

The mouse was sleeping comfortably in his bed, dreaming of dreams he never dreamt of before.

This dream was too good to be true. It was everything he ever wished for. He slept so greatly he didn't even know he was asleep. The dream was just so spectacular he didn't even want to consider it was all fake. But a dream is a dream, and the mouse woke up from his wonderful dream. It was the middle of the night, and the mouse had just gotten up from his bed when he heard a knock on the back door. The mouse yawned and in a tired voice said, "Who could it be at this time?" He walked down the old, dark brown wooden stairs and stood watching the small little door for a minute. He looked around the unfinished room. The wooden door was pretty small, suitable for a small mouse like himself. There was a shelf on the wall left of the door that contained paint buckets and cans. On the opposite side of the door, there was a tall rug that lay on the corner wall and a singular ice skate hanging from the top of the room. A bunch of junk and useless things were scattered throughout the room, like a box containing rugs and other things. There was a window on the left wall that shined a little light directly to the door. "Why would anyone come through here?" the mouse asked himself, "This room ain't finished yet." Then, there was another knock on the door. The mouse walked slowly towards the door, then, in a low, tired voice, the mouse asked, "Who is it?" There was no reply, and so again the mouse asked again, "Who is it?" Once more, there was no reply. There was silence for a while, as the mouse continued to stare at the door, not knowing what to do. He walked slowly closer to the door with his white slippers and blue pajamas. Suddenly, there was a loud banging noise that came from the door. Startled, the mouse moved a little back. Another loud bang came from the door, and then another, and another. The mouse backed away from the door, his eyes fixated on

it. Then, the banging stopped, but there was a new noise. The sound came from the doorknob, which the mouse observed to be shaking a little. The mouse realized that somebody trying to open the door. The mouse tried to run away to the stairs, but he tripped on a paint bucket and fell to the floor. He reached in his pocket for his phone, but remember it was in his room still. He continued to watch the door, terrified of what might come. And then he saw it. **His heart was pounding. He was sure he had seen the doorknob turn.** The mouse turned around and tried to get up and escape, but it was too late. Before he even knew it, the mouse was losing consciousness. The mouse lay on the floor out cold, with no dream this time.

Uninvited guests

It was like any other day. I woke up, brushed my teeth, and put on my clothes. I'm a regular-looking guy, just another average-sized gray mouse. I wear a beige coat and beige hat, but my coat isn't buttoned up so you can see my white shirt and black tie. I of course wear black pants and shoes. I wish I were taller so I can get the ladies, but what can a man do. My names is Jace Horton, but everyone who knows me closely calls me Ace. Used to be a detective, but I left that job years ago for reasons. As I was saying, I put my clothes on, ate my food, and hopped in my black car. I put on the radio and heard about somebody stealing factory products or something, but I didn't care about that. I put on some jazz music and drove my way to the coffee shop.

I entered the coffee shop and ordered my usual coffee for the morning. I looked out the window and watched the faceless people walk down the sidewalk. I wonder where they're going, and how today will be. I already know the answer, it's just going to be like any other day. I stare off to the distance, wondering about questions I had for the day.

"Mr. Jace, your coffee is ready," the server said, "Come get it before it gets cold!"

"I'll be right there," I said as I sat in my seat. I grabbed the coffee and took a sip.

"Mr. Jace," the server asked, "You said you used to be a detective before, right?"

I took another sip of coffee. "Yeah, I used to be a detective way back in the day. Why do you care about that?" I said.

"Well, there's this case about some terrorist blowing up houses. It's on the TV right now." A terrorist blowing up houses? How come I never heard of this before now? This world gets crazier every day. I looked up at the box TV, and it said as followed:

A terrorist has been blowing up houses around New York City. Currently, there have been three victims that confirmed to have their houses blown up by the terrorist. The police are still looking into this case at this very moment, but they have no leads to who or where this person is as of yet. The victims are all safe and well. There are some consistencies between all the stories. They all seemed to be knocked out before the houses blew up and were taken outside nearby the house. The victims also had a letter with them. On the letter, it has some numbers and the words "From, the Guest". The police haven't looked into the letter too much. This is all the information we have at the moment. The police are currently looking into this case.

"If you're asking me to look into this case, then I refuse. I quit being a detective and I'm not going back." I took my final sip of coffee.

“Yeah I know,” said the server, “just wanted to know if you were interested.” The server looked at the empty cup. “Do you want a refill, Mr. Ace?”

“Yeah, I want one more refill. Then I’ll hop in my car and go about my day.” I drank my last coffee and went outside the coffee shop. I just got outside the coffee shop when...

“Jace Horton,” said the police officer, “I am officer Sanchez, Frank Sanchez. We need you to help with a case about the terrorist.” the officer pulled out a donut with pink icing and took a bite. He had a police uniform and police hat on, with shades on. He was a light brown rat and a little bit on the shorter side.

“Guess you know I used to be a detective. Why me though? Find another detective to work on the case, cause I won’t do diddly squat.”

“Well, they said you were the only person that could solve this case. I don’t know the details, that’s just what my higher-ups told me. You just got to come with me in the car.”

“I ain’t going to enter the car or work on any case. I already quit being a detective, no matter if they say I’m the only one who can crack it.” I turned around and started walking towards my car when he said it.

“Your friend, Levi Picalum. He is a victim of this so-called ‘Guest’.” The officer took another bite out of his donut. “I was told you guys were very close friends back in the day.”

Levi Picalum? That’s a name I haven’t heard in a long time. He used to be one of my best friends ever since the start of high school. He helped me get through a lot of things, like break-ups and when I didn’t feel right physically and mentally. We went into the detective business together but he left early on. We stopped talking a lot when I left the detective business, but we still talk from time to time. He’s a victim of the “Guest”?

“This is an outrage! Why haven’t I been informed of this earlier?”

“Mr. Jace, your friend was the third person to become a victim of the Guest, so we didn’t inform you of it until he came to the police station and told us about it. Said his phone was blown up with the house, so that’s why he couldn’t tell you.”

“Well, that explains things. I guess I’ll have to help you with this case, but let this be known that this is the last case I’ll ever take.”

I drove in the car with the officer to the police station. It was very calming looking outside the window. A gentle mist fell to the ground as the people went about their day. I sat there wondering what would happen today. Guess I was wrong. Today won’t be so normal after what happened this morning. I’m not very enthusiastic about what will happen in the future. Looking into the past, I was a fairly good detective. I’m no Sherlock Holmes, but I am not the worst detective. I left the detective business because it was so stressful. You know, looking into cases every day, trying to figure out who done it. I swear this will be the last case in my life. I’ll have to find a real job aft-

“Mr. Jace,” the officer said, “we have arrived at the police station. You can get out of the car now.” He took a final bite of the donut and went outside. “I’ll also need your keys to your car, Mr. Jace.” I handed him my keys and opened the door. The mist had stopped and the ground was damp by then. We entered the building and I went into the room. There were gray shade curtains to the side of the room. The room was dim with little light. There was a wooden desk and two chairs in the middle of the room. The walls were colored gray. And that’s where I saw him. It would have been hard to miss him.

Inside the room, there was a mouse and a fairly big one at that. He wore a black coat and black pants. He is a brown mouse. One of the biggest mice I have seen.

“I’m Detective Small, my full name is Ivan Small.” He turned the light on brighter. “Glad to be working with you, sir.”

I chuckled a little. “Ivan Small? Well, there isn’t anything small about you. Nothing at all.” I chuckled a little more at my joke.

“I get that a lot, sir.” Ivan said, “I am a detective in training. I hope to see how you work brilliantly.” Ivan took a seat, which was a little too small for him. I sat down as well.

“I have a question for you, Small. I asked Mr. Sanchez why they can’t choose another detective, but I didn’t get a good enough answer. Why can’t there be another detective in this case?”

“About that. Most of the detectives are away in other cases. We don’t have any detectives here that can crack this case. That’s why they went to find you because you are a good detective.”

“I’m very flattered, Detective Small. Well, first things first. I need to see the letters.”

The three letters were gathered together in a small gray bin neatly on top of each other. I took the letters out and placed them side by side on the desk. “These are the letters?” I asked. “Yes, sir,” Ivan said, “These are the letters from the three victims. We didn’t look at them too much to not contaminate anything.” I opened one letter. It showed some numbers and degrees. As the news said, it had the words “From, the Guest”. I opened the second letter. Same thing, but different numbers. I opened the third letter. Just like the last two.

“These look like coordinates to someplace. Since all of them have coordinates, I assume they lead somewhere.” I took a minute to ponder this. “Why would somebody leave coordinates to a place? That doesn’t seem very smart.”

“Maybe he dropped them while he carried the person outside,” Ivan said, “It is a possibility.”

“Still,” I said, “it is improbable he would drop all three of them. He may have dropped them all, sure, but I feel it is kind of weird. But in case he was clumsy enough to drop them all...” I took a breather for a couple of seconds and then said “Take this to somebody and find out the coordinates of these places. Right now, I want to go to all the victims and ask them questions about what happened.”

Ivan got out of his seat. “Yes, sir. Do you want to gather them here or do you want to go directly to them?”

“Rather go to them. I don’t want to waste my time here while I wait. It’ll get boring.”

There I was, in the police car again, with Mr. Sanchez at the wheel. I was at the front this time, with Ivan at the back. He took up too much of the seat. Then it suddenly hit me. Gosh darn it, I forgot my car at the coffee shop. I hope it wasn’t stolen by some criminal or something.

“Frank, I forgot my car back at the coffee shop and-” “Yeah, we have it covered.” Frank took a bite out of another donut. “Remember when you handed me your keys? Yeah, I got somebody to drive the car home. You don’t have to worry.” Ah, well that’s good. At least I don’t have to worry about that.

We finally arrive at victim one’s house, or should say his friend’s house ,since he has none. They said his name was Larry Burn while we were in the car. I gaze out the window and look at the house. It is a simple white house with a black tiled roof. There are two windows at the side and a wooden door at the front. Officer Sanchez stays in the car as we go up to the house. We knock on the door, and we hear “Who is it?” coming from the other side. “This is Detective Ace and my partner, Detective Small. We are working with the police to solve the

“The Guest” incident. We need your assistance to figure this crime out.”

“Oh, the detectives. I’m glad you came. Come right in!” The door opened and we were greeted with a small brown mouse. He had his blue pajamas on, which was a little strange since it was the middle of the day. We went to the kitchen and sat down at the dinner table.

“I would get some food for you guys, but my friend left the house to go get some more food. How may I help you guys?”

“We just need you to say what you remember from the incident. That is all,” Detective Small said.

Larry Burn told his story and what happened that night. I was honestly disappointed that he didn’t see who knocked him out, but I can assume that he probably had a mask on anyway. HE said that he was so afraid he couldn’t even catch a glimpse of the Guest. After he finished the story we thanked him for telling us the information. We went to the cop car and started driving to the next victim.

“We are going to Levi Picalum next since he is closer than the third victim,” Officer Sanchez said while driving. “I’m sure you are glad to hear that, Detective Ace.”

“Yeah, I’m glad to hear it. I rather hear this from a friend since he has some detective experience. He might have some more information than the last guy.”

We finally arrived at our destination. They said Levi was with his mom, Rosemary Picalum, who should be asleep by now. They said I could talk alone with him since I know him and he might open up more. It was a small, light forest green house with a black roof. We knocked on the door and heard footsteps coming down the stairs.

“Who’s at the door?” a voice asked. I knew that voice could only belong to one person.

“It’s me, Ace. Your buddy from high school and at our detective job. May you open the door, please.”

“Ace? It’s you?” Levi opened the door immediately, “Oh, it really is you, I haven’t seen you in a long time buddy. How ya been these couple of years.”

“Honestly, just the same until today. I would love to catch up with you, but I have a job to do.”

“What’s your job then?” Levi asked, “Are you detective again?”

I looked back to the police car, and then to my shoes. “Actually, right now I am. It’s only for one case though.”

Levi looked surprised. “I was only just kidding. I didn’t think you would be a detective again. I thought you hated being a detective. That’s why you quit if I recall.”

“Well, one I heard you were a victim of the Guest, I had to get involved. Even though I don’t want to. They said that all the detectives are gone on other cases, which is kind of surprising to me.”

“Oh, so that’s what it’s about. I can already guess what you wanna ask me. I tell you all about what happened that night if you want. We can sit down at a table if you want.

We walked to a table and sat down in the seats. “I don’t got a lot of information,” Levi said, “just so you know.”

“Really?” I was a bit disappointed by this fact. “You don’t got that many details? Did you at least see his face?”

“Sadly, I couldn’t,” Levi looked a little sad “He was wearing some sort of black mask. He was a little bit shorter than me however and I saw a yellowish fur from his arm.”

“Well, that is kind of rare. But this is New York! You at least see some yellowish rats around.” I was a bit mad. I thought at least I would get SOME good information.

“I’m sorry, Ace. It was just really dark at the time. Couldn’t see a darn thing. I don’t remember everything from the time, so maybe if you come back tomorrow I can tell you some more details if I can remember any.”

I looked at the time. 10:30 on the dime. I suppose it was a good time to rest my mind and think about what I’ve learned for today. “O.K, I guess I’ll leave for home then. Have a good day, pal.”

“And to you too, old friend,” Levi said as we got up from our seats. Levi closed the door as I entered the cop car. I getting kinda sick of it, the car. I have been in for almost 3 hours listening to Officer Sanchez’s terrible music. That and I’m pretty bored if I stay in a place for too long doing nothing. Oh yeah, that reminds me. I got to get my- Holy lord and all that is right. WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO MY HOUSE!

The house was completely and utterly destroyed. Only some things remained, barely intact. In the middle was my car, or what was left of it. The roof of the car had been blown off, and pieces were scattered throughout the ruins. Wheels, glass, and even my steering wheel. It shooks me to my core. I couldn’t even fathom what I was looking at.

Officer Sanchez and I went outside, shattered. “Why did this have to happen to me? What did I do to deserve this? WHY ME?”

This was not my house anymore, gone just like the others. It must have been the guest, he must have done this, but why? I haven’t had any contact with him at all, or so I believe. And why was my car in the middle? I thought they gave my car to - wait a minute. I looked around the house again. There was a mouse on the sidewalk with a police uniform on. There was a group

of people around the man. Maybe he was the driver the drove my car to my house. Maybe the Guest took him out and blew my house and car as well. That does make some sense, but why would he blow up my house. Why would he knock the policeman out to blow up my house? I haven't met anybody that was remotely suspicious yet.

Officer Sanchez was just as shocked as I was. He even took his shades off at the shock. Detective small was not here, he already left for his home. “ We are going to let you stay at the police station for the night. Is that alright with you?

“Yeah, that's alright. I just don't know why I was affected by the Guest. I joined the case today.”

“ Very sorry for your house sir. I'm just as shocked as you are. Having you stay is the least we could do for you now. I assure you that you will get the money you need to get another house.”

“That's good to know. I'm going to have somebody to talk with the policeman over there later.” I pointed to the crowd. “ I just need to know some things from him. Also, I need some people to investigate my house. It's now a crime scene.’

“Understood, Detective Ace.” Officer Sanchez replied, “Should we get going?”

I look over to a factory building puffing black and gray smoke. I look back to house ruins. “Wait a minute...” I notice something under a piece of rubble. It was small, white, and dirty. I went to the rubble and pushed the rock over. Right there was another letter, with the words “Sorry for that house of yours,” on the cover.

“ I think we just found ourselves some evidence, Sanchez.” I smiled a little, but then frowned at the words on the cover.

“I believe we did find some, Ace.”

I didn't go to sleep for a while. I put the lights on in the room, directly over the letter and shadows around the table. I stood looking at the letter for a while. Then, I finally decided to open the letter. There were some coordinates, as usual, and the words "From, the Guest." There was something, however, that was more important. Inside the letter was a piece of fur. I chuckled to myself as I realized I finally got a piece of evidence.

I woke up the next day, feeling kind of good for the day . It was a feeling I haven't felt for a long time.

I actually felt happy for the day, and what promise it would bring. I finally got the piece of evidence I so desperately needed. I guess the Guest accidentally left his hair there by mistake. Maybe he was in a hurry, I don't know. All I do know is that now we can finally identify who the Guest really is. Before I give the hair sample to the forensics people, I call Detective Small. He says he is sorry for my house. I show him the hair sample, and he is impressed and happy. We give the hair sample to the forensics investigation office, and after a few hours, we finally get to know who has been doing the crimes.

"Well, who is it?" I asked the chief of the forensics office, or as I like to shorten the title, the CFO.

"From the information we gathered, we can detect that the person from the hair sample was Sammy Garnella, who has been to jail on more than one occasion. Sammy was released from prison just a couple of weeks ago. He does have yellowish fur, just like Levi and the other policeman have said.

"So there is a pretty good chance that this Sammy Garnella did this crime. Why did he go to prison for the first time?"

“It says that Sammy went to prison for owning explosives.” The CFO said

‘I mean, that does make sense, He does blow people’s houses up. Where did he get these explosives?’ I asked

‘He got the explosives from a factory that manufactured them in Connecticut. He was arrested in New York when they found explosives in his car.’ The CFO waited for any other questions.

“Explosives, factories...” I took a minute to think about this. Then, it came to me. “From my house, which is now destroyed, I saw a factory in the distance. What was the factory producing?”

“I believe the factory was producing some sort of...” The CFO took a minute to think. “I believe it was explosives that it was producing.”

“The other victims, are there houses near explosive factories?”

“Yes, I believe so if I recall.” the CFO started to get what I was talking about.

“If all the victims had their houses blown up near explosive factories, couldn’t there be a chance the Sammy had stolen the explosives from the factories?” I looked at the CFO for an answer.

“Yes, that makes quite a lot of sense. Sammy stole the explosives from the factory. Brilliant deduction, Detective Ace!”

“That’s not all. Yesterday morning I can recall on my radio about some factory goods being stolen from so factory. If these factories were explosive factories, then it would only prove my point. I don’t believe the media has covered this very much due to the houses blowing up.”

“So what do you think happened, sir?” The CFO asked.

“ I believe Sammy stole the explosive from factories. To keep the coverage of this too low, he blows up nearby houses to try and cover up the stolen explosives. People don't even expect it to have any correlation and don't even know that explosives were stolen.”

“That doesn't explain why Sammy Garnella leaves around letters. Why would he waste his time doing that when there is a chance he might get caught?” The CFO asked.

“That's exactly it. There is no explanation. The letters don't correlate with the houses blowing up at all. It is just there to keep the police and detectives off Sammy's tail. If he didn't leave a hair sample by accident, we may have never had even known that the letters were just a distraction.”

Suddenly, somebody barged in. “Mr. Jace, I have some information for you. The coordinates you see on paper all seem to lead to someplace in Antarctica. I believe that the letters are a dead end, sir.”

“Oh, that's the best thing that I could have heard today. That further proves my point. Hey, mam, could you find out the nearest explosive factory from my place that has not had any destroyed houses near it?

“Right away sir!” The woman went back out the door.”

“I am going to leave and talk with Detective Small about this.” I went near the door, “Have a good day, chief.

“You too, Mr. Jace.” I hope you catch this terrible, terrible man for good!”

The woman figured out where the nearest factory was and the backdoor too. They said he was probably going to escape from the backdoor and go onto that street. I talked with the police about my plan on how to capture him, and they agreed. We told everyone in the street secretly to

be careful if they see anybody or hear knocking on their door. At first, they were terrified, but they calmed down once we told them my plan. They were to contact us if they heard knocking. Once they did, the police will surround Sammy and the door. He would be arrested shortly after.

Sammy did in fact rob the explosive factory, and not away from it. HE walked down the street in his mask and a bag full of explosives on his back. He walked down the street with a cold breeze blowing by. It was kind of refreshing walking down the street in a dark night sky. Buildings that were faintly lighted from post lights. He choose the very last building left of the street. It was definitely older than a lot of other buildings in New York. He decided it was finally time to destroy this house. He knocked on the door, but he heard no steps. He only could hear a faint voice, which was even fainter due to his mask. He knocked again and started his usual banging. While he was banging the door, he didn't even realize he was being surrounded by cops. When he finally stop banging the door and put his hand on the doorknob, a voice called out.

‘Sammy Garnella, you are under arrest’

Sammy never thought he would ever hear those words ever again in his life. Before he knew it, handcuffs were put on his arms. He was put in the cop car, and thrown in jail.

“Nice job Detective Ace,” said Detective Small “We never could have done it without you.”

“ It was a wild ride, Detective Small. I never could have done it without you.”

“Thank you, sir. I am flattered.”

I take a sip of coffee from the cafe. “No problem, Small. Have a nice life, for that was the last case of my entire life. Hopefully”