

## The Valentine's Day killer

*Year 2010.* It was Valentine's Day night, and everybody could feel the love all around the streets of New York. But tonight, the lovers' night, was going to be Chloe Green's last night. Indeed, her boyfriend Matthew Harvard, had discovered that she was having an affair with Jeremy Skota, her ex-boyfriend. But he was a smart boy. He didn't break up, and he had been pretending loving Chloe for weeks. Anger quickly replaced sadness. He prepared his tragic revenge methodically and secretly. And that night, during a romantic dinner, he was going to poison Chloe...

They were having a great night: watching movies, joking and talking about common memories. Chloe was finishing her dinner, when she asked Matthew for more wine. He took her empty glass to the kitchen, poured delicious wine in it, just before adding some poison. "Oh thank you", she said when he brought back the glass of wine. She brandished it, and said with happiness in her voice: "Happy Valentine's day honey. Cheers!" She swallowed the wine. Blood came out of her mouth. She dropped the glass, and lost consciousness. The noise of broken glass announced that Chloe Green had just passed away, that 14<sup>th</sup> of February, that night full of promises.

Matthew cleaned the whole apartment. The police would not find a single piece of evidence that Chloe had eaten and drunk here. Everything was clean. Just as if nothing had happened. Before calling the police, he had a last thing to do. He took Chloe's phone in her purse, and wrote a text message to Jeremy: "It was nice to have a drink with you. See you soon. XXX."

Inspector Lacey had been working for the New York Police Department for a long time. She was one of the best police officer, thanks, to a great sense of observation. But her exaggerated passion for her job was the main reason of her loneliness, that Valentine's Day night. She almost felt bad for being happy to have a murder case to investigate on that night. Had somebody just killed his or her Valentine?

She arrived at the crime scene. It was a young man's modern apartment. A blond and beautiful girl was lying on the floor, next to the door, with blood on her lips. Inspector Lacey immediately noticed: "The body doesn't have a natural position. Has somebody moved it?"

Matthew Harvard, the dead girl's boyfriend, didn't seem so choiced. He was giving the police a really clear report. To Lacey, this sounded fake and prepared beforehand.

"She called me about 30 minutes ago. She told me that she had seen her ex-boyfriend in her way to my apartment, and had accepted to quickly have a drink with him. She felt sorry for him being alone tonight. Then she arrived here, and just after having closed the door, she lost consciousness and I saw blood leaking from her mouth. He has obviously poisoned her! He has killed my girlfriend!".

That's what Matthew Harvard said to the Police. They brought him to the office, to get more information about this "Jeremy Skota".

Skota was arrested 20 minutes later. Inspector Lacey insisted to be the one that would question him. He was skinny and pale. He couldn't stop crying about Chloe's death. When he finally calmed down, he answered Lacey's questions. He couldn't be the murderer. He had spent the night at home with his dad. The police didn't find any poison at his house, not even a bottle of wine. They were a non-drinker family! "Do you have something to add?" asked Lacey when she thought that he had said enough.

-I do. I received this strange text message from Chloe earlier...

Inspector Lacey was sure of one thing: Skota wasn't guilty. Now, she had to prove that Harvard was. She came back to the crime scene, and inspected every little corner of the apartment for an evidence. Eureka! She had just found a little piece of glass on the floor, next to the dinner table. Suddenly, everything became clear in Lacey's mind...

*3 months later.* Inspector Lacey was having coffee at the Starbucks during her break, when somebody touched her shoulder. She turned back. A young man was watching and smiling at her. She recognized him! Jeremy Skota! The boy wrongly accused of her ex-girlfriend's murder.

"I am not going to annoy you for a long time, Inspector. You're probably really busy. I just wanted you to know how thankful I am for what you have done. You didn't just solve a murder, proved my innocence and Harvard's guilt. In some way, you have saved my life, Inspector. You're my hero..."

*The end.*