

# **The Mystery of Deadly Daisies**

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# Chapter One

Honolulu, Hawaii

4 March 1947

The night was falling down to a late midnight hour. Two friends, Frank and Daniel, were just leaving the local bar called Lopez Hills. With a high level of alcohol in their veins, they were walking around and talking.

**DANIEL:** Are you going straight home, Frank, or are you going to visit Marge first?

**FRANK:** I will probably go and see Marge first. I do not think she will be happy to see me like this, though.

**DANIEL:** Tell her that I still do not know anything about the jewels.

**FRANK:** Gee, I told you a thousand times already, they belong to her and not to you!

**DANIEL:** They belong to me! She just took them from me!

**FRANK:** Give her a break! She's your sister, man! The testament gave her the same rights to your mother's possessions as it did to you!

**DANIEL:** That doesn't mean she can just take them from me! I worked hard for that jewelry. I'll even sue her, if necessary!

Frank got a burst of anger when he heard these words.

**FRANK:** You didn't do anything for them! Please, just leave me alone. I don't want to argue with you now!

**DANIEL:** You just say that because she's your girlfriend! You would agree with me if it wasn't so!

**FRANK:** That's not true!

**DANIEL:** You bet it is! In addition, you can't even admit that you're interested about their value, too!

Suddenly, Frank didn't know what Daniel was talking about. That was because only Daniel knew about the true value of the jewels of his mother.

**DANIEL:** You're just a hypocrite, you know that, Frank?

**FRANK:** That's enough! Get out of my sight!

Daniel left and Frank was heading to his car. As he was pulling out his car keys, a mysterious man appeared in the darkness, dressed in a brown suit. From the distance, he was speaking to Frank.

**MAN:** Do you really want to continue playing games?"

Frank looked around.

**MAN:** Yes, I'm talking to you, Frank Lombardo.

Frank got scared stiff and with a fear in his voice, he answered the question.

**FRANK:** Please, sir! I don't know about anything! How do you know my name?

The man continued.

**MAN:** I know a lot about you! That's why you have to pay!

Frank, being drunk, only saw a silhouette of a man walking fast towards him. When he saw a knife in his hands, he began to shout from his entire lungs.

**FRANK:** No, please don't do it, I beg you!

The man stabbed Frank three times in his stomach. As his body was lying on the ground, entirely soaked in blood, the man put a piece of daisy next to his head. Afterwards, he quickly ran away. Frank's dead body stayed lying there.

# Chapter Two

The Police Station

4 March 1947

It was a busy day at the Police Department of Honolulu.

Lieutenant Phil More had just heard about the murder nearby the Lopez Hills Bar. He immediately called two detectives into his office.

One of them was Herbie Fox. Lieutenant More knew that he was perfect for this case. Herbie was a sixty-year-old man who had forty years of investigative experience. He loved his job, although he didn't make it show on the outside. Herbie was a stronger man with his hair going grey and with a scar on his cheek. He was usually rude to people, which might have been because of his age and cynicism, which may seem typical for people like him.

The second detective was Albert Fringe, who was a middle-aged man who had just been promoted to a higher department. Even though he had a lot of medical problems, he believed in himself and tried to be the best detective he could possibly be. His body was fit, his hair was ginger and he had freckles on his face, which possessed somewhat of a pale characteristics.

The lieutenant spoke with them.

**LIEUTENANT:** Greetings, fellas. I have some bad news for you.

The lieutenant had not even finished his sentence and Herbie asked a question with sarcasm in his voice already.

**HERBIE:** Is it about some murder again?

The lieutenant smiled and answered.

**LIEUTENANT:** You just can't let me have the joy of telling you, can you?

Herbie smiled with a charming look on his face. Nevertheless, Albert joined the conversation with a serious manner.

**ALBERT:** What's the matter, lieutenant?

**LIEUTENANT:** We got a report that there was a murder near the Lopez Hills Bar. Officer Shelby found a dead body on a parking lot nearby. You should go there and investigate the crime scene.

Suddenly, Herbie got angry.

**HERBIE:** Do you want to send both of us there? I don't even know this man. I prefer to work alone, as you might surely know.

Albert got upset and the lieutenant stated with anger.

**LIEUTENANT:** For crying out loud, don't be so cold, Fox! The man standing by your side is one of the best young detectives we have here! I'm sure you'll get along just fine.

Herbie answered with a calmer tone of his voice.

**HERBIE:** With all due respect, lieutenant: if you saw such a load of dead bodies as I have in your life, you would be glad to have my kind of personality.

Afterwards, Herbie looked at Albert and apologized for making a scene.

**HERBIE:** I'm sorry, mister... What's your name?

**ALBERT:** Albert Fringe. Pleased to meet you, mister Fox. I'm your admirer and I really respect what you do. You're my idol.

Herbie laughed and replied.

**HERBIE:** I advise you to go and work in that new restaurant, which got opened a few days ago. You can buy a beef for as low as one cent there!

Albert started laughing from the bottom of his heart and the situation in the office started to look witty. Even the lieutenant started to laugh. After a little while, the conversation continued.

**LIEUTENANT:** It didn't even take a minute and you two are good friends already! Are you happy now, mister Fox?

**HERBIE:** Oh yes, lieutenant. Obviously, this fella has a good sense of humor.

**LIEUTENANT:** All right then, Fox, you should now go and start investigating. Time is precious, you know.

Herbie and Albert left the building and got into a car. Albert was the driver. During the commute, they had a conversation. Herbie started.

**HERBIE:** I need to tell you something about myself, mister Fringe. Something about my personality.

**ALBERT:** I'm listening, mister Fox.

**HERBIE:** I have a few personal conditions during the investigations, which you should respect.

**ALBERT:** Which ones, for instance?

**HERBIE:** To start off, I'm an introvert. I keep a lot of my thought processes purely to myself. You should know that, mister Fringe.

**ALBERT:** Of course, mister Fox. After all, I'm not that different from you.

Herbie looked at Albert with a surprise in his eyes.

**HERBIE:** Believe me, mister Fringe. We are two completely different people. I'll bet my life that this is so!

After a moment of silence, Herbie continued.

**HERBIE:** What motivated you to detective work, mister Fringe? Were you expecting to bring some excitement into your life?"

**ALBERT:** I wouldn't say so, mister Fox. I was always interested in being a detective so, I decided to go for it after I graduated from the high school in Connecticut; I wanted to fulfill my dreams.

**HERBIE:** Your dreams? About what? Looking at the dead bodies and interrogating psychopaths?

**ALBERT:** I don't know what lead me here. It was just a feeling I had, which I couldn't hide.

**HERBIE:** Just look at that! Only a few minutes of knowing you and I know about one of your life dreams already. At least you got it fulfilled. I only hope that you won't have to face disappointment in your life.

**ALBERT:** Did you face it?

**HERBIE:** I can't really tell, mister Fringe. Have you ever seen a dead body?

**ALBERT:** No.

**HERBIE:** Well, prepare for a moment of truth then. You'll finally see what it is to be a detective. As soon as that moment appears, you'll understand what I'm talking about.

Albert remained calm.



# Chapter Three

## The Crime Scene

4 March 1947

After a few minutes, Albert and Herbie arrived at the Lopez Hills Bar. Journalists and police officers had surrounded the area. Albert and Herbie came close to the police line.

**OFFICER BLAKE:** Detectives?

Asked one of the police officers who stood near the line. Herbie showed him his badge. The police officer looked at it and said.

**OFFICER BLAKE:** Oh, I see. We've been expecting you, mister Fox! You can cross the line.

Herbie said jokingly.

**HERBIE:** I wonder why you haven't recognized me, officer Blake.

Officer Blake got a little upset. Then, Herbie and Albert crossed the line. When they made a few steps, there was the dead body of Frank Lombardo lying next to them, with an analytic, Dean Marston, who was bent down and observing it. He was an old man with dyed brown hair, round glasses, wearing a white braid. He had rough wrinkles on his face and a fit figure. Even though he had a tough job, he was always calm by nature. He suffered from a mild level of lisp. Albert got scared stiff and nervous when he saw the body. Herbie grabbed his shoulder and whispered into his ears.

**HERBIE:** This is how it feels like to be a detective. Welcome to my world! Keep in mind; the worst things in your life are still yet to come, my friend.

Afterwards, Herbie started talking with Dean.

**HERBIE:** What have you got so far, mister Marston?

**DEAN:** Hello, mister Fox. The victim has quite a lot of wounds. Three of them are in the area of his stomach. It's apparent that a knife stabbed him. He simply fell down to the ground and bled out. The daisy placed next to the body is artificial.

**HERBIE:** Does he have wounds anywhere else on his body?

**DEAN:** There are some red spots on his neck. What that means is: it's possible that the victim has been strangled before being stabbed to death. I'll need to analyze the whole body in my laboratory for more detailed assumptions. It also looks like the victim has been under the influence of alcohol.

**HERBIE:** Thank you, mister Marston.

Dean stood up and observed the crime scene a little further. Herbie bent down to the body and started looking for some clues. He looked into the pockets of a coat, which Frank wore that night. He could feel some papers in them, so he pulled them out of there. The first one was a card of a man called Malfred Ash with his telephone number and an address written on it. Herbie immediately took a note of both, the telephone number and the address, into his notebook. The next paper in Frank's coat pockets was a letter from a caretaker, which informed Frank about a late mortgage payment. Herbie took a note of the caretaker's name: Charlie Crown. Besides the papers, there were three bonbons, apartment keys, and a wallet in his pockets. The wallet had a total of thirty dollars in it. Herbie stood up and observed the crime scene with Albert walking by his side. Albert asked.

**ALBERT:** Have you found out anything?

**HERBIE:** Not really. There are not a lot of clues here. The most interesting thing may be the car key inserted in his car.

**ALBERT:** Why do you think so? It only has Frank's fingerprints and maybe fingerprints of some of his relatives. I don't see anything special about them.

**HERBIE:** Don't be so narrow-minded, mister Fringe! They might help us in some situations, maybe tell us something more.

**ALBERT:** I'm not so sure about that but, so be it, mister Fox.

Herbie put a white glove on his hand and took the car keys. Afterwards, he carefully placed them in a small plastic bag. Later, Herbie decided to visit the Lopez Hills Bar. There was an obese man with short black hair behind the bar counter. Herbie and Albert came close to him and Herbie started talking.

**HERBIE:** Detective Herbie Fox, I would like to ask you a few questions.

The barkeeper replied with more of a rude manner.

**BARKEEPER:** All right, go on. What do you want?

Herbie sat on a barstool. Albert was just standing and watching. Herbie started talking.

**HERBIE:** We are investigating a murder, which happened near your bar. Could you describe me precisely what happened last night? Does the name Frank Lombard ring any bell to you?

**BARKEEPER:** Lombardo? Yes, I know that guy. He's one of my regulars. What about him?

**HERBIE:** I'm unfortunate to say this... He was murdered yesterday. Did he have problems with alcohol?

**BARKEEPER:** Gee! What a cruel world! It depends. Sometimes he came and drank one glass of vodka; sometimes he came and nearly poisoned himself with almost everything liquid we had here. I don't think he actually had drinking problems, though. He wasn't drinking alcohol each and every time he came here, you know.

**HERBIE:** That sounds interesting. Was he alone or did he have a company?

**BARKEEPER:** He was here with a friend. I think his name was Daniel Greg. They were arguing a lot, though. At one point, they nearly got into a fistfight and at the other one; they were drinking Martini with laughter together.

Herbie took a note of this information. He started thinking.

**HERBIE:** Do you know what might have been the cause of their argument?

**BARKEEPER:** I was hearing things about some woman called Marge, but I also heard something about diamonds.

**HERBIE:** What diamonds?

**BARKEEPER:** I don't know. My memory is kind of shaky about that.

**HERBIE:** Try to remember! It can help the investigation by a mile in some situation.

**BARKEEPER:** I can recall some argument about who shall possess them. I can't remember anything more right now. Maybe it was only a drunk talk.

Herbie continued taking notes. Albert started asking questions, too.

**ALBERT:** Can you tell us when did they leave?

**BARKEEPER:** It could be about three o'clock in the morning.

**ALBERT:** Did you hear any noise?

**BARKEEPER:** No, I didn't hear anything.

Albert got suspicious.

**ALBERT:** How come? It happened not even a mile away from your bar!

The barkeeper got nervous and started looking to sides. He stated with anger.

**BARKEEPER:** All right, I did. I heard shouting and then a strange weeping noise.

**ALBERT:** Why did you not do anything?

**BARKEEPER:** I'm just an ordinary barkeeper! I hear shouting men every night, for crying out loud!

Herbie started to ask questions again.

**HERBIE:** Why didn't you call the police?"

**BARKEEPER:** I didn't find it necessary.

Herbie stood up from his chair and let his temper show out.

**HERBIE:** Go and take a look outside! There's a dead man who didn't deserve to die! You might have helped him to his grave with your ignorance!

**BARKEEPER:** Stop shouting at me! Otherwise, I'll make a complaint about you two assholes!

**HERBIE:** You must have such a fugitive mind, mister barkeeper.

The barkeeper raised his voice furiously.

**BARKEEPER:** That's enough! Get the hell out of my bar and leave me alone!

Herbie replied with sarcasm.

**HERBIE:** It was a pleasure being here, mister barkeeper. I hope I'll be able to come here again sometime.

The barkeeper shouted.

**BARKEEPER:** Screw you, chump!

Even though it looked like Herbie and Albert were about to leave the bar, the argument between Herbie and the barkeeper continued for several minutes. It came to the point when Albert simply couldn't take it anymore and he pulled a pack of cigarettes out of his pocket. Afterwards, he announced.

**ALBERT:** I'm going to have a cigarette outside, if you don't mind.

Albert went outside and lit up his cigarette. When he finished smoking, he wanted to throw the stub into a trash bin as he didn't want to simply throw it on the ground. He found one at the backside of the bar. When he reached the trash bin, he noticed something sharp beneath the garbage. He gently grabbed and picked out an object. It was wrapped in a black bag. While he was softly unwrapping the object in his hands, he got terrified. He could see drops of blood. When he unwrapped the object completely, it was obvious. It was a bloody knife! He wrapped the knife back into the black bag with terror and ran to Herbie. The argument was still going on when he entered the bar. Albert shouted.

**ALBERT:** Mister Fox, I found something very questionable outside! I want to show it to you in private, though.

Herbie replied with a light smile.

**HERBIE:** What is it? A golden coin or what?

Albert remained nervous and replied seriously.

**ALBERT:** No, it's something serious! I really need you to see it.

**HERBIE:** All right then. I'll just say goodbye to my friend here.

Herbie smiled at the barkeeper who had a very angry look on his face.

**HERBIE:** Goodbye, my friend. I hope we can have a chat sometime soon again.

Herbie stated to the barkeeper. As they both came to the entrance, he added.

**HERBIE:** Mister barkeeper, before I leave, I would like to give you a riddle.

The barkeeper hesitated but agreed. Herbie continued.

**HERBIE:** A drink spilling out makes one person annoying and desperate at the same time. Who is that person?

The barkeeper thought about it for a while but remained silent. After a while, Herbie stated.

**HERBIE:** It's a beloved barkeeper, my friend!

The barkeeper got surprised and Albert laughed. Herbie and Albert left the bar. As they were going to the car, Albert said.

**ALBERT:** I wouldn't say that you have such a good sense of humor, mister Fox!

Herbie replied with confidence.

**HERBIE:** Extraordinary problems require extraordinary solutions, mister Fringe! What do you want to show me?

Albert showed the knife to Herbie.

**ALBERT:** I found this at the backside of the bar. Take a look at it.

Herbie got surprised and stated with joy.

**HERBIE:** Well, well, well! This must be the knife that killed the victim. This is outstanding! You have found a major clue! I'm starting to be glad that they assigned you to me. I wouldn't find this one myself!

Albert smiled.

**ALBERT:** It was nothing, mister Fox. I've noticed it by a pure coincidence when I wanted to throw a cigarette stub to the trash bin.

**HERBIE:** We need to deliver this object to the analysis!

# Chapter Four

The Police Station

4 March 1947

Herbie and Albert arrived at the police station. Herbie had the wrapped knife in his hands and he spoke to the doorkeeper.

**HERBIE:** Good afternoon, Mike. I'm looking for mister Marston. Is he in his laboratory?

**DOORKEEPER:** He has just finished the analysis of the dead body a few minutes ago. He should be in the canteen right now. You'll probably have to wait a while.

**HERBIE:** Thank you, Mike.

Herbie and Albert sat down and waited. Herbie started a new conversation.

**HERBIE:** What do you think about the detective work so far, mister Fringe?

**ALBERT:** Actually, I don't have a certain opinion yet. What I can say is that some things almost made me throw up.

**HERBIE:** That's understandable, mister Fringe.

**ALBERT:** Can I ask you about your beginnings?

Herbie smiled and replied.

**HERBIE:** I can recall them quite precisely. I was twenty years old and I was just finishing the police academy. My mother was a police officer. I had a job almost immediately after my graduation.

Albert nodded his head and Herbie continued.

**HERBIE:** I remember my first serious case. It was a murder of a clockmaker. When I solved it, the lieutenant took a fancy of me. When there was an opportunity, he always gave me awards for being the best detective. Thinking about it, it all might have happened because of my poor mother.

Herbie started to look around, stuck in his thoughts. After a little while, Dean Marston appeared. Herbie stopped him and spoke with him.

**HERBIE:** Mister Marston, are you available right now? We have an important clue that needs to be analyzed.

**DEAN:** Of course. What clue?

**HERBIE:** Let's go.

They all walked into the Dean Marston's laboratory and closed the door. Herbie started to gently unwrap the knife from the black bag. A few seconds later, the knife got revealed and Marston took an astonishing glance at it. Herbie stated.

**HERBIE:** This one.

Marston observed it for a little moment and stated.

**DEAN:** Interesting. Where did you find it?

**HERBIE:** Mister Fringe found it in a trash bin.

**DEAN:** Have you touched the unwrapped parts with your hands?

Albert replied.

**ALBERT:** No, I haven't. I've strictly touched the black bag only.

Dean claimed with a slight relief.

**DEAN:** That's great! I can identify the fingerprints without inspecting yours first. Supposing the killer wasn't wearing gloves, of course. I can conduct that he had more courage than intelligence. Murdering someone with a knife and throwing it into the nearest trash bin isn't something that you can get away with, you see.

Herbie started thinking out loud.

**HERBIE:** I guess that this case might be already solved. The murderer's fingerprints are on the knife. We'll arrest him and there we go!

Dean stated.

**DEAN:** Not so fast, mister Fox! I don't think he wasn't wearing gloves. Also, there might be fingerprints of more people on that knife.

Herbie argued.

**HERBIE:** I'm not concluding anything. I don't rely on fingerprints, anyway. I'm creating my own opinions mainly by the interrogations. Fingerprints always help, though. It depends on how successful your analysis will be. Anyway, I've heard that you have finished the analysis of the dead body. What have you got?

Marston came to the white awning. He grabbed his analysis documents. After a little while, he started explaining.

**DEAN:** I have some rather interesting results. My guess that the victim was under the influence of alcohol was confirmed. There were also particles of nicotine in his body. There are bruises on

his chest and several other ones throughout his entire body. Some of those look like they were caused by glass. Probably a bar incident, I might say.

Herbie asked curiously.

**HERBIE:** Could you describe those bruises in more detail?

**DEAN:** Quite apparent and deep. You see it looks like someone beat him up, which only adds to my theory of a bar incident. There are also some signs of a black eye. Talking about it, could you please give me that knife? This won't be pretty, though.

As Herbie was giving the knife to Dean, he asked Albert.

**HERBIE:** Will you be able to handle this, mister Fringe?

Albert replied calmly.

**ALBERT:** I hope so. I have already seen the body.

Herbie nodded his head softly and stated.

**HERBIE:** All right, you have been warned then. You can continue, mister Marston.

Dean revealed the body slowly. Albert got terrified and almost threw up again. Herbie remained calm and the sight in front of him didn't cause anything to him. Dean placed the knife on the victim's stomach and concluded.

**DEAN:** It's obvious. The wound is matching the shape of this knife! I'm almost certain that the blood is the victims. We have our answer. Right here is the murder weapon! I don't think we need analysis anymore, as you might see now.

Herbie replied.

**HERBIE:** Thank you, mister Marston. If you find out anything new, call and leave a message for Lieutenant More. He'll forward it to me during the next call to the police station.

**DEAN:** Of course, mister Fox. My services are here for you.

**HERBIE:** Have a nice day, mister Marston.

**DEAN:** Have a nice day, too, mister Fox.

Herbie and Albert left the laboratory room. During their walking through the police station, Lieutenant More stopped them.

**LIEUTENANT:** Mister Fox, we have a witness here!

Herbie replied with a surprise.

**HERBIE:** Which room?



**LIEUTENANT:** Interrogation Room two.

**HERBIE:** Thank you, Lieutenant More. Let's go, mister Fringe!

They entered the room and Albert closed the door. There was an old lady sitting at the table. She had a very calm and quiet voice. Herbie sat down in front of her and started the interrogation. Albert stood by his side and after he had been given an order, he transcribed the whole conversation.

**HERBIE:** Detective Fox, so what can you tell us about this case, missis...?

**ANGIE:** Angie, Angie Rothford. I am the neighbor of Frank Lombardo.

Herbie seemed to be joyous about this fact.

**HERBIE:** I'm very glad that you came here. You can begin your testimony now.

Missis Rothford started explaining.

**ANGIE:** The incident happened at around three o'clock in the morning. I woke up to the strange noises outside and I looked outside the window. I saw my neighbor, Frank Lombardo.

**HERBIE:** Can you describe the person's appearance that was with him?

**ANGIE:** My memory is not in such a good shape, mister. I wonder how I even recognized the face of Lombardo. I remember that they were walking past the street and they were arguing about some diamonds. Unfortunately, that's all my memory can come up with.

**HERBIE:** All right, missis Rothford. Can you tell me something more about Frank Lombardo?

**ANGIE:** I didn't know him well. He sometimes came to visit me and he even helped me with groceries, time after time. Anyway, I noticed that he had problems with the caretaker. He didn't have a lot of money and he often had difficulties with paying the mortgage, you know.

**HERBIE:** We've acknowledged some of these things already. Can you tell us something more, missis Rothford?

**ANGIE:** I wish I could, but I'm afraid I can't. I'll probably disappoint you with that. I just wanted to tell you what I know. I thought it might help you a little.

Herbie stood up.

**HERBIE:** Thank you, missis Rothford. You're a prime example of how each citizen of Honolulu should act.

**ANGIE:** Kind words, Detective. Goodbye.

**HERBIE:** Goodbye.

Herbie and Albert left the room and headed outside the building towards the car. Soon afterwards, missis Rothford left, too. When Herbie and Albert entered the car, Albert asked.

**ALBERT:** What now, mister Fox?

**HERBIE:** I think we're about to visit our victim's company. Oh, I need to get his address. Wait here, mister Fringe.

Herbie got out of the car and accessed the nearest telephone booth.

**HERBIE:** Operator, Detective Herbie Fox speaking. I need you to connect me with the Social Security Administration of Honolulu.

**OPERATOR:** Wait, please.

After a few seconds of bleeping, a voice of a woman spoke to the telephone.

**ASSISTANT:** Social Security Administration of Honolulu. How can I help you?

**HERBIE:** Detective Herbie Fox at the telephone. I need an address of a man called Daniel Greg.

**ASSISTANT:** Moment.

After a little while, the voice of the woman spoke again.

**ASSISTANT:** There are more people under the name Daniel Greg in our database. Do you have some specific information about this person?

**HERBIE:** Which one of them lives closest to the Harding Avenue?

**ASSISTANT:** There is one person who lives almost on that street. 3266A Lincoln Avenue; Honolulu, HI 96816

Herbie took a note of the address to his notebook.

**HERBIE:** Thank you.

He hung up the telephone and returned to the car. Albert asked him.

**ALBERT:** Do you have it, mister Fox?

**HERBIE:** Yes, I do. Let's hope that it's Daniel Greg we're looking for.

**ALBERT:** Are you not sure?

**HERBIE:** There were more people under that name in the database. I've asked for the address of the one who lives closest to the Lopez Hills Bar.

**ALBERT:** That was a wise decision, I suppose, mister Fox.

**HERBIE:** You probably know what to do.

# Chapter Five

Daniel Greg  
4 March 1947

Herbie showed Albert a note of the address. Albert hit the pedal and drove there. After a few minutes later, they arrived. There was a smaller house and they both reached the door. When Herbie rang the doorbell, a man with longer brown hair and a fit figure opened up.

**DANIEL:** Who are you?

Herbie took his badge and said.

**HERBIE:** Detective Herbie Fox. This is my detective partner. His name is Albert Fringe. We have some questions about last night.

Daniel got surprised.

**DANIEL:** Come in.

Both of them entered the house and sat down on a sofa in the living room. Daniel was getting more and more terrified every second.

**DANIEL:** What happened, detectives?

Herbie and Albert looked at each other. After a little while, Herbie started talking.

**HERBIE:** We're investigating a murder of Frank Lombardo.

Daniel got shocked and asked with horror.

**DANIEL:** I hope you don't want to tell me... I mean, I just really don't know what... Are you telling me that he's dead?

**HERBIE:** I'm afraid so, mister Greg.

Daniel covered his face with his palms and started breathing heavily. After a while, he continued.

**DANIEL:** That can't be so! Please say it's not true! Dammit, Frank! What happened?

**HERBIE:** We found him dead by his car. Someone stabbed him to death and he bled out.

**DANIEL:** No! Why him? This is just... unbelievable!

Daniel stood up and walked through the room nervously. Herbie continued.

**HERBIE:** I know it's hard for you, but we need to ask you some questions.

Daniel slightly calmed down and sat down on the sofa again. Calm but still shocked, he said.

**DANIEL:** I'm listening.

**HERBIE:** Albert, you know what to do.

Herbie gave his notebook to Albert who was already pulling out his pen out of his pocket. Herbie started the conversation.

**HERBIE:** Tell me in detail, what happened yesterday in the bar. We have information that you were with the victim until approximately three o'clock in the morning.

**DANIEL:** There's not that much to tell about yesterday. We were both tired from work. We arranged to go to the bar and relax a little.

**HERBIE:** Describe me the whole evening.

**DANIEL:** Nothing interesting. We came there at about eight o'clock and ordered our first piña colada. "Since then, the time just flew by and we didn't even know what time it was.

**HERBIE:** Was Frank involved in a bar fight?

**DANIEL:** No, he wasn't. Why are you asking that?

**HERBIE:** He had several different bruises on his body.

**DANIEL:** Really? I don't know how he got them.

**HERBIE:** How was your relationship with Frank?

**DANIEL:** We were good friends for years. We played golf together, went to a lot of events, and we met each other in the bar every Friday night.

**HERBIE:** Did you have any conflicts with him?

**DANIEL:** Things got a little out of control when he started dating my sister, Marge. Otherwise, we had no conflicts.

Herbie looked skeptically at Albert and asked more questions.

**HERBIE:** We got some testimonies about diamonds. Did you have some property issues between each other?

Suddenly, Daniel started to slightly shake.

**DANIEL:** I don't know what you're talking about.

Herbie began raising his voice.

**HERBIE:** Well, that's quite interesting, mister Greg. In our testimonies, a witness stated that you were arguing about jewelry. Does it not ring a bell to you?

Daniel started to shake a little more intensively.

**DANIEL:** No, I don't know anything.

Herbie chose to be ruder.

**HERBIE:** Mister Greg, I'd like to warn you that giving false statements to the police is a federal crime in this country! You can even spend years in prison!

Daniel couldn't handle the pressure anymore and he started admitting.

**DANIEL:** Ok, ok, you got me. Things are more complicated around that.

**HERBIE:** Go on.

**DANIEL:** The thing was, my mother died just a few weeks ago. You can't stop the time; you know how it goes. Her testament is not entirely clear and she owned quite some valuable pieces of jewelry. Since I'm her firstborn child, I think it should be me who gets to own them. Marge doesn't think that, though. She thinks that something like diamond jewelry should get to the daughter. To be honest, we had so many arguments that we haven't even talked since the day of my mother's funeral.

Herbie got suspicious and claimed.

**HERBIE:** Something's fishy about this, mister Greg. Do you want to tell me that you have some serious feuds with your own sister just because of some decorative objects? I think that those jewelry pieces have some higher value, which only you know about. You want to own the diamonds to make a good barter.

**DANIEL:** That's not true! Stop accusing me!

Although Daniel wanted to defend himself, he knew that Herbie concluded his intentions perfectly. He wanted to stand up and make the detectives leave but he couldn't do that due to his softer character. Herbie carried on with his speech.

**HERBIE:** You know what, mister Greg? I think I have just revealed the first suspect of Frank's murder! Without even saying that much, you have made me imagine the murder's motive.

**DANIEL:** Please stop! What you're saying doesn't make any sense! We were good friends! I had no reason to kill him! Furthermore, it was my sister who I have a feud with, not him. How did you even think of that?

Herbie hit the table with his fist and started shouting. Albert got slightly scared because of his scene.

**HERBIE:** Where did you go last night when you left Frank? You must have heard his crying! Did you disappear like some Canterville ghost?

**DANIEL:** I quickly went away. I was strongly drunk, so you can be glad that I even remember something.

**HERBIE:** Let's go, mister Fringe, but one more thing. Give me an address of your sister. If you give us a false one, we'll come back and bring you downtown!

Daniel started looking nervously after a piece of paper and a pen. Albert offered him the notebook with his pen.

**ALBERT:** You can write it down here. Try to write it as clearly as possible, please.

**DANIEL:** Thank you.

When he finished writing, he gave the notebook back to Albert. Herbie came to the door with  
threatful words.

**HERBIE:** I have my eyes on you, mister Greg!

Herbie opened the door and left. Albert followed him. Daniel got very upset and didn't say  
a word.

# Chapter Six

Marge Greg  
4 March 1947

Herbie and Albert got in the car. Albert cranked up the engine and while driving, he asked Herbie.

**ALBERT:** Was it necessary, mister Fox?

Herbie replied with confidence.

**HERBIE:** Being a detective is not an easy task, mister Fringe. Sometimes you just have to get out of your comfort zone and act fiercely.

**ALBERT:** But you know, he didn't show any signs of resisting, and he was cooperating with us.

**HERBIE:** I don't know if you heard the same things as I did, mister Fringe. He tried to lie to us! If we didn't have any previous testimonies, we still wouldn't have a single suspect.

**ALBERT:** And what about that barkeeper? Did you find him at least a bit suspicious?

**HERBIE:** Nothing is impossible. I keep an eye out on everyone who has something to do with the victim. That applies to each case. Nevertheless, the only suspect at the moment is Daniel Greg.

**ALBERT:** Can I ask you why? It is true that he only had a feud with his sister and not him.

**HERBIE:** It may seem illogical. You see, one thing remains the same on the testimony. As you remember, he told us that Frank was dating Daniel's sister before his death. Try to think about it the way I do. There are tons of possibilities and hypotheses about this. What if Lombardo had something to do with the diamonds, too? What if he had a plan with Marge based on those diamonds? Do you understand what I'm trying to say, mister Fringe?

**ALBERT:** I have a clearer picture in my mind already.

**HERBIE:** I doubt that Daniel told us the whole truth. Something just seems to be wrong with him. I don't like that.

After a few minutes, they arrived at a place where Marge Greg was supposed to live. It was a six-story apartment. Herbie looked at the mailboxes. When he saw Marge Greg written on one of them, he stated with a mild laughter.

**HERBIE:** Daniel didn't give us a fake address, at least.

They entered the building and started looking for the story on which was Marge. Herbie suggested.

**HERBIE:** I'll take a look on the left door, you'll take a look on the right door. Is it okay for you?

**ALBERT:** Yes, it is, mister Fox.

They walked across the first story, then the second, third, fourth. On the fifth, Albert found a tag of Marge Greg.

**ALBERT:** Here she is!

**HERBIE:** Great, mister Fringe.

Herbie knocked on the door. After a while, an attractive, approximately forty-year-old woman opened the door. She had long blonde hair and blue eyes. She was very fit and she had a soft voice. She looked at the detectives with horror in her eyes and asked.

**MARGE:** Who are you?

**HERBIE:** Detective Herbie Fox. This is my detective partner, Albert Fringe. We would like to ask you a few questions.

With a surprise and not saying a word, she let them both into her flat. When they sat down on her sofa, she asked a question.

**MARGE:** Would you like something to drink?

**HERBIE:** No, thank you. Sit down, please.

**MARGE:** As you say so, mister Fox.

She sat down on the sofa and Herbie started talking.

**HERBIE:** We're investigating a murder of Frank Lombardo. Could you please tell us where were you last night? Do you know something about yesterday's arrangements of Frank Lombardo and Daniel Greg?

With tears in her eyes, she wondered.

**MARGE:** Frank... Frank is dead?

**HERBIE:** I'm afraid so, missis Greg.

Marge started crying with her face covered in her palms. After a while, Herbie and Albert started looking at each other. Herbie decided to calm down Marge.

**HERBIE:** Listen to me, Marge. I do realize that this is a big tragedy for you, but we need as much information from you to solve the case of his murder and catch the murderer. So please, answer me, Marge. What can you tell us about Frank and Daniel's night out yesterday?

Marge started wiping out tears from her face with her hands but she could only speak with crying.

**MARGE:** I know... I know that... I know that they went to the bar. Frank called me and told me that he was going there with Daniel and that he was coming to visit me afterwards. He also told me that he might go home, so I didn't get nervous when he wasn't arriving.

**HERBIE:** Can you describe Frank?



**MARGE:** Do you mean his character and things like that?

**HERBIE:** Yes, missis Marge. I'm deeply sorry for your loss.

**MARGE:** Frank... I don't know how to describe him. People had mixed opinions about him. If I were to generalize, I would possibly say that he was a weirdo.

**HERBIE:** What exactly do you mean by that?

**MARGE:** He had a quite strange attitude towards things. He was even mysterious in some ways. For instance, he never told me a lot about his intentions in certain situations. It may sound strange, but this was one of the reasons why I loved him so much. Sometimes he even scared me with his behavior. At other times, he had mood swings and was a bit aggressive. It was never anything serious, though.

**HERBIE:** Can you tell me more about your relationship?

**MARGE:** We dated for over a year. He even proposed to me, but I rejected it. I wanted to marry him after solving all his financial issues.

**HERBIE:** Financial issues?

**MARGE:** Yes, you see, he was an electrician. He could just barely pay the rent and sometimes, he even had to borrow money from his mother in order to do it.

**HERBIE:** Could you give me an address of his mother?

**MARGE:** You'll need to wait for a moment. I'll fetch my phone book.

Marge stood up from her chair. After a while, she brought her phone book and put it on the table. She started looking for a piece of paper. Herbie told Albert.

**HERBIE:** You know what to do.

Albert gave the notebook to Marge with the same words as the last time.

**ALBERT:** Try to write it as clearly as possible, please.

Marge wrote down the address and returned the pen and notebook to Albert.

**MARGE:** Here you are.

Herbie continued.

**HERBIE:** Thank you, missis Marge. We shall continue now. There is one question that bothers me the most. What can you tell us about the diamonds?

**MARGE:** What diamonds?

Herbie looked at Marge with anger.

**HERBIE:** Don't play any games with us, missis Marge. I'm talking about the diamonds, which caused your brother and you to have a feud.

**MARGE:** Oh, yes, I know. Excuse me. I didn't know what diamonds you're talking about at first.

Herbie gave a scorned expression and stated.

**HERBIE:** Tell me everything you know about the diamonds. I know it's complicated, but we need to hear your version.

**MARGE:** Our mother, Evelyn, died a few weeks ago. She owned a lot of diamonds. I was born after my brother and he found out that her will does not say anything about who shall get the diamonds.

**HERBIE:** Do you know something about the value those diamonds might have?

**MARGE:** I'm not very good at these things. I don't think they are valuable very much, but maybe I'm wrong. On the other hand, my brother is greedy for money. I'm afraid that he might sell them right away when he gets them. It wouldn't be fair to our mother. She treasured them like gold for her entire life! Needless to say, I think that my brother will forcefully get them and I won't be able to do anything about it.

**HERBIE:** So you don't know anything about their value?

**MARGE:** Not a financial one. Still, they mean a lot to me since my mother treasured them so much throughout her life.

Herbie looked at the ground and mumbled.

**HERBIE:** That son of a bitch!

Marge got surprised and asked.

**MARGE:** Pardon?

**HERBIE:** I'm sorry, missis Marge. I have a feeling that your brother is keeping something in secret.

**MARGE:** Like what?

**HERBIE:** To be honest, I think that your brother wants those diamonds because of their value. Is there some connection between Frank and the diamonds?

**MARGE:** Well, sort of. In my mother's will, there is a statement, which says that the child who is married should inherit more.

**HERBIE:** And you claim that you did want to marry Frank.

**MARGE:** Yes, I did. I only refused his proposal because of the complicated situations going on right now.

**HERBIE:** I see. Is your brother married, missis Marge?

**MARGE:** He got divorced two years ago. Hannah is now his ex-wife.

**HERBIE:** It's not easy for me to say this, missis Marge, but the future of your brother looks questionable.

**MARGE:** Please tell me you're not seeing him as a suspect of Frank's murder!

**HERBIE:** I'm sorry, missis Marge, but yes. After hearing the testimonies, there is a cloud of doubt over the innocence of your brother.

Herbie stood up and looked around the room. Meanwhile, he told Albert.

**HERBIE:** It looks like we're moving on, mister Fringe.

Herbie came to the door and said.

**HERBIE:** Thank you, missis Marge. Take care of yourself.

As he was closing the door, Marge came and added with fear.

**MARGE:** Wait, mister Fox.

**HERBIE:** Yes, missis Marge?

**MARGE:** Promise me you won't arrest my brother. I really doubt that he would commit a murder!

**HERBIE:** Promises are to keep. Unfortunately, I can't keep this one, missis Marge.

Marge remained silent and Herbie left the apartment with Albert. When they got into the car, Herbie started thinking and Albert asked.

**ALBERT:** What are we going to do now, mister Fox?

Herbie looked at Albert and replied.

**HERBIE:** I'm thinking, mister Fringe. Needless to say, I suppose that Daniel is on thin ice already.

**ALBERT:** Do you think he's the murderer?

**HERBIE:** On one hand, something tells me that he is. On the other one, I don't think so. Even if the testimonies would fit together some pieces towards him, it still just doesn't make sense very much. Why would he put a daisy next to his body? Would he be able to murder a friend who was with him in the bar that same night? Would it be worth a few pieces of diamonds? Either someone lied to us about something or we're missing a lot of information.

**ALBERT:** Do you want interrogate Frank's mother?

**HERBIE:** I'm thinking about that. She may give us some insights, so I suggest doing that.

**ALBERT:** And what about Marge? Are you suspicious about her as well?

**HERBIE:** Of course. She might be involved in those diamonds even more than Daniel. Still, I trust her more than I trust Daniel. Anyway, don't worry about it. We're here to solve this murder.

# Chapter Seven

Elizabeth Lombardo

4 March 1947

After a moment of silence, Herbie spoke again.

**HERBIE:** I'm very tired. I think that we are still able to go and visit Elizabeth Lombardo, though. You know what? Let's go to the Black Dragon restaurant, which is just two blocks away from here. I'm starving! Who's supposed to make it through the entire day without food?

**ALBERT:** All right, mister Fox. I'm quite hungry myself.

Albert drove to the restaurant. They both entered and sat at the table. After a few seconds, a waiter came to their table and asked.

**WAITER:** What would you like to order, gentlemen?

Herbie replied in a dry manner with a menu in his hands.

**HERBIE:** This steak looks decent. I think I'll have it. What about you, mister Fringe?

**ALBERT:** I'm a vegetarian. I'll have a salad.

The waiter wrote down the order and left with a statement.

**WAITER:** All right, gentlemen.

Herbie looked at Albert with a smile and noted.

**HERBIE:** You're a youngster, mister Fringe. You need to eat meat. In this modern world, you won't even survive without it. What made you decide to be a vegetarian?

**ALBERT:** I just don't think that animals deserve to die for food.

Herbie gave a surprised look and said.

**HERBIE:** That's very interesting, mister Fringe! Even though you chose to be a detective and explore deceased human bodies, you pity dead animals. Let me tell you something, mister Fringe. In order to be a successful detective, you need to have a colder attitude!

Twenty minutes had passed. Herbie became slightly nervous and was starting to be impatient. It changed when he saw the waiter with plates in his hands going in their direction.

**WAITER:** Here you are, gentlemen. Enjoy your meal.

Herbie thanked the waiter. A few more minutes passed and a mysterious man entered the restaurant. He wore a hat and a brown suit. He had a round face shape with a dense moustache above his lips. When he sat at the table, Herbie couldn't take his eyes off him. He told Albert.

**HERBIE:** Do you see that man? The one wearing a brown suit, I think I sent him to jail once for robbing houses. It was in 1927. I'm not that sure, though.

Albert got curious and looked at him. When the man noticed that he caught the attention of both of them, he got stressed. Herbie asked the waiter for a glass of water and stated.

**HERBIE:** I don't like this, mister Fringe. He's behaving quite strangely.

**ALBERT:** He probably remembers you, mister Fox.

**HERBIE:** Either that or he's onto something again.

Herbie continued eating and when he finished his steak, he decided to go and speak to the man. As he was approaching him, the man stood up in horror and started to run. He quickly got into his car and fled in high speed. Herbie shouted.

**HERBIE:** Fringe! Fringe! Quickly! Get in the car and step on it!

Albert stood up and they both ran to the car. Herbie got very nervous.

**HERBIE:** Step on it! He's running away, mister Fringe!

Albert accelerated quickly and chased after the man. Herbie took the transmitter and announced.

**HERBIE:** Detective Fox, badge number 107, do you copy?

A few seconds later, a voice of a man spoke.

**ASSISTANT:** Yes, copy!

Herbie continued.

**HERBIE:** We need backup on Lincoln Avenue! There is a reckless driver heading to the highway!

**ASSISTANT:** Roger that! Sending backup to Lincoln Avenue!

After a half a minute, the man hit a tree and tried to get out of the car. Herbie quickly opened the door and ran to the vehicle with a gun. He shouted.

**HERBIE:** Get out of your vehicle! Put your hands up!

The man got out of his car and obeyed Herbie. Herbie shouted with anger.

**HERBIE:** Who the hell are you?"

The man didn't say a word and he had a determined look on his face. Herbie was trying to persuade him to speak.

**HERBIE:** Why did you run away from us? Are you involved in a crime?

The man remained silent. Herbie chose to appear even tougher.

**HERBIE:** If you choose to remain silent, we will arrest you and bring you in for questioning! The choice is yours!

The man resisted and looked at Herbie. He started speaking with a calm voice.

**CHARLIE:** I'm... My name is Charlie.

**HERBIE:** Charlie who?

**CHARLIE:** Charlie Crown.

Herbie experienced a flashback. He recognized his name because he wrote it down once into his notebook. He couldn't remember the reason, though. Charlie continued.

**CHARLIE:** When I saw you in the restaurant, I recognized you. I was near the Lopez Hills Bar when you were investigating the crime scene. I got scared and I ran away.

Herbie thought of his words but he couldn't clearly understand Charlie Crown's point.

**HERBIE:** But why did you get so terrified? Your reaction was inadequate!

Charlie tried to explain his behavior further but he still didn't make a clear point to Herbie.

**CHARLIE:** You need to understand. I have social disorders and I can get panic attacks very easily when there is something going on, which involves me at least a little bit. I'm also going to therapy for this.

Herbie got angry again.

**HERBIE:** That doesn't give you any reason to run away from the police! Tell me, how much are you involved in the murder of Frank Lombardo?

Charlie got terrified once again and replied.

**CHARLIE:** I'm not! I'm just a caretaker in the apartment in which he lived in! Nothing else! I swear!

Herbie remembered the letter, which contained Charlie Crown's signature. Meanwhile, the police backup arrived. Herbie commanded to them.

**HERBIE:** Bring him to the station! I want to question him more.

The police took Charlie. He was showing horror throughout the entire process. Albert got out of the car and came to Herbie.

**ALBERT:** Who was that, mister Fox?

**HERBIE:** The caretaker from Frank Lombardo's apartment.

**ALBERT:** Why did he run away from us?

**HERBIE:** He told me he had some a social disorder. There's something wrong here. I don't think he told the truth. There must be something more.

**ALBERT:** What are we going to do now?

**HERBIE:** We're going to visit Frank Lombardo's mother first. Then we'll go interrogate him.

They both got to the car and headed to Elizabeth Lombardo's house. When they arrived, a short, old woman opened the door. She could be around seventy-six. She had hearing problems and couldn't walk properly. She had tears in her eyes.

**ELIZABETH:** Can I help you, gentlemen?

**HERBIE:** Detective Herbie Fox. This is my detective partner, Albert Fringe. We would like to ask you a few questions about your son.

**ELIZABETH:** Come in.

Elizabeth let them in. It was a small house with a narrow corridor at the entrance, which led to the living room. When they entered the living room, Elizabeth fetched a jar of tea and three mugs.

**ELIZABETH:** Have yourself a treat, gentlemen.

Herbie took a cup and slowly started to drink. He thanked Elizabeth when he drank about half of it. Elizabeth sat down, too. Afterwards, as always, Herbie lead the conversation and Albert was listening. Elizabeth stated at first.

**ELIZABETH:** I hope you'll catch that monster. He deserves to be hanged!

**HERBIE:** We are not too far from it, missis Lombardo. We have three suspects already.

Elizabeth gazed at Herbie and said.

**ELIZABETH:** Tell me who those people are.

**HERBIE:** I shouldn't say that, missis Lombardo. There are no clear conclusions yet.

Elizabeth replied with anger.

**ELIZABETH:** My poor son is dead! I think I deserve to be informed who might have caused his death! "What a spoiled world we're living in these days!"

**HERBIE:** Believe me, missis Lombardo. I would have told you those names. If someone deserves to hear them, it's you. But we may blame someone who has nothing to do with your son's murder eventually.

**ELIZABETH:** Tell me anyway, detective.

Herbie hesitated at first but he started to give hints to missis Lombardo about the suspects.

**HERBIE:** Does the name Daniel Greg say anything to you, missis Lombardo?

Elizabeth gave a surprised look.

**ELIZABETH:** Of course I do. He's the brother of my son's girlfriend. Well, ex-girlfriend already, unfortunately. Are you saying he might be the murderer?

**HERBIE:** Actually, I'm suspicious about him primarily because he was with Frank that night.

Herbie knew he was lying. He just wanted Elizabeth to remain calm and not do anything reckless. That's why he kept the fact of Daniel being the biggest suspect a secret.

**ELIZABETH:** Don't you have any evidence against him? Oh my, even detectives can't do their job properly these days!

Although Herbie got a little angry after hearing these words, he tried to remain gentle. He calmed himself down with a thought that those words had come from a senile old woman.

**HERBIE:** Don't be so cynical, missis Lombardo. You don't even know how mentally and physically difficult our work is.

**ELIZABETH:** What have I done that I ended up in this dishonest town of America?

**HERBIE:** Let's get to the point, missis Lombardo. Mister Fringe, pay close attention.

Herbie put his mug on the table and started the interrogation. Albert took the notebook and wrote down notes.

**HERBIE:** What can you tell us about your son?

**ELIZABETH:** What do you want to know? It's not clear to me.

**HERBIE:** Describe him in detail. Tell me everything you can about his personality.

Elizabeth's eyes started to get moist again.

**ELIZABETH:** My son... He was a good man. He was a loving son and he was honest.

Elizabeth took a handkerchief and wiped her tears. After a little while, she continued.

**ELIZABETH:** His personality was unique. He wasn't the same as the other men. He was a great student in school and he liked to help people. And yes, even he had some issues. Who doesn't, mister Fox?



Herbie continued with a bit more sensitive voice from this point.

**HERBIE:** Of course, missis Lombardo. Could you define what you mean by saying that his personality was unique?

**ELIZABETH:** I can't describe it clearly. He was just different. He saw the world in a very particular way of his.

**HERBIE:** Could you tell me about your son's past?

**ELIZABETH:** He was a very good boy and son, but sometimes he easily got in trouble. He had some mood swings in which he made his temper apparent. I remember that he fought a boy because of a girl once. He was just strange. He also hung out with the wrong people.

**HERBIE:** What people?

**ELIZABETH:** All kinds of bad people. It was either someone who didn't have his mind in the right place or someone even worse, a criminal. I remember that when he was a teenager, I found a small bag of marijuana in his pants. I immediately forbid him to see those people who gave it to him.

Herbie got surprised and asked.

**HERBIE:** Do you want to tell me that Frank had some bad connections?

**ELIZABETH:** It was a long time ago. I doubt that he had some connections like that before his death.

**HERBIE:** Did your son ever have some problems with law?

**ELIZABETH:** He sometimes hung out with those wrong people and did some silly things. When he got into some trouble, I really think it wasn't because of his own will. There wasn't a single day when the police didn't knock on our door. I can only hope that he didn't have any problems that I didn't know about. He kept everything bad to himself and never told me about the things he wasn't proud of.

**HERBIE:** I think I know what you mean by that, missis Lombardo. Can you tell us something about the diamonds?

Elizabeth thought for a moment and replied.

**ELIZABETH:** Wait for a moment, detective. Something's coming up in my mind. I think he mentioned it. It was about how he had an argument with his girlfriend's brother.

**HERBIE:** That's all right, missis Lombardo. You don't have to tell us about that. We have enough information from the previous witnesses. What can you tell us about the relationship between Frank and Marge?

**ELIZABETH:** Assuming from what I saw, they looked happy. I would pick someone else for him, though. I don't really like her type of women. She's just too easy-going. But I was glad that he could find someone after his divorce.

**HERBIE:** He was married?

**ELIZABETH:** Yes, he was. Bernadette Moon was his wife.

**HERBIE:** What was the reason of their divorce?

**ELIZABETH:** To tell the truth, I don't even know myself. I think they didn't get along with each other anymore. I'm even wondering how they fell in love at that time. They were quite opposite to each other.

**HERBIE:** Do you have grandchildren, missis Lombardo?

**ELIZABETH:** That's a good question, detective! Do you see any pictures of children in my house? No, I don't. Bernadette even wanted to have children, but Frank didn't. Look at me now! My one and only son is dead and I don't have any grandchildren! Not to mention that I'm a widow. I'm about to die soon, too. This is not how I thought it would be.

Elizabeth got into even deeper sadness.

**HERBIE:** How long has it been since your son's divorce?

**ELIZABETH:** It's been a few years.

Herbie saw that Elizabeth couldn't handle the conversation anymore. He decided to end the interrogation.

**HERBIE:** All right, missis Lombardo. I don't want to make you suffer any longer. If you think of anything else, call me. This is my card. You're the only person who hasn't told me a single lie and who won't throw the card into the trash.

Herbie put his card on the table and quietly left with Albert. When he was at the door, he added.

**HERBIE:** Take care of yourself, missis Lombardo. You're a very strong woman. I believe that things can be good in your life.

Herbie and Albert left. Herbie was slightly depressed after the conversation with Elizabeth and asked.

**HERBIE:** What's the time, mister Fringe?

Albert looked at his watch.

**ALBERT:** It's quarter past four, mister Fox.

Herbie thought for a while and said.

**HERBIE:** I'm not sure, mister Fringe. I think we should continue tomorrow. We've been through a lot today. I bet that you agree with me.

**ALBERT:** You're right, mister Fox. My family is waiting for me at home.

**HERBIE:** You're a father, mister Fringe? That's impressive! How old are your children?

**ALBERT:** I have a five-year-old son and a two-year-old daughter.

**HERBIE:** That's wonderful, mister Fringe. You're a true man!

**ALBERT:** What about you, mister Fox? Do you have children?

**HERBIE:** I have three. They're all adults now. Two sons and a daughter. My firstborn son went to Europe and I haven't seen him for years now. How I wish we would get along better. My second son is now studying law. I think he wants to follow my footsteps. He deserves an easier job than I have, I would say. My daughter got married a few months ago. I'm so proud of her. She's a surgeon.

**ALBERT:** How old are they, mister Fox?

Herbie smiled.

**HERBIE:** I don't want to appear witty, mister Fringe. They're not much younger than you are. Back in the day, it was quite different with the youngsters.

Albert laughed and continued.

**ALBERT:** And what about your wife, mister Fox?

**HERBIE:** Well, unfortunately, she passed away. She died of a lung cancer. I'll never forget her. Sometimes, I can still see her and hear her.

Herbie's mood got lower again. After a while, he added.

**HERBIE:** All right, mister Fringe. See you at the station tomorrow. Remember, a terrified racy caretaker is awaiting us. We also need to investigate Frank Lombardo's flat. I'll research all of our investigations and evidence tonight. You can do the same if you want to, mister Fringe.

After these words, they both said goodbye to each other. Herbie came home and changed his clothes. Wearing only a flat top afterwards, he put a piece of sausage on the table. After a while, he cut slices of bread and started eating. He was glad that he was finally home. Interrogations were very exhausting for him. Three hours passed and Herbie was still thinking about the case. He went by his plan and put all the evidence on the table. The night was increasing and the storm appeared. Herbie sat down and started analyzing the clues. He grabbed the piece of daisy and thought to himself.

**HERBIE:** Why did the murderer place this daisy next to the body? Was he trying to say something? Does it symbolize something? Or is it just a sick custom of his? Also, it's artificial. It may have something hidden on it somewhere.

Herbie observed the piece of daisy in detail. He couldn't find anything until he saw something peculiar on one of the petals. He looked for a magnifying glass and tried to concentrate on it. He saw a small-embossed number one.

**HERBIE:** Number one? What's that supposed to mean? Is it his first victim? Does it mean that we can expect him to strike again?

He didn't see anything else on the piece of daisy. He carried on to the next evidence. It was the letter from the caretaker. He observed the envelope. He found it to be strange that the caretaker wrote the address of the apartment twice. It looked like he sent the letter through the post office, but there wasn't any stamp. Herbie couldn't see the reason why the caretaker felt the need to write down the address twice. He opened up the envelope and started to read the letter. It was written with a blue inked pen.

*Waena Apartments*

*1320 Aala Street Honolulu, HI 96817  
(866) 423-9317*

*Dear mister Lombardo.*

*I went through the rent payments for the month of February and I have some news for you. Yes, once again, with regret and anger, I inform you that you're the only person in this apartment who hasn't paid the rent. The deadline of the payment was set for the 28 February 1947. It's been almost a week since this date has passed. Could you explain to me, why didn't you pay the rent again? I gave you a clear warning that I can throw you out of your apartment after three late payments. This is, as you may know, the fourth time. Do you realize this fact, mister Lombardo? You can be glad that I'm so generous towards you. I moved your deadline to the end of this week. If I don't receive your payment, you can pack your bags and move out. I'm not willing to tolerate your manners anymore! Not only that, but I have also received complaints about you from the neighbors. This is your last warning! I repeat, one last warning!*

*With regards,*

*Charlie Crown (the caretaker).*

Herbie put down the letter and noticed a small piece of folded paper in the envelope. He unfolded it and number one was written on it with thick large-sized writing. Herbie thought with the piece of paper in his hands.

**HERBIE:** Number one again? Why does it appear on the piece of daisy AND in his envelope to Lombardo? Is Charlie Crown the murderer? I wonder how he'll explain not only this fact but also how he was able to almost blackmail Lombardo when he has social problems. It doesn't make sense to me. Would a caretaker murder someone because of late payments? I would have to work overtime if each caretaker thought like that! But also, why would Daniel murder his good friend? Because of some pieces of diamonds? Does Charlie Crown know anything about the diamonds? Maybe he has some intentions with them and he's trying to cover up himself with telling everyone he has disorders. And what about Marge? I can't think of any reason why she would do that but... And generally, what the hell does Frank Lombardo has to do with those diamonds? It's simply a thing of the Greg family. There's not much left after Frank, obviously.

Herbie thought of the card of Malfred Ash, which he had in his coat pocket.

**HERBIE:** I almost forgot. I need to take a look whether I still have that card of the guy named Ash. He thought, I think I wrote it down to my notebook.

Herbie opened his notebook and saw Malfred Ash's address on one page.

**HERBIE:** I have an idea. I'll try to find Malfred Ash in the yellow pages and call it. Just to see what comes up when you call his number.

Herbie looked for the yellow pages. He found it on a shelf after a while. He searched for Malfred Ash and after a few minutes, he found his number. He dialed the number. When he dialed it for the first time, noone answered. When he dialed it for the second time, voice of a woman spoke.

**WOMAN:** Hello?

**HERBIE:** Good evening, miss. Is this the number of Malfred Ash?

After a moment of silence, the woman replied with insecurity.

**WOMAN:** Who's calling?

**HERBIE:** Herbie Fox. Could I speak to him, please?

Another moment of silence occurred. This time, Herbie could hear a whispering. A short while later, Herbie asked.

**HERBIE:** Are you there, miss?

The whispering went on and Herbie raised his voice.

**HERBIE:** I advise you to answer me, miss! I'm starting to lose my patience!

Herbie could hear a conversation between some man and the woman from the telephone, but he didn't get any answer. The woman hung up. Herbie thought to himself.

**HERBIE:** Something's wrong here! I'll try to call it once again twenty minutes later. I won't go easy on them!

Twenty minutes had passed and Herbie tried to call the number again. This time, a deep man voice spoke. There was a loud music playing in the background and many other voices. Herbie didn't want to say that he was a detective.

**MAN:** Hello?

**HERBIE:** Good evening. Is this the number of Malfred Ash?

**MAN:** Who's asking?

**HERBIE:** Herbie Fox.

**MAN:** Who?

**HERBIE:** Never mind. Listen, I found your card somewhere and I wanted to ask whether you offer some services.

**MAN:** Well, yes. I'm an electrician. I repair household appliances.

**HERBIE:** Are you treating all of your customers like this?

**MAN:** Look, I'm busy. Do you want something from me or not?

Herbie hung up. He found it unnecessary to argue with some arrogant stranger.

**HERBIE:** An electrician? Huh... I don't believe that for some reason! Why would Frank Lombardo have a card of an electrician in his pocket? He was an electrician, too! Were they co-

workers? But still, why would Lombardo need his card? That's a question that Malfred Ash needs to answer tomorrow. Should I even go as a detective? It would maybe be better if I dressed as a civilian. What can this guy have to do with the case? Electrician? I doubt so!

Herbie yawned and thought to himself.

**HERBIE:** I'm really tired. I've had enough. I should go to bed. Who knows if I might solve this weird murder?

He brushed his teeth, put on his pajamas, and went to bed. After a little while, he fell asleep.

# Chapter Eight

Charlie Crown  
The Police Station  
5 March 1947

It was another sunny morning and Herbie met Albert at the police station. They went to the Lieutenant's office. The lieutenant asked.

**LIEUTENANT:** How are you doing so far? Is there any progress?

Herbie started talking.

**HERBIE:** We're working on it. We have several suspects. I think we might solve the case today. We still need to interrogate some people and investigate some places though.

**LIEUTENANT:** Should I consider it to be good news, mister Fox?

**HERBIE:** I think you won't regret doing that, lieutenant.

**LIEUTENANT:** That's good, mister Fox. The journalists arranged a press conference today. They want to hear only positive statements! They are like leeches, but it's understandable that they want to put out something interesting.

**HERBIE:** Don't worry, lieutenant. We have it under the control.

**LIEUTENANT:** Good! Have you found out the motive yet?

**HERBIE:** There are misunderstandings around some diamonds. That's why I think it may be a material motive. Either that or we still don't know something about Frank Lombardo.

**LIEUTENANT:** And what about that piece of daisy? I bet that those leeches will ask me about that.

**HERBIE:** It's probably a custom of the murderer. I haven't found out yet. All I have are assumptions and I wouldn't say them out loud if I were you.

**LIEUTENANT:** All right, so it's his custom. That should be all, mister Fox. I think I might be able to handle it from this point. I'm sure that a detective like you will catch the murderer as soon as he shows up. You can both leave now. Take care.

**HERBIE:** Goodbye.

Herbie and Albert left. As they were walking through the corridor, officer Blake stopped them.

**OFFICER BLAKE:** Fox! Haven't you forgot about Charlie Crown yesterday? He was sitting in the interrogation room for hours and you haven't showed up!

**HERBIE:** Really? I may need help with some things. What did you do with him?

**OFFICER BLAKE:** We locked him up in the cell after three hours. Poor guy, he was so confused about what was happening.

They all three laughed out loud. Herbie got a little upset about it and said.

**HERBIE:** That's all right, mister Blake. He can thank you for informing us about that. We're going to interrogate him. In which room is he in?

**OFFICER BLAKE:** I'm going to tell the guards. He's still in the cell so you need to wait for about ten minutes. We'll put him in the room two. This time, it would be nice of you to show up, mister Fox!

**HERBIE:** Thank you, mister Blake. I would be lost without you!

**OFFICER BLAKE:** A pack of Pall Mall should be enough to show your gratitude, mister Fox. I think I deserve it after what I've done for you. Don't worry, I'll share it with you and we'll both have a nice smoke after work.

**HERBIE:** Of course, mister Blake. I just need to solve this case first.

**OFFICER BLAKE:** All right, wait here then.

Herbie and Albert sat down and after a moment, Dean Marston appeared and came to them.

**DEAN:** Mister Fox! Mister Fox! Can I ask you about the investigation?

**HERBIE:** We're making some progress, mister Marston. We have no clear conclusions yet. What about you? Have you found out something new?

**DEAN:** No, I haven't. Do you have some new suspects?

**HERBIE:** I wouldn't say that there is someone as suspicious as Daniel Greg, but yes, we do. Basically, everyone who had something to do with Frank Lombardo is a suspect.

**DEAN:** That's certain, mister Fox. Anyway, I have a lot of work to do today. I was just curious about the case. I'm going to leave you now. See you around, mister Fox.

**HERBIE:** See you around, mister Marston.

Marston went away. Herbie started talking with Albert.

**HERBIE:** Mister Fringe, I haven't heard anything from you for a while. What do you think about the investigation so far?

**ALBERT:** I don't have much to say, mister Fox. I have mixed feelings about everything that occurred yesterday. I even wonder if I chose the right job.

**HERBIE:** This is your first homicide case, mister Fringe. You'll get used to the pressure as time passes. You don't even know how much pressure I'm under right now! I can tell you that being a detective's partner is one of the softest jobs you can have on the squad! Have you got some thoughts about this case to add?

**ALBERT:** I've thought about the evidence quite intensively yesterday, but I couldn't come up with anything. What about you, mister Fox?

**HERBIE:** I do have some new information. I've observed the letter from the caretaker. I've also tried to call Malfred Ash but it wasn't successful. Lombardo had his card in his coat pocket. First time when I called, a woman answered the phone. She ignored me almost the entire time. It took a few minutes before I got to talk with Ash himself. Let me tell you. You won't find so easily such a talkative electrician like he is! Thinking about it, we need to visit him today. I'm just wondering whether it would be more effective to come as a civilian. I don't like what was happening during our phone calls.

**ALBERT:** That won't be necessary, in my opinion. If he really keeps something a secret from us, he will probably try to run away.



**HERBIE:** That's not what I'm pointing at. He might lie to us the entire time. In a way, you're right. When he does, we'll be able to send him behind the prison bars.

Ten minutes passed and officer Blake came back.

**OFFICER BLAKE:** He's waiting for you, mister Fox. Be careful, though. He looks angry. You probably have to go tough on him!

**HERBIE:** Thank you, Officer Blake.

Herbie and Albert stood up and went to the interrogation room number two. Charlie Crown was sitting at the table already. He had a furious look on his face. Herbie sat down and started the interrogation. As usual, Albert was transcribing.

**HERBIE:** Greetings, mister Crown. We meet again.

Charlie Crown replied with fury.

**CHARLIE:** Greetings, mister Fox. I'm so grateful that you put me in a cell for no reason! I've enjoyed staying the night here!

**HERBIE:** I'm glad to hear that, mister Crown. At least I don't need to have any regrets about what happened.

**CHARLIE:** Do you understand the word irony, detective?

**HERBIE:** Of course I do, mister Crown. I would have asked you the same question because you probably didn't understand me correctly.

**CHARLIE:** I'm happy that you even showed up, detective. It was so sad for me to be here alone.

**HERBIE:** Excuse me. Is this the same Charlie Crown who I met yesterday? Because I observe quite a big change in your behavior, mister Crown! You're being rude to the detective! What happened to the Charlie Crown who ran away from me and then tried to explain me his social phobias with fear? You're a very complicated person!

**CHARLIE:** You're hilarious, detective! Just try to go against me! I have official documents from my shrink. I'll sue you and I'll be so kind that I won't mention my night spent here does that sound all right to you?

**HERBIE:** Oh, stop it, mister Crown! Do you want me to go against you? Well, I have something to show you then!

Herbie took Charlie's letter to Frank from his pocket. He unfolded it and he held it firmly in his hands, pointing towards Charlie Crown.

**HERBIE:** See this, mister Crown? You have a nice handwriting. You deserve a new luxury pen. You also have a lot of courage! Just one thing, I wouldn't expect it from someone who ran away from us yesterday. You literally threatened Frank. You said you'll make him homeless!

Charlie defended himself.

**CHARLIE:** I had a right to do that! That man was nothing, but trouble! He never paid the rent on time and he caused some other problems, too. I'm glad that scum died! People like him have no place in this world!

**HERBIE:** Be careful, mister Crown! Nobody deserves to die. It doesn't matter whom we're talking about. Everybody deserves to live! Anyway, you're a new suspect in this case.

**CHARLIE:** Excuse me? How dare you? Do you know who I am? I studied law! I wanted to work as an advocate!

**HERBIE:** I don't care, mister Crown! I don't judge people by their education or job! I have no idea who you might be and I'm not even interested, to be honest. Now, tell me. Do you know something about the diamonds?

**CHARLIE:** I have no idea what you're talking about.

**HERBIE:** Be honest, mister Crown!

**CHARLIE:** I seriously don't know.

**HERBIE:** All right, I believe you then. But what does this mean.

Herbie showed Charlie the small piece of paper with number one written on it.

**CHARLIE:** What's not to understand, mister Fox? In our apartment, we number the alerts. Not all of them, only serious ones. Alert about the late payment is one of them. Lombardo could be glad that my previous warnings were only informal. Since this was his first formal warning, I needed to put this piece of paper into the envelope. Ridiculous, I know, but that's how it works in our apartment.

**HERBIE:** That's interesting, mister Crown! Could you explain why the number one was written on the piece of daisy, as well?

**CHARLIE:** No, I can't.

**HERBIE:** Well, all right then, mister Crown. One last question. Do you have keys to Lombardo's apartment?

**CHARLIE:** Of course I do. What kind of a caretaker would I be if I didn't?

**HERBIE:** Isn't that illegal, mister Crown?

**CHARLIE:** No, it's not! I respect the privacy of everyone in the apartment. Even if you probably don't think so.

**HERBIE:** I'm not accusing you of anything, mister Crown. We just need the keys from Lombardo's apartment, that's all. If you give them to us, you are free for now. I'm saying that because if I had to judge purely by this interrogation, I would send you to prison right away!

**CHARLIE:** How rude! That's unbelievable! You can be glad if I give you the keys!

**HERBIE:** Either that or you'll spend some more cruel nights here until you're claimed to be innocent!

**CHARLIE:** Come with me to the apartment.

The guard asked Herbie.

**GUARD:** Are you leaving, mister Fox?

**HERBIE:** Yes. You can free him.

**GUARD:** Goodbye, mister Fox.

**HERBIE:** Goodbye.

Herbie and Albert stood up and left with Charlie. When they opened the door, Herbie told Charlie.

**HERBIE:** No need to drive, mister Crown! You're coming with us.

They all three got in the car. During the commute, Herbie talked with Charlie.

**CHARLIE:** Where is my car, mister Fox?

**HERBIE:** That's not important right now, mister Crown. I need to have you near me all the time!

**CHARLIE:** How rude!

**HERBIE:** I feel the same, mister Crown. You're behaving inappropriately towards us!

**CHARLIE:** Inappropriately? Should I polish your shoes, detective?

**HERBIE:** That's a good offer. A better attitude would be a better one though.

**CHARLIE:** You don't even deserve it, detective!

**HERBIE:** Do you know what, mister Crown? Just be quiet from now on. I think we'll be both glad when you don't end up in prison for good.

# Chapter Nine

Apartment of Frank Lombardo

5 March 1947

Charlie stopped talking. He hadn't said a word until they got there. After a few minutes, they arrived at the apartment. Charlie Crown led Herbie and Albert to his flat where he had Frank's keys. He had a big board in his workroom, which contained copies of keys of all the people in the apartment. He grabbed keys to Lombardo's flat and gave them to Herbie.

**CHARLIE:** Get out of my sight, detective. You have to return them afterwards. The person who will rent Frank Lombardo's apartment will need a copy of these keys.

**HERBIE:** Don't you worry, mister Crown. I don't think I'll stop by anytime soon at this apartment.

**CHARLIE:** Please, just leave.

Herbie and Albert left Charlie Crown's flat. They looked around the apartment and soon afterwards found Frank Lombardo's flat. Herbie gave the keys to Albert and said.

**HERBIE:** Would you be so kind, mister Fringe?

Albert opened the door and they both entered. There was a strong smell and mess everywhere.

**HERBIE:** It looks like that window hasn't been opened for days. We have to do something about that terrifying smell!

Albert stated.

**ALBERT:** I'll open the window up in the living room.

**HERBIE:** Walk through the entire flat and observe everything that might be interesting, mister Fringe.

**ALBERT:** Can I touch those things?

**HERBIE:** It shouldn't be a problem but I would recommend you to wear gloves. I always carry one pair in my pocket. Just in case.

Herbie took a pair of gloves out of his coat pocket and gave it to Albert.

**HERBIE:** Here you are. I'll grab a napkin. Either way, fingerprints won't really help us.

**ALBERT:** All right, mister Fox. Thank you.

**HERBIE:** Go through the living room. I'll check the Lombardo's workroom.

**ALBERT:** All right, mister Fox.

**HERBIE:** If you see anything really interesting, call me. I'll also tell you about my findings.

Albert nodded his head. He put on the white gloves and went to the living room. Herbie took off to the workroom. He opened the door and entered.

**HERBIE:** Let's see. A big dirty room with a table. Plenty of stuff lying on the floor. I don't think that Lombardo was a very tidy person. I wouldn't be able to work in a room like this one.

Herbie looked around more and he saw tiny papers on the floor. Most of them were some documents, but one piece of paper interested him. It was tickets from a cash machine with a word *LOSE* written on it. He noticed more losing tickets soon afterwards.

**HERBIE:** It's obvious that Frank had a gambling problem. He lost his money and couldn't pay the rent on time because of it. But how did he get the money eventually?

Herbie looked further and sat at the table. He observed each paper that was on the table. There were documents, utility bills, game tickets, telephone, and a typewriter. Herbie noticed one flyer. It was an advertisement of a jewelry store on the Lincoln Avenue. On the back of the flyer, there was a jewelry auction advertisement.

**HERBIE:** Did Lombardo have some intentions with the diamonds eventually? It wasn't his property.

After a little while, he noticed a letter from Daniel Greg on the table. He started reading it.

*Frank,*

*Don't do anything irrational with the money I lent you to pay the rent. You have enough problems already! You need to stop with the gambling. Your chances of winning are very slim, anyway. If you spend my money on the game tickets, I'll never lend you again! Don't tell Marge, but I found buyers for the diamonds. They offered me two million dollars for them. Can you believe that? Soon, I'll be a millionaire! All you have to do is to sign those papers I gave you earlier. You know about that statement in my mother's will. Since you're my future brother-in-law already, you can give me all the rights for the ownership of the diamonds. Dealing with Marge would be a lot more difficult. I hope that you'll be the wise one and that you will help me. We'll go 50/50 with the money. Can you even imagine what you can buy with that kind of money? See you on Friday. Pick me up at six.*

*Daniel*

**HERBIE:** What have we got here? Not only did Daniel want the diamonds for selling purposes, but he also wanted to betray his sister! I suppose that Frank didn't agree with signing the contract. I can easily imagine the reason why he could murder Lombardo. He wanted permission, which he didn't receive. With the murder of Lombardo, not only would he be able to find another way to the diamonds, but also, he wouldn't have to share his money with anyone. That makes sense but it still does not look like the full story. I'll look further. Greg is on a thin ice, though. If I find evidence that tells about some connections with mafia, I'll arrest him immediately!

Herbie looked through the papers further. There were many letters. One of them caught his interest. On the envelope, there was only Frank's address and no signature or name of the sender.

*Lombardo,*

*Boss wants to meet you and talk about some things. Come on Wednesday to the Riviera Bar at six o'clock. Come alone.*

**HERBIE:** I have a feeling that Lombardo wasn't a saint, either. It looks like a letter from some mafia!

Herbie stood up and continued searching for objects and he found a magazine about gardening. There was an illustration of daisy placed on a diamond on the front cover. Inside the magazine, there was Frank's order for subscription of the magazine for the year 1948.

**HERBIE:** Lombardo and gardening? He can't even take care of his flat! Besides, there's no garden nearby! Is it possible that the murderer burglarized into Lombardo's flat before he committed the murder? It would probably explain the mess that's all around here, too. I think it's time to call to the Riviera Bar. I guess that poor Frank won't mind if I use his telephone. That cover is so ironical!

Herbie looked for a phonebook. He found one in the drawer of the table. He searched for the Riviera Bar's phone number and dialed it. A male barkeeper answered the phone.

**BARKEEPER:** Hello?

**HERBIE:** Good afternoon, sir. Detective Herbie Fox speaking. Can we talk?

**BARKEEPER:** Yeah, we can.

**HERBIE:** I have a few questions. Does the name Frank Lombardo say anything to you?

**BARKEEPER:** I'll be honest with you, no. But I think I heard the name Lombardo in this bar a few times. Are you investigating his murder? I've heard about it on the radio.

**HERBIE:** Yes, I do. Listen, you need to remember as much as you can. Have you seen a group of men with a man who was alone?

**BARKEEPER:** A group of men? I can see that every night here, pal. But as a matter of fact, I have. Their table was the one from which I heard the name Lombardo.

**HERBIE:** Do you know what they were talking about?

**BARKEEPER:** They were mentioning some debts. At one moment, they were talking about game tickets. At the other one, they were talking about utility bills. I remember that because they were talking loudly.

**HERBIE:** Do you remember anything more?

**BARKEEPER:** They all left together at about nine. That's all I can tell you.

**HERBIE:** Thank you for cooperation, mister...

**BARKEEPER:** Mickens.

**HERBIE:** Thank you for cooperation, mister Mickens. You have helped us with this information.

**BARKEEPER:** Do me a favor, detective. Catch that smug who committed the murder and make him pay!

**HERBIE:** Don't worry about that, mister Mickens. Bye.

**BARKEEPER:** Bye.

Herbie wrote down all the information he heard to his notebook. When he finished, Albert called him to the living room.

**ALBERT:** Mister Fox! Come here!

Herbie stood up and quickly went to Albert. He had an open box in his hands.

**HERBIE:** Have you found something, mister Fringe?

**ALBERT:** Look! In this box, there was a set of knives, which look similar to the one we found! It even looks like that exact size and shape is missing!

**HERBIE:** So my thoughts are true! The murderer did break into this flat before the murder! He searched the entire flat and then took a knife with which he decided to commit the murder! It all makes sense!

**ALBERT:** One question. Why are there no signs of violent entrance on either the doors or the windows?

**HERBIE:** That's a thoughtful question. Either the murderer owned the key to this flat or he had some serious skills with a lock pick. We only know about one person who owned the keys to this flat and that is Charlie Crown. I would say that it's improbable that Daniel Greg had the keys, but nothing is impossible!

**ALBERT:** What now? Have you found something?

**HERBIE:** I've found some interesting letters and a bunch of game tickets. I've even called to the Riviera Bar. It was because Lombardo got a letter to meet there. There was no sign of a sender anywhere. One thing remains, though. Lombardo did go to that bar and he knew the person who called him there! It looks like gambling had an important role in Lombardo's life.

**ALBERT:** So what are we going to do?"

**HERBIE:** I'm thinking. Do you have any ideas, mister Fringe?

**ALBERT:** Is it possible to find out something about the person who sent that letter?

**HERBIE:** That letter was written on a typewriter. That means we don't have a lot of options. It would be very difficult to identify that person based on the writing. In order to do that, we would have to research all the typewriter models. They all have almost the same type of writing. The only differences are on some particular letters. We don't have enough time for that!

**ALBERT:** What about going to the Riviera Bar?

**HERBIE:** That's unnecessary. I've spoken to the barkeeper already. We have all the information from that place. Interesting fact is that Lombardo left with those people in the bar. Who knows what for, right? They could have gone gambling. One thing just came into my mind. What about that Ash guy? Should we do the typical interrogation or act as civilians? We need to come up with a reason why we're visiting him in that case.

**ALBERT:** I think we should just proceed usually.

**HERBIE:** You're right, mister Fringe. Do you think that there could be anything more in this flat?

**ALBERT:** I don't know. Either way, I don't think so.

They both researched the whole flat again. When they couldn't find anything, they left, and got in the car. Herbie took a card of Malfred Ash and gave it to Albert.

**HERBIE:** Let's go, then. Do you know where his apartment is located?

**ALBERT:** I'll probably need to take a look around, but I do.

**HERBIE:** Step on it, mister Fringe!



# Chapter Ten

Malfred Ash  
5 March 1947

Approximately fifteen minutes had passed and they arrived at the apartment. They found out that Malfred Ash lived on the third story. When they reached the door and knocked, noone opened. Herbie had heard some noise coming out of that door but he wasn't sure.

**HERBIE:** It seems like something happened last night, mister Fringe.

After a while, Herbie lost his patience and decided to do something.

**HERBIE:** I've had enough! Step out, mister Fringe! I'm going to make some noise!

**ALBERT:** What do you want to do, mister Fox?

Herbie made two steps back and kicked out the door with strong force.

**HERBIE:** If it's impossible with the good way, it's possible with the bad way! Come on in!

They both entered the flat and looked around. The phone started ringing and Herbie answered. The caller was a man.

**HERBIE:** Hello?

**MAN:** Is it you, Malfred? You sound different somehow. Are you ill?

**HERBIE:** Yes, I am. What do you want?

**MAN:** How's... the thing? Do you have those diamonds?

**HERBIE:** Excuse me?

**MAN:** Don't you know already? Those diamonds! Boss wants to do the barter already. Those Russians are impatient so you need to act quickly or we're all going to die! So, do you have them?

**HERBIE:** I'll call you up later.

Herbie slowly hung up and stated.

**HERBIE:** We have the murderer, mister Fringe! Quickly, we need to find some evidence here and arrest him! Now! We don't have much time!

They both started to quickly research Malfred's flat. Albert found a box full of artificial daisies. He showed it to Herbie who shouted afterwards.

**HERBIE:** Quickly, grab one of them!

Albert grabbed a piece of daisy and gave it to Herbie. Herbie observed it carefully and noticed the number one written on it.

**HERBIE:** That son of a bitch! We're right! This piece of daisy is identical to the one found next to the Lombardo's body! Do you see this number one? It's exactly the same! We need more!

They continued searching. Herbie noticed Malfred's diary on the table. When he opened it, he saw a note that said *DIAMONDS – FRANK LOMBARDO* with the exact date and time when the murder occurred. Herbie stated.

**HERBIE:** We got him! Look at this diary! See this note? It's exactly the date and time when the murder occurred!

**ALBERT:** I see. It was very irrational to take a note of something like that.

**HERBIE:** More! It's obvious that the reason of the murder were those diamonds. I don't know how yet, but it's true! Let's look further!

Herbie flicked through the other pages of Malfred's diary and he found Charlie Crown's phone number, as well as Daniel Greg's. Afterwards, he opened a drawer and there were keys with a tag *DIAMONDS* on them.

**HERBIE:** It all makes sense! Charlie Crown made and gave a copy of the keys to the Lombardo's flat! Ash simply went to the flat when Lombardo wasn't at home and looked for the diamonds. Daniel Greg probably told him that he was the person who takes care of the ownership issue and Malfred misunderstood that by thinking that Lombardo owns the diamonds himself! Now, when Malfred didn't find the diamonds in Lombardo's flat, he took one of his knives and went to murder him! He probably noticed the magazine and left one of his artificial pieces next to the Lombardo's dead body. How awful! I suppose that Malfred Ash was the buyer mentioned in Daniel Greg's letter to Lombardo. Either way, Daniel Greg and Charlie Crown are getting charged as associates! Daniel doesn't even know how much he's involved in a murder of his friend. All right, mister Fringe. Let's go to the station! We don't know what Malfred Ash looks like so we can't catch him on our own.

They both left the flat and as they were walking down the stairs, they saw a man in a green suit. He wore a hat and glasses. He had a thin figure. Herbie asked him.

**HERBIE:** Malfred Ash?

The man looked at the detectives with horror and ran away by his car. Herbie and Albert quickly followed and chased him. Herbie spoke to the transmitter.

**HERBIE:** This is Detective Fox, badge number 107. I need immediate backup on the Saint King Street! We're chasing the murderer of the Frank Lombardo case and he's heading towards the McCully Street! Be quick, the murderer can't escape! Do you copy?

**ASSISTANT:** Roger that! Sending backup to the McCully Street!

After a few minutes of furious chase, Malfred Ash, with the help of backup, pulled over. Herbie quickly got out of the car and went to Malfred with a gun in his hands along with the other officers. Malfred Ash got out and put his hands in the air.

**HERBIE:** Malfred Ash! You're under arrest for the murder of Frank Lombardo! You have a right to remain silent, anything you say can and will be used against in a court of law. You have the right to talk to a lawyer and have him present with you while you are being questioned, if you cannot afford a lawyer, one will be appointed to you. You can decide at any time to exercise these rights and not answer any questions or make any statements. Do you understand? We have enough evidence against you! Don't even think about trying to run away again!

Herbie handcuffed Malfred and the police officers took him to the station. When they arrived, there was press all over the place already. Initially preparing for the press conference, when they saw a man in handcuffs, they all started asking questions and taking photographs.

**REPORTER 1:** Do you have the murderer of Frank Lombardo?

**REPORTER 2:** How did you manage to solve the case?

**REPORTER 3:** What evidence do you have?

...

Herbie decided to be silent and ignored the questions. They both went to the lieutenant's office, while the officers were leading Malfred Ash to the prison cell. The lieutenant saw them all and asked with a smile.

**LIEUTENANT:** Mister Fox, once again, I'm proud of you! How did you solve the case?

**HERBIE:** We found strong evidence in the flat of Malfred Ash and we heard a phone call intended for him. I need you to arrest Daniel Greg and Charlie Crown, too. They're associates in the murder. Their names were written down in Malfred Ash's diary!

**LIEUTENANT:** All right, mister Fox. I'll take care of that. So, could you explain the whole murder to me?

**HERBIE:** Of course. The motive of the murder was a desire for pieces of diamonds and money. Diamonds were a property of missis Greg, the mother of Daniel and Marge Greg. The only connection with Lombardo around those diamonds was missis Greg's last will, which contained a very important statement for Daniel and Malfred Ash. Daniel Greg wanted to sell the diamonds but he needed permission from Frank Lombardo. He couldn't make the barter without it. I even guess that he might have planned the murder. His sister refused to give him the permission and Frank supported her by doing the same thing. The strategy of Daniel Greg may have been to murder Frank Lombardo and to emotionally abuse Marge so he can receive the permission. He received an offer for two million dollars for the diamonds. The mafia was involved. The whole case is a one large chain. Daniel told Ash about the diamonds. Ash told the mafia about the diamonds. The mafia requested him soon after to commit the murder so they can do the barter. Ash's plan was simple. He thought that the diamonds are in Lombardo's flat. He requested keys from Charlie Crown, the caretaker. He was obviously a friend of Daniel Greg. Malfred wanted to take the diamonds from Lombardo's flat and do the barter as soon as possible. When he didn't find the diamonds, he decided to take a knife and murder Lombardo. Daniel Greg must have informed him about his meeting with Lombardo in the Lopez Hills Bar.

Albert added.

**ALBERT:** Lombardo had financial issues and he probably owed money to Malfred Ash. Debts, hazard, and diamonds caused Lombardo's death with a final act from Malfred Ash.

Herbie got surprised.

**HERBIE:** Excellent, mister Fringe. It looks like you've learned something!

Albert smiled and the lieutenant said.

**LIEUTENANT:** Great job, detectives! Ash will be in jail for at least twenty years! The judge will decide about everything, even about the fate of Daniel Greg and Charlie Crown. All right. Albert Fringe, I'm giving you a raise! I see that your partnership is successful and you certainly deserve it! You can go, detectives. Your work here is done!

The court sentenced Malfred Ash for fifteen years of prison. Daniel Greg got sentenced for five years of prison and Charlie Crown got sentenced for one year of community service. Marge Greg got married again a year later. She received the diamonds and they never got sold.

# CHARACTERS CHARACTERISTICS

**Name:** Herbie Fox

**Age:** 60

**Date of Birth:** 27/2/1887

**Place of Birth:** Honolulu, Hawaii

**Job:** Detective

**Family status:** Widowed

**Children:** Philip Fox, Richard Fox, Veronica Fox-Winsley

**Appearance:** 5 ft 4.96 in, 209 pounds, gray hair, scar on a cheek

**Name:** Albert Fringe

**Age:** 35

**Date of Birth:** 30/5/1911

**Place of Birth:** Kailua, Hawaii

**Job:** Detective

**Family status:** Married

**Children:** Mark Fringe, Josephina Fringe

**Appearance:** 5 ft 6.93 in, 154 pounds, ginger hair, freckles

**Name:** Daniel Greg

**Age:** 42

**Date of Birth:** 15/8/1904

**Place of Birth:** California, USA

**Job:** Architect

**Family status:** In a relationship

**Children:** none

**Appearance:** 5 ft 8.9 in, 165 pounds, longer brown hair

**Name:** Marge Greg

**Age:** 40

**Date of Birth:** 17/1/1907

**Place of Birth:** California, USA

**Job:** Secretary

**Family status:** In a relationship

**Children:** none

**Appearance:** 5 ft 2.99 in, 110 pounds, blonde hair, blue eyes



**Name:** Frank Lombardo

**Age:** 41

**Date of Birth:** 28/2/1906

**Place of Birth:** Verona, Italy

**Job:** Postman

**Family status:** In a relationship

**Children:** none

**Appearance:** 5 ft 4.96 in, 154 pounds, black hair

**Name:** Elizabeth Lombardo

**Age:** 76

**Date of Birth:** 20/6/1870

**Place of Birth:** Verona, Italy

**Job:** Teacher (retired)

**Family status:** Widowed

**Children:** Frank Lombardo

**Appearance:** 4 ft 11.06 in, 132 pounds, long gray hair

**Name:** Malfred Ash

**Age:** 34

**Date of Birth:** 11/10/1912

**Place of Birth:** Honolulu, Hawaii

**Job:** Electrician

**Family status:** Single

**Children:** none

**Appearance:** 5 ft 1.81 in, 126 pounds, brown hair

**Name:** Robert Wintski

**Age:** 52

**Date of Birth:** 20/4/1894

**Place of Birth:** Kapolei, Hawaii

**Job:** Bartender

**Family status:** Married

**Children:** Sylvia Wintski, Thomas Wintski

**Appearance:** 5 ft 4.17 in, 247 pounds, short black hair

**Name:** Charlie Crown

**Age:** 43

**Date of Birth:** 20/12/1903

**Place of Birth:** Honolulu, Hawaii

**Job:** Caretaker

**Family status:** Single

**Children:** none

**Appearance:** 5 ft 6.93 in, 159 pounds, brown hair

**Name:** Phil More

**Age:** 63

**Date of Birth:** 25/3/1883

**Place of Birth:** Honolulu, Hawaii

**Job:** Lieutenant

**Family status:** Married

**Children:** George More

**Appearance:** 5 ft 4 in, 134 pounds, gray hair

**Name:** Angie Rothford

**Age:** 78

**Date of Birth:** 14/3/1868

**Place of Birth:** Kaneohe, Hawaii

**Job:** Saleswoman (retired)

**Family status:** Married

**Children:** Abraham Rothford

**Appearance:** 4 ft 12 in, 143 pounds, gray hair

**Name:** Thomas Blake

**Age:** 45

**Date of Birth:** 9/4/1901

**Place of Birth:** Minnesota, USA

**Job:** Police officer

**Family status:** Divorced

**Children:** Claudia Blake

**Appearance:** 5 ft 6 in, 165 pounds, short black hair



**Name:** Dean Marston

**Age:** 65

**Date of Birth:** 21/9/1881

**Place of Birth:** Honolulu, Hawaii

**Job:** Forensic analytic

**Family status:** Widowed

**Children:** none

**Appearance:** 5 ft 3 in, 139 pounds, hair dyed brown

**Name:** Andrew Shelby

**Age:** 38

**Date of Birth:** 13/5/1908

**Place of Birth:** Honolulu, Hawaii

**Job:** Police officer

**Family status:** Married

**Children:** John Shelby, Anna Shelby

**Appearance:** 5 ft 7 in, 174 pounds, brown hair

**Name:** Mike Hannigan

**Age:** 52

**Date of Birth:** 29/11/1894

**Place of Birth:** Berlin, Germany

**Job:** Doorkeeper

**Family status:** Single

**Children:** none

**Appearance:** 5 ft 3 in, 163 pounds, black hair

**Name:** Richard Mickens

**Age:** 42

**Date of Birth:** 9/1/1905

**Place of Birth:** Aiea, Hawaii

**Job:** Barkeeper

**Family status:** Single

**Children:** none

**Appearance:** 5 ft 8.7 in, 180 pounds, brown hair