Dissecting a *Two Minute Murder:* The Case of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Like in any text, the author of a two minute mystery provides information that the reader must use to create***

 ***understanding. When authors aren’t providing literal information, then they are implying something. Record***

 ***information from your text below to help you solve the mystery!***

1. Look at what the characters do and say:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Character | Action(s) | Inference(s) |
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1. Describe the setting. What specific details might be important for solving the mystery?

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1. In the space below, jot down any clue you think might be significant to solving the mystery. Briefly explain what you infer from each clue.
2. What do you think happened? Record your theory of the crime below.

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Was your theory correct? Yes No

If no, does it seem obvious now that you know the answer? Yes No

1. Go back through the story and underline any clues you might have missed, now that you know the outcome.
2. A title is supposed to give readers a hint or clue about the text. How does the title of your two minute murder mystery relate to the answer? Explain using details from the story.

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**Just a Taste**

**D**etective Nose emerged from his car and was immediately dwarfed by the grandeur before him. All at once he felt quite small to be in the presence of one so wealthy. Inhaling a deep breath he began the large trek up the marble walkway. The house, or rather estate, was easily worth over a million dollars and the proprietor far more than that. Or at least he "was" worth far more than that. Earlier that morning Detective Nose had received a call from the daughter of the late Monsieur Cyr, although the police had deemed his death accidental, Gertrude suspected foul play.

Nose approached the door and heaved upon the large ornate door knocker. Almost immediately it opened and Nose was greeted by a tiny, shrewd looking man.

"May I Help You?"

"Yes, I'm Detective Nose. I was summoned here to investigate the death of Mr. Cyr."

"I'm sorry sir, there must be some mistake, the police have already been and gone. No such summons was issued." The man began to close the door.

"Wait, wait! It's okay Geoffrey. I called him here just after the police departed. Please, Detective come in. Would you like some refreshments?"

"If it's all the same to you I'd like to get started right away, the longer we wait the less likely I'll find anything. Miss uh..."

"Gertrude Elizabeth Beatrice Cyr. You may address me as Miss Gertrude. That will be all Geoffrey. If I have need of you I will ring."

"Yes ma'am." The aged man, sluggishly departed. Watching him leave eerily reminded Nose of a small prime ape, not at all attractive. Why was he employed here, if not to scare away any unwanted visitors. A small smirk appeared by the corners of his mouth as detective Nose mused over these thoughts. Just then Geoffrey stole a quick glance towards the outdoor pool, completely overlooked by Gertrude, but not Detective Nose.

"I'd like to begin my investigation out there, Miss Gertrude." Detective Nose motioned towards the pool.

"How perceptive of you Detective, that's where father passed away earlier this morning." Gertrude led the detective towards the enormous sliding glass doors that not only led to the backyard, but the outdoor swimming pool as well. "As you are aware the police have already been here and surveyed the scene deeming poor fathers death an accident."

**Just a Taste (cont)**

Nose surveyed the scene. The pool was well crafted, roughly, twenty by twenty five feet. There was a shallow end and a deep end complete with a diving board.

"Father had always enjoyed swimming and diving in his spare time. On occasion, he would go for hours. Geoffrey found his body in the pool this morning and called the police. He had a large bump on his head and had apparently been knocked unconscious, subsequentially drowning." Gertrude's eyes began to swell and she took out a delicate white hanky to wipe away a single tear. "The police believe it was an accident. They say that he slipped on the diving board and hit his head. I have my doubts and I sincerely hope you find more than they did."

Detective Nose noticed a trail of water going from the ladder at the edge of the pool to the diving board. The quantities suggested the story Miss Gertrude had regaled him with was true, Monsieur Cyr had been diving for hours. Bending down detective Nose placed his finger in the water and tasted it.

"Miss Gertrude I believe your convictions are right, there is more to Mr. Cyr's death than meets the eye."

Why did Detective Nose suspect foul play?

**A Lucky Break**

**D**etective Nose reported to the scene of the robbery and immediately noticed that officers were already inside the store speaking with the owner. Since they looked occupied, Nose decided to take a look around to see what evidence he could collect.

The jewellery store was located facing a quiet street, attached to a small boutique on the right. A bright red canopy stretched across the building that seemed to add a touch of a class and elegance to the neighbourhood. As the detective walked around the building, he was careful to watch his step. The sidewalk was littered with broken glass from the large display window where Nose assumed the burglar had gained entry. Around to the left side of the building was a long alleyway that stretched as far as the Detective could see. The buildings that lined the alleyway had no windows facing the left side although he could see a few small air vents. To the back of the building was a steel reinforced door, which was locked.

Nose quickly drew a rough sketch of the scene in his notepad and then hurried off inside to join the officers. Fortunately, his arrival was just in time to hear the owner's recollection of the morning events.

"I don't really have much to tell you," the owner said. "I arrived this morning, albeit a few minutes late, to open up shop for the day. When I arrived, the first thing I noticed was the broken window. I took out my key and unlocked the front door. After taking a quick survey of what was missing, I phoned the police from the phone in my office. It is ironic since just last week I booked an appointment to have an alarm installed on the front door for early this morning. Our last system was outdated and was dismantled just yesterday in anticipation of installing the new alarm system."

The Detective took a quick look around and noticed many empty jewellery cases where necklaces, rings and other assorted treasures should have been and then he asked to have a private word with the police. They all stepped aside.

"He hasn't mentioned whether or not his jewellery was insured", said Nose, "but I'm willing to bet he is trying to commit insurance fraud!"

What lead Detective Nose to believe that the robbery was no more than an attempt at insurance fraud?

**Case of the Murdered Husband**

“It was terrible,” Mrs. Johnson was saying to a uniformed officer as Detective Nose arrived on the scene. “I had just got home from the grocery store and was coming in to ask Steve to help me get the groceries in. I could tell something was wrong the minute I opened the back door, but before I could do anything, someone slapped something over my mouth and nose. The next thing I knew, I was waking up on the kitchen floor. Steve was stabbed to death in the living room – there was nothing I could do, so I called the police right away and waited out here for you to get here.”

“You haven’t touched anything in the living room at all?” the detective asked Mrs. Johnson. She shook her head firmly.

“I knew that if I touched anything, I might disturb clues, and I really want you to catch the scum that killed my husband!” she said fervently.

“I’m sure we will,” Detective Nose assured her. He started into the living room to look over the scene of the crime. As he entered, he noticed the victim’s feet sticking out from the other side of the couch, and noted that he was in his stocking feet. It wasn’t until he walked around the end of the couch that he could see Mr. Johnson, lying on his stomach on the floor. Two uniformed officers stood by, waiting for him to arrive.

“Help me turn him over,” Detective Nose told one of them. The man was definitely dead. The bloodstain had seeped into the carpet, and soaked the kitchen knife that was hidden under his body. Without a word, he turned and headed back into the kitchen.

“Mrs. Johnson,” he said, “I’m ready to arrest the scum that murdered your husband. Please stand up and turn around,” he added, unhooking the handcuffs from his belt.

How did Detective Nose know that Mrs. Johnson had killed her husband?

**Case of the Accidental Drowning**

**I** was not quite sure as to why I was being called down to investigate an accidental drowning at Sandyside River but fortunately, it was a sunny day and I could not think of a better place to be. Who knows, maybe once I was done, I would get a little fishing in.

When I arrived, there were a few police officers and a small gathering of onlookers. Two of the officers were standing on the public docks talking to what looked like an extremely well tanned gentleman who was wearing a bathing suit. Next to them in the water was a canoe that looked like it had seen better days.

After approaching the trio, I introduced myself to the tanned fellow, who was looking very upset, and asked him what had happened.

“It’s simply terrible Inspector! My friend Jim and I were out canoeing when I suggested that we give the Sunnyside rapids a go,” said the distraught man as he pointed in a southern direction towards the rapids. “Jim was a little concerned as he had never been in a canoe before today but I told him there was no need to worry, I would steer, all he had to do was paddle. Unfortunately, the rapids were a little more difficult than I remembered. I‘m not sure exactly what happened or when he fell out, all that I know is that when I got to the end of the rapids, I turned around and he was not there.”

I looked down at the canoe and observed that there were a couple of lifejackets and one wooden paddle with a large crack within the blade. I was just about to inquire as to how the paddle became damaged when the man stated, “Hell, I didn’t even notice that. My paddle is broken. I guess I must have cracked it on one of the rocks while I was traversing the rapids.”

“Yes, that is possible, “ I said. “But it is more likely that it cracked when you used it to hit Jim!”

Why did Inspector Nose suspect that Jim’s drowning was not an accident?

**Case of a One Handed Accident**

**T**he coroner said his death was accidental but I have my suspicions — I just can’t prove anything.”

Detective Nose stood inside the secluded cabin with the deceased’s brother. The cabin consisted only of two small rooms. It was very spacious with the antique kitchen being the highlight. It had an old wood burning stove and hand carved cabinets. On the blue stained counters sat, some food including some freshly opened canned goods, some apples, a few dirty dishes and a handheld can opener. The common area was small with a couch and a table. The second room was tucked away in the back. In it there was a single bed covered with an exquisite handmade quilt and a plain brown desk. The deceased’s body had been removed just a short hour ago.

“So tell me what lead you to conclude that his death wasn’t accidental after all?” Detective Nose asked.

“My brother was a handicapped man; he recently lost his arm in a horrible mechanical accident. Ever since then he’s required a nurse to help him out with even the simplest of tasks.”

“I’m really sorry to hear that,” Nose interrupted. “Please continue.”

“Well, this week he insisted on going up to the cabin alone for a few weeks. He was determined to prove to everyone that he hadn’t lost his independence. He had only been gone for a few days and because there is no phone out here, I decided to come up on check on him. Even though he insisted on spending the week alone, I was worried about him. When I arrived, I knew something was not right. There was an extra set of large footprints going into the cabin, my brother had small feet, but the police stated that it was not enough evidence to go on. Inside, I found him dead on the couch. I must admit that it was common knowledge that he owned this cabin but my brother was afraid that if he told anyone where he was going that they might try to stop him. I was the only person who knew where he was and that was because I was more than just his brother; I was his best friend. I know in my heart that his death was no accident. Therefore, I phoned you. My brother deserves justice.”

The Detective pursued the cabin once more. “Tell me, has anyone been in the cabin or touched anything since you reported the death of your brother.”

“No, only the police and the medical staff have been here.”

“Well based on what I’ve seen I don’t believe this was any accident either and I think I can help you prove it! Can you think of anyone that may have wanted to kill your brother?”

*What evidence did the Detective find that lead him to believe that there was no accident?*

**Case of the Missing Rings**

**D**etective Nose entered the dark cottage and spied the distraught woman Ms. Lloyd sitting on her sofa by candle light. A uniformed Officer passed by and assured Nose that they would have the power on in an instant. Detective Nose then approached the woman and asked for her story.

“I was watching an old movie when the lights suddenly went out. Just then, I heard some strange noises coming from the bedroom. I got up to investigate when all of a sudden someone came flying out of the bedroom in such a rush that they knocked me down. Although I did not get a look at the offender, I did hear them open the front door and run out.. At this point, I crawled over to my desk and picked up my phone to call you people. When I got off the phone I lit some candles and checked the bedroom, that’s when I saw that my diamond rings were missing.”

The lights suddenly flashed on and Detective Nose was able to get a good look at the neat cottage. There was a large fireplace, and a very modern computer sitting on a desk. The front door was opposite another door which lead to the bedroom. The phone rang and the woman got up to answer it. Inspector Nose watched as Ms. Lloyd picked up the cordless phone and nodded as she politely excused herself and went into the bedroom to continue with the call. When she returned, the Detective asked her if that was the only phone in the cottage. She assured him that it was.

“I guess the only other question I have then, Ms. Lloyd, is where did you hide the rings?”

Why did detective Nose suspect that the woman was lying?

**A LUCKY BREAK**

**Hint:** Did a burglar break the window?

**Answer:** Detective Nose suspects that the man used the opportunity presented by changing alarm systems to stage a burglary. His fatal error was that he broke the front window from the inside, which was evident from all the glass on the sidewalk. Had the window been broken from the outside, the glass would have been inside of the building, not on the sidewalk.

**JUST A TASTE**

**Hint:** It took just a taste!

**Answer:** The water that led from the pool ladder to the diving board was fresh water, not chlorinated water from the pool. Nose suspects that someone used a hose to make the trail of water so that it would look like Mr. Cyr was using the diving board.

**Case of the Murdered Husband**

Answer: Mrs. Johnson told him that her husband had been stabbed to death, but no one knew until he turned the body over and found the stab wounds and the knife.

**Accidental Drowning**

Answer: The man claimed that he was steering the canoe. If he were steering, he would have been in the back of the canoe. Detective Nose suspects that because the man lied about not seeing Jim fall into the water, he is probably responsible and as he stated, may have used his paddle to hit Jim before pushing him overboard.

**Case of the One Handed Accident**

Answer: Although the deceased only had one arm, there was freshly opened canned food on the counter. A handheld opener requires the use of both hands to operate it.

**The Case of the Missing Rings**

**Answer: Mrs. Lloyd could not have made the call under the circumstances that she claimed since cordless phones require electrical power to operate.**