



Mystery at the museum



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It was in the middle of the night, we could hear snores. It was the sound of a bus full of kids, all asleep. They were exhausted after the long journey they had. They were coming from Vancouver, it was a school trip.

Since the beginning of the school year, the children had studied the history of England. They were impatient to travel around England, they were without their parents, it felt like freedom ! But they were still under the authority of their English teacher, Mrs Morine Morell. She was young, maybe too young to be a teacher, she was only 22, that is why parents were quite worried to leave their kids, although she was a very responsible young woman.

Suddenly, the driver braked, which made the students freak out. At that moment, all the passengers woke up, **destroying** the little snores. It was because the driver had seen a shadow crossing over the road, and he had almost hit it. Lucky him, there was nothing, it must have been a hallucination. Mrs Morell reassured the kids, as it was frightening for seven year old children.

Ten miles later, the bus stopped at a chalet, 150 miles away from London, it was in the middle of the country. It was late, therefore everyone was tired, so much tired ! The teacher went out of the bus and walked to the reception, she picked up the keys of their cabins, while the driver took out the luggage. Each person took his stuff and went to his room. They slept late. At 10 o'clock, Mrs Morell woke the girls up for breakfast, she went next door, she came in and asked the boys to be ready to eat at 10'30. However the driver wasn't there for breakfast.

After breakfast, the class went on their first excursion, to the center of London. The driver was actually sleeping in the bus. The teacher and he had an argument, she said it was unacceptable because it could scare the children.

Every child was chatting and joking except for one, Nemo who was reading a novel, he seemed passionate. He was reading Death on the Nile, it was Agatha Christie's masterpiece.

The bus stopped, and Mrs Morell began to speak:

"Today we are going to visit Agatha Christie's museum, I ask you please to be quiet and discreet."

The class entered the museum and their guide told them some facts about the author's life. After that, the lights were switched off, leaving the room in the dark, the children watched a short movie about Agatha Christie. At the end of the projection, Nemo noted that a child, John, was missing. Nemo sped up to inform Mrs Morell of his discovery. She gathered the children and asked them if they knew where John was. No one answered. She asked the museum curator to search everywhere for John but nobody found him. She called the police and said it was really urgent. Nemo said to the teacher that the museum doors should be closed, to let nobody escape. At that moment, a watchman walked into the room and said that he couldn't close the doors (because of the others tourists) without the consent of his boss. Mrs Morell replied quite low that it could be a matter of life or death.

When the police arrived, Mrs Morell explained the situation. She informed them that she had called John's parents already. Nemo was really impressed by those men, it was better than in his books ! He was the first person interrogated by the police, because he was the one who had noticed that John was missing. So he related the day :

"We left the chalet around 11 o'clock, the driver was already in the bus, I think he had slept inside. I heard Mrs Morell and him talking, she was pretty upset with him, I guess. We ate on our way to the museum, we didn't have time to stop, because our guided tour started at 14.30 o'clock. When we arrived at the museum, the driver parked his car next to the emergency exit. The guide introduced himself and we began the tour. Later we went into a room with a big screen, watched by two watchmen. Then the lights went off, I heard that someone was leaving the room, I think it was one of the watchmen. During the movie, Mrs Morell walked into the room to kept children quiet. When the projection was over, I saw that John was not there anymore, and I told it to Mrs Morell. "

Nemo was interrupted by a woman who was screaming. She was shouting over and over “where is my son, where is he?!”. Mrs Morell recognized this woman, it was John’s mother, who was nearby because of her work. She tried to comfort her. Mrs Morell asked her if her husband was coming or not. She answered he was parking the car. A policeman came and told her they were doing everything they could to find her kid. Then, John’s father, Brian Fields, came in and talked to the policemen. The policemen said they were trying to watch what the museum’s cameras had filmed to account John’s afternoon. The policemen understood that Nemo loved detective stories; they decided to let him join the case enquiry because he was a witness and he could have seen important details.

The policemen and Nemo made a list of the person who could have taken John away. They thought it was a kidnapping, they didn’t think John had willingly run away.

They interviewed the watchman who had left the room during the projection, Mr McKelley, as he was on the top of their suspects list: when he was in the room, John was in there, and when he had left, John had disappeared. Furthermore, he didn’t want to close the museum’s doors. They went to a discreet place to question him.

“Mr McKelley could you tell us what you did when you left the room?”

-Sure, I was only taking a coffee break, he replied.

-Did you notice John Fields was missing or anything that could help us?

-No as I said, I wasn’t even in the room, I was really tired, it was a very long day... during my break, I saw a man running on along the corridors, he looked pretty stressed. Do you suspect me to have anything to do with this kidnapping?

-Did you see his face?

-No, I couldn’t, he wore a hat, I think it was a cap.

-Mrs Morell told us you didn’t want to close the doors, to let no one escape. Why not?

-I was only following the procedure. My boss almost fired me last year. I have to respect the laws to keep my job. I would never hurt a child, I am a father, and a good man.

-Thank you for answering our questions, Mr McKelley.

-What are we doing now? asked Nemo to the policemen

-We must find the man with a cap. Have you see anyone with a hat among the museum staff?

-No, but our school driver had one this morning, said Nemo”

They went to the exit to talk to the driver who probably was in his bus. On their way, they saw John’s father and Mrs Morell staring at each other as if they knew one another. He came closer to her and said “Bianca, is that you? I hope that this is not your fault” and then he came back to comfort his wife.

The policemen and Nemo arrived at the bus, it was opened but there was no sign of the driver. They searched the bus, the glove compartment, they found a map of the museum, with all the exits, the rooms, the different cameras. They also found a wedding ring with the initials BM. “We have to question the teacher and John’s father because they looked pretty suspect, earlier on.” They took Mrs Morell apart and started to ask her questions:

“Morraine, we have to ask you some questions, it’s the procedure. Have you ever changed your first name? Because Morraine Morell doesn’t exist.

-My name is Bianca, I changed my name a couple of years ago, because of administrative problems. Is that all? she said.

-Not yet, did you know John's father, Mr Fields, before?

-Yes, I have known him for a couple years.

-Thank you for your help Mrs Morell", said the policeman

Right after that, they asked Mr Fields some questions, the policemen had the feeling that Mrs Morell and Mr Fields were hiding something:

"Mr Fields, we have learned that John is not your biological son is that true?

-Yes, my wife and I decided to adopt a child seven years ago. John's mother was only 15 when she was pregnant, she didn't want to keep the child because she didn't want to end her studies, it was really important for her.

-We saw you when you talked to Mrs Morell, you seemed to know her. Is she your mistress? Maybe she wanted you to leave your wife for her, but you didn't do it so she decided to hurt your son. Am I close to the truth?

-No, not at all, she is not my mistress, she is already married. Mrs Morell is John's biological mother. She will never hurt him, I'm sure about that.

-Did she tell John that she is his real mother?

-No, we don't want to tell him right now, he's too young. Bianca tried to get John back one year ago, when she became an adult. She took my wife and me to court, but we won the trial. We decided that Bianca had the right to see John grow up as his teacher, but only this way."

After that interrogation, the policemen and Nemo gathered all the people in the museum, in the room with the big screen, where everything had started. One of the policemen gave a speech; he said that with his team, he had found the kidnapper. At that moment the driver entered the room escorted by a policeman.

"The person who took John away is this man, the school driver, he pointed at him, but he had an accomplice, his wife, Mrs Morell. They secretly were married. Mrs Morell was pregnant when she was young; she wanted her child to be adopted. Mr and Mrs Fields, who couldn't have children, adopted her baby. Bianca Morell changed her name to Morine Morell because she didn't want people to know she was pregnant. Seven years later, when Mrs Morell became an adult she wanted her child back. However, she lost the trial. She found a way to be close to her kid, she became his teacher. But it wasn't enough for her, she wanted more. So she asked her husband to kidnap her kid, in this museum to have a family. Mrs Morell waited for the watchman to go on his break and told John to go out during the short movie, no one saw him because it was during a fascinating part of the movie. At that moment, the driver turned off the cameras and ran **across** the corridors. He stood next to the door and waited for John to go out. When John went out he caught him and hid him. So I am asking both of you where is he now?

-He's in the bathroom, said Mrs Morell, I'm sorry". She walked into the room to join her husband, she held his hand, looked at him and said "we have to, it's too late." She got a gun out of her purse, she shot her husband and killed herself.

The policemen took the children away, but it was too late. Nemo found John in the bathroom and took him to his parents.