

## THOUGHTS CAN BE MURDER

### CHAPTER ONE

Samantha Evans Patterson stood in silent shock as she listened to the midday news on TV. *This must be wrong*, she thought; *Oh my God. This has to be a mistake.* She immediately went to the telephone and placed a call to her husband, Detective Dave Patterson.

“Scranton Police Station.”

“Is Dave Patterson around? This is his wife.”

“No, Ma’am,” answered the assistant, “all of the officers are presently in a meeting. Can I have him call you?”

“Yes, please,” she said half in a daze as she put down the receiver.

Again she listened as the TV reporters went over every detail that was presently known. A body had washed up near the Philadelphia shipping docks. The identification wasn’t positive yet, but speculation said that it was Terrence Gonzalez, a former policeman who had worked with her husband. He had been convicted of being a mole in the police department, helping in a fraud and money laundering ring. Terry, as he was called, had been sentenced to four years in prison, but served less than a year as he had given vital information to send known mobster Buzzie Sundrie to jail for murdering a fellow policeman. He had been released less than two months ago.

Remembering Dave saying that Terry had stopped at the police station recently to talk to his former superiors, it was noted that he wanted to go straight. He knew he couldn’t be a policeman any longer, and knew the department didn’t trust him, but he had been ashamed of what he had done. As a private citizen he hoped to be able to help out in some way.

Sammi, with her unique talent of being able to hear other people’s thoughts had spent time around Terry and assured Dave that when he said he was repentant and wanted to do something positive with his life, his thoughts did match his words. He hadn’t been given any assignment that she was aware of, so she was surprised that he had been found killed near the docks.

The phone rang, disturbing her thoughts.

“Hi, Sammi, what’s up?”

Dave’s voice could always calm her down.

“I heard the news about Terry. You already know, right?”

“That’s what our meeting was about. We were actually going to start giving him small assignments after you found out he was sincere. He wasn’t on anything official yet, but had heard about something and I think he was trying to find out information. We figured that’s what got him killed.”

“God, I was so shocked. He just got out of jail.”

“And he was pretty lost as to what to do. After you confirmed that he really wanted to do good, we were gonna slowly start working with him. Now, he could have been a mole for us and with you around, we could keep a check on him. But somebody got to him fast.”

“Did he drown?”

“No, he was shot, execution style, through the back of the head.”

“How horrible. This one got to me. I know he was a mole, but ... Are they absolutely sure it’s him? I mean, is it a positive I.D.?”

“Afraid so. Hang in there; I’ll be home in about an hour. Relax, okay? We’ll talk about it later. I’ve got to go.”

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But she couldn’t relax. The past year or so had been a whirlwind of arrests and convictions and people were still showing up involved in one way or another. Dave and Sammi worked as a team. He was the detective, but she was the one who could hear people’s thoughts and therefore able to pull valuable information from suspects. Strange, but true nevertheless. She could do it since she was a little girl. It was natural to her. She’d simply stand next to someone, concentrate and their thoughts talked to her out loud, like in a real conversation. Her Grandpa Logan could do it, too, but he was the only other one she knew. And he had guided her along helping to keep her gift under control. After he died, she kept everything to herself. It was hard to find anyone she could trust with her secret.

Although she’d known Dave since college, he had dated and married her friend Kelly. The three of them maintained a close friendship and Sammi considered them both best friends. The marriage seemed happy enough at first, but less than five years later, they were both considering splitting up, although they’d hoped to remain friends. But Kelly was at the wrong place at the wrong time and was accidentally killed by a bullet meant for someone else. It took Dave a long time to get over it. After all, he was a policeman and he protected and saved people. But he hadn’t been able to save his own wife.

The telephone rang. She had to listen to the sales pitch as her answering machine picked up the call. *Why don’t you give us a call if you could use new windows by Downing. We have the sturdiest and yet most flexible windows around. Our sale will be on until the end of this month. Call and save yourself money on new windows.*

She resumed her memories. Throughout his period of mourning, Dave depended on her. They’d always been best friends, but shared a casual platonic-like relationship. For quite a while he dated a lot, mostly in an effort to forget and ease his pain by becoming involved with one after another. Then about two years ago, everything slowly began to change between them. They both took their time, but as their work relationship became more intense, so did their personal life. And six months ago, they’d gotten married. Sammi was happy that she’d married her best friend. And presently only six people in the entire world knew about her special talent, with Dave being the first one she’d told.

When his car pulled into the driveway, she was at the door to meet him. He kissed her and gave her a caring hug upon entering. He always did that.

“Are you feeling better?” he asked.

“I can’t quite get over this. How about you?”

“It’s strange in a way. We were talking about how angry and disappointed we were with him when we first found out. But he was a talented guy. And we could

have used him to get us information. We knew we'd have to watch him, but we've got you, Sammi. You could always tell us if he was playing straight with us."

"I was hoping to get a chance to do that."

"He had called Sergeant Brady last week about something and said he was going to check it out. I didn't get that briefing yet."

"I wonder what he was working on. Did he leave any clues? He did get a light sentence for testifying against Buzzie. Could be someone was angry about that."

"Somehow I don't think so. Our buddy Jim thought it might even be something left over from the kidnappings, but I didn't think he was involved in that."

"Jim thinks so? I never heard anything that suggested those dock crimes and the kidnappings were related, did you?"

"Jim says he's beginning to think everything is related and he may have a point. Anyway, right now, this is another murder to be looked into."

"Is the referee group going to investigate?"

She saw him look over and smile. Jim, Tom and himself referred to themselves as the referees, but would never tell their wives what that meant.

"I don't know yet. Sergeant Brady hasn't said anything. But I get the feeling he thinks we might be too close to this one. We'll see."

She noticed he was getting restless as she watched him shift his position on the couch for a second time. He plopped his feet onto the ottoman and rested his head on the back of the couch. Walking quietly into the kitchen she came back with two glasses of wine and handed one to Dave as she sat down next to him.

They sat there for a while both lost in their own thoughts sipping their glass of wine. What a complicated world. And what would their part be in the future? They had helped solve many complicated crimes in the past. They worked so well together. Sammi always needed a cover to be able to listen to the thoughts of others. And then she would pass her information on to Dave, who would take appropriate action. With him around, no one questioned how the information was obtained. They assumed it was reliable and moved with it.

Dave grabbed her hand. "What a waste with Terry. He was young and very ambitious, but he was smart. And he was so clever. He had fooled us for a long time until you came along. I imagine he could fool others, too. And we had plans for him."

"How old was he?"

"About thirty-two, I think. And I heard that he'd been engaged. After he got out of prison he had talked about a girl he had known for a while and was thinking of settling down and making some sense out of his life."

She didn't say a word, but felt sad. Everyone deserved a second chance. Then the telephone rang.

Dave answered. "Serge, what's up?"

"We need you back here right away. Is Sammi available?"

"She's here with me right now. What's the matter?"

"The mayor's coming down with part of his staff. I'm not sure what it's all about, but I'm suspicious. I want to pick up as much as I can. He's having a fit about another murder at the dock and an ex-policeman at that. This publicity is bad for him,