But when he found himself caught, it was a wise decision to become submissive and further as we were there to solve this mystery, he might somehow be able to have access to dead professor’s residence. But more luckily, he was

provided an opportunity to guard that residence and hence further it was a cakewalk’ replied Crick.

‘What had happened to the Faston case which John was working upon?’ asked Jim.

‘There wasn’t any Faston case for sure. Just the cap the paper boy had was from Faston and hence I said Faston case!’ replied Crick.

‘I more question - why Sidney didn’t kill his own brother?’ asked John.

‘Well, I think he is a brother after all! And now Mr. Robert I hope you should be able to handle this case well after my departure tomorrow morning. It is already three in the morning and I believe if I would hurry, I would be able to catch the train back at four in the morning. Explain every matter carefully and finally reveal our identity to Mr. Traveroy’ saying this Crick rushed to his residence, packed his items and along with Jim and John he just was able to catch the early morning train back from Ransford.

The next day paper had the headlines –

“ANOTHER MASTERPIECE WORK FROM CRICK”

**(THE CASE OF DEATH OF PROFESSOR RICHARD AND
THE MISSING PRISONER MASTER HALWORTH)**