

Death by Quarantine

Written by Walton Burns

Bella Bartner, illustrator

A resident under quarantine hasn't left his house for days. Yet the mail carrier looks at his doorstep and immediately knows the resident is dead.

And he knows who did it.

Can you figure out what the mail carrier saw and identify the murderer?

Examine the evidence, analyze the facts, and solve the mystery!

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Thimbleberry Police Department

Incident Report

Incident: #2020-0131

Date: 8/20/2020

Officer Badge: #3126

Name: Chen, Carmel

SUMMARY

At 1:30pm on Thursday, Aug. 20 2020, I was informed by dispatch of a 9-1-1 call reporting a potential incident at 46 King's Road in Thimbleberry. Dispatch stated the caller was the mail carrier, Anthony Cosi. Cosi told him that the resident of the house, Gabriel Carson, was in danger, possibly dead.

I arrived at approximately 1:42 pm. I found Cosi outside the residence near the front door.. He was extremely upset and anxious, but able to communicate coherently. He insisted that Carson must be in trouble, even though he had not entered the house or seen anything unusual. I rang the doorbell and knocked several times. At 2:03 pm, I entered the house through the unlocked door and found the resident deceased...

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Police interviewed the mail carrier, Anthony Cosi. He said that the victim, Gabriel Carson, was under quarantine after contracting COVID a few days ago. He works from home knitting handmade scarves and selling them online. Because Cosi frequently shipped out orders and received supplies through the mail, Cosi was coming to the house almost every day. He and Carson began chatting and became friendly with each other.

The past week since Carson was quarantined, Cosi had made a point of coming to the door, ringing the doorbell, and chatting. Cosi said that Carson did not answer the door that day, which was unusual. Carson seemed to look forward to the almost daily visits and came to the door quickly.

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Thimbleberry Clinic



652 East Main Street
Suite 5A
Thimbleberry, QC
06406

8/15/2020

Dear Gabriel William Carson,

We are contacting you with your COVID-19 test results. Your test is POSITIVE for COVID-19.

Lab Results

Component	Value	Date
COVID19	Detected	08/15/2020

Please isolate yourself in your home for 14 days after the date your symptoms started 08/13/2020. Stay home except to get medical care to minimize contact with others to avoid spreading this infection. Keep at least 6 feet away from other people, whether inside or outside.

Any healthy person coming into close contact with you should quarantine themselves for 14 days after contact.

Please monitor your symptoms and contact your PCP if your symptoms worsen or you have any other medical concerns.

Interview with Nellie Carson
Incident: #2020-0131 Date: 8/21/2020
Interviewed by Detective Olivia Rossito

Rossito: Did you see your son at all yesterday?

Carson: I wish I had . . . I went to the house early in the morning to drop off some puzzle books. I thought it would give him something to do. But I just I left them on the doorstep. I didn't ring the bell in case he was sleeping.

Rossito: What time did you drop the books off?

Carson: Around 7:15. I was on my way to my 7:30 exercise class at the Y.

Rossito: And did you see anyone at the house or notice anything unusual?

Carson: No. I put the books on the doorstep in a bag near the food box. He had a little box for the meal delivery person. His gardening tools were out. Gabe never puts them away... Oh, I shouldn't criticize him.

Rossito: Those kinds of thoughts are natural. Don't punish yourself. Now, did he have any close friends in the area?

Carson: No. It's too bad. He moved back to Thimbleberry earlier this year to be closer to us. He hadn't had a chance to meet people when COVID closed everything down. I can't think who would have done this!

Rossito: Do you know if he was expecting anyone to visit that day?

Carson: I don't think so. Except the mailman. Business is booming because everyone's stuck home so they do a lot of online shopping. I gather he and the mail carrier got to know each other. He sounded like a very nice man. Gabe did say something about jail time? I don't know for what though.

Rossito: That's interesting. Did your son get anything else delivered?

Carson: He started getting all his meals delivered once he got quarantined. It's just easier when you're sick, not to have to cook.. I don't know who the driver was, but someone was there three times a day.



gabrielwcarson@expressmail.com

Unread	Sender	Subject	Time
★	Yarn Heaven	Good news! Your Order Was Delivered!	20 Mar 1:59 pm
★	Post Office	Item(s) Delivered in/at Front Door	20 Mar 1:21 pm
★	Yard Beautiful.com	Latest Post: How Often to Water in August	20 Mar 12:39 pm
★	Carson's Scarves	New Order!	20 Mar 12:17 pm
★	Bite Bringer	Your Bites are Coming: Driver is on the way	20 Mar 11:48 am
★	Bank of Thimbleberry	Security Alert: Unusual Credit Card Activity Detected	20 Mar 10:21 am
★	Thimbleberry Market	Your Grocery Delivery Has Arrived	20 Mar 10:16 am
★	Amazing Prizes	You Won! Open the Attachment! Urgent!	20 Mar 9:32 am
★	Friends of the Library	Events at the Library This Week	20 Mar 8:21 am
☆	Bite Bringer	Your Order Was Delivered at Front Door	20 Mar 7:44 am
☆	Bite Bringer	Your Bites are Coming: Driver is on the way	20 Mar 7:31 am
☆	Mom	Left you a gift, won't ring bell so you can rest	20 Mar 7:21am
☆	Post Office	Pick-up Scheduled for 8/20/20: At Front Door	20 Mar 7:02 am
☆	Bite Bringer	Dinner Order Scheduled for Today 6:30 pm	20 Mar 6:57 am
☆	Bite Bringer	Lunch Order Scheduled for Today 12:00 pm	20 Mar 6:47 am
☆	Bite Bringer	Breakfast Order Scheduled for Today 7:45 am	20 Mar 6:46 am
★	Mom	Fwd: 10 Foods to Eat to Get Over COVID	20 Mar 6:35 am

Interview with William Miller
Incident: #2020-0131 Date: 8/21/2020
Interviewed by Detective Olivia Rossito

Rossito: Thank you for speaking to us. Can you please state your name and occupation for the record?

Miller: Billy Miller. I work for Bite Bringer. Like "We bring you your bites, anything you want to bite, brought fresh to your door. Bite Bringer!"

Rossito: I've seen the ads, yes. Now Bite Bringer's records show that you delivered breakfast and lunch to Gabriel Carson at 46 King's Road yesterday.

Miller: Yeah. I mean, I guess. I can't remember every delivery.

Rossito: Did you see Mr. Carson either time yesterday?

Miller: No, He has a box on his doorstep and I just put the food in there. Yesterday it was a breakfast sandwich from Wasp Hive Diner. Then I ring the doorbell and take off. No time to wait. Plus he has COVID, right? I don't want to get sick.

Rossito: So you didn't know Mr. Carson?

Miller: No. I never even saw the guy.

Rossito: Can you think of any reason why someone would kill him?

Miller: Me? No, no...I know he was ordering stuff all the time and he was a good tipper, so I guess he was pretty rich. Maybe someone tried to rob him. And then sell his stuff at a pawn shop. I heard that's how robbers make their money. But he didn't have anything that seemed expensive. Just a lot of scarves and stuff for sewing. Weird!

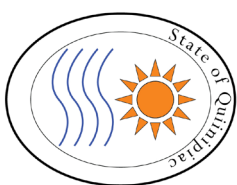
Rossito: So you've been in his house? But you said you just rang the door and left.

Miller: What? Uhm, yeah, no, like, OK so a couple times he was right there when I rang the bell, so he opened the door and I handed him his food. So I could see behind him.

Rossito: Interesting.

Miller: Hey did you talk to the mail guy? Cause I heard he was in prison. And he was really close with the Carson guy opened the door right away.

State of Quinnipiac
Department of Public Safety
Criminal Record



Last Name: Cosi
First Name: Anthony
DOB: 4 Sept 1985
DPS #: 195-1076

Offense	Description	Disposition	Date of Dis- position	Sentence
Resisting Arrest	Argumentative with the arresting officer	GUILTY	9 Sept 2010	FINE \$500
Carrying an Illegal Weapon	A nightstick is an illegal weapon	GUILTY	9 Sept 2010	1 YEAR JAIL, CONSEC
Robbery, 2nd Degree	Robbed a jewelry store armed with a metal night-stick	GUILTY	9 Sept 2010	5 Years JAIL, CONSEC

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According to the police, Carson's body was found in the living room, which was the room the front door opened onto.

The medical examiner reported that Carson's death was likely caused by a blow on the back of his head. From marks on his body, face, and hands, it appears that he was involved in a fight. Blood was found on a large heavy table near the body

Time of death was between 6 and 12 hours before Officer Chen discovered the body at 2:00pm.

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Police found one set of footprint made by dirt tracked in by an unknown individual. The victim wore clean slippers and would not be expected to leave footprints.

Based on the footprints, the unknown individual entered the house and began moving around in the room in a pattern consistent with fighting.

The same footprints are found in the blood of the victim and bloody footprints are found throughout the house, indicating the unknown individual ran through the house quickly after the death of the victim. There are impressions on the carpet near the victim suggesting the individual knelt near the body for some time.

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There was a suspicious charge made on Carson's credit card that was flagged by the bank. This was for an order of a large quantity of simple jewelry such as simple diamond earrings, silver locket, and gold necklace chains. There was no record of Carson visiting these websites in his browser history.

Representatives for the store told police he had never placed an order from them before, as best they could tell. In fact, police could find no evidence that Carson had ever ordered any jewelry online.

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Interview with Anthony Cosi
Incident: # 2020-0131 Date: 8/21/2020
Interviewed by Detective Olivia Rossito, Thimbleberry PD

Cosi: Yes, I've told you this already. I had two boxes for Gabe on Thursday and he scheduled a pick-up for five packages. I rang the bell and waited. After maybe 10 minutes, when he didn't answer, I got suspicious. Then I called the police.

Chen: OK, let's get to the point. How exactly did you know that he was in trouble?

Cosi: I can't tell you that.

Chen: Did you see someone? Ora car driving away. Maybe you saw his body through the window?

Cosi: No, I didn't look in the windows.

Chen: Maybe you heard something like a gun shot or a voice?

Cosi: No. Nothing like that.

Chen: So it was something you saw outside?

Cosi: I can't say. I just can't.

Chen: This is pretty suspicious, because you tried to rob a jewelry store. And Gabriel Carson's credit card was used to buy a lot of jewelry!

Cosi: Hey, that robbery was dumb. I was desperate and I didn't know any better. But I didn't actually hurt anyone. And I learned my lesson. I've changed. That's why I volunteer as a mentor at the community center! Talk to them, they'll tell you!

Chen: We will be talking to them. That includes the kid you've been mentoring, too. Maybe he's in on it.

Cosi: Wait! You can't do that. These are at-risk kids. Their identity is private, right?

Chen: Sounds like you don't want us finding out what you told him.

Cosi: No, no. I'm just protecting him. He's like me when I was his age, starting to do some bad things. I wanted to turn him around before it gets worse.

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The Bite Bringer dispatch told police that Miller was assigned to deliver breakfast and lunch to Carson on Thursday. She also confirmed that Carson had made orders for all his meals early in the morning. He recorded the breakfast pick-up in the app at 7:30am, and marked it delivered at 7:42am. He recored the lunch pick-up at 11:48am.

The Wasp's Nest Diner confirmed that Miller picked up breakfast at around 7:30am, an egg and cheese sandwich on a bagel with hash browns. They also confirmed Miller picked up Carson's lunch at 11:45am, a Western Burger with fries and a side salad.

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Interview with Eleanor Green, Thimbleberry Community Center
Incident: #2020-0131 Date: 8/21/2020
Interviewed by Detective Olivia Rossito, Thimbleberry PD

Green: Yes, Anthony is one of our mentors. He's been doing a wonderful job! All his evaluations have been excellent and there are no complaints against him.

Chen: What kind of background checks do you do on your mentors?

Green: We are aware of his criminal record, if that's what you're asking. When he signed up, we did a background check. We had him shadow another mentor for a while, a kind of probation. We saw no signs of violence, temper, or encouraging criminal behavior. Quite the opposite! He gave great advice and was very kind and patient.

Chen: Do you always take mentors with criminal records?

Green: He's not the only one and it can be a real asset. We found a mentee with a similar profile. At-risk kids tend to have a lot of obstacles in life and they're often looking for an easy, get-rich scheme. Anthony had planned to pawn the jewelry he stole, for example. That's the kind of thing his mentee was always talking about so having Anthony as an example of how it can go wrong is really helpful.

Chen: Can you give me the name of this mentee?

Green: I'm not comfortable doing that.

Chen: Are they a minor?

Green: No, but they still deserve protection. Our mentees may not look like fine upstanding young men and women. Some may be using drugs or doing petty crimes. But I don't feel it's fair to put them on the police radar and possibly bias you against them.

Chen: Well, could you contact him and ask for consent.

Green: I can do that. However, I can't get in touch with him until after work. The delivery service doesn't let him use his personal phone when he's on the clock.



Telephone Records for Cosi, Anthony
203-555-0101

Date	Time	Duration	Recipient
8/20/2020	1:26 pm	1m 23s	Thimbleberry PD
8/20/2020	1:24 pm	1m 20s	Bite Bringer Driver Phone #11G
8/20/2020	11:34 am	2m 11s	Thimbleberry Post Office
8/20/2020	09:15 am	1m 02s	Coastal Dentist

Appendix to Incident Report

PHOTO 1/12

Incident: #2020-0131

Photo of Doorstep of 46 Kings Road

Taken 8/20/2020, 2:02pm by Officer Chen



Your Turn

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Who killed Gabriel Carson?

What did Anthony Cosi see on the doorstep that made him suspect that person?

Why didn't Anthony Cosi tell the police immediately?

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Hints

1. What time was Gabriel killed according to the police?
2. What other clue can help us figure out when Carson was probably killed?
3. Who visited Gabriel before that time?
4. What did those visitors bring?
5. Are those things on the doorstep?
6. If not, what probably happened to them?
7. Who should have visited Gabriel after his death?
8. What should they have brought?
9. Is that thing on the doorstep?
10. Why is it missing?
11. Who did Anthony Cosi call before calling the police and why?

Solution

William Miller, the delivery driver killed Gabriel Carson. On Thursday morning, he rang the doorbell and waited for Carson, believing that Carson's house was full of treasures to pawn. Perhaps Carson caught on that Miller was casing his house, or perhaps Miller became enraged by their disappointment. In any case, they fought. Carson hit his head on the table and died. Miller took his credit card and used it to buy jewelry, perhaps to pawn.

Anthony Cosi, the mail carrier, had gotten to know Carson's routine and knew that Carson got his meals delivered. When he arrived, the food box was empty but the bag from Carson's mom was still there. It's unlikely that Carson would have taken his meals in and not noticed the bag from his mother right in the doorway.

However, because Cosi was Miller's mentor, he didn't want to turn him in. Instead he called him to confirm what happened. Then he tried to encourage Miller to turn himself in.

I hope you enjoyed your adventure through this zine, the newest incarnation of my Clue by Clue mysteries. I call them Clue by Clue because you get the information one clue at a time! I would deeply appreciate your feedback, so please send any and all thoughts to walton@cluebyclue.com.

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