

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-68639-6 - A Puzzle for Logan
Richard MacAndrew
Excerpt
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Chapter 1 *An escape and a murder*

Jenny Logan was enjoying an afternoon of warm Scottish sunshine on the beach at Portobello, five kilometres from the centre of Edinburgh, when her phone rang.

‘Logan.’

‘Grant here, madam.’

‘It’s my day off, Grant,’ said Logan.

‘I know. I’m sorry,’ said Grant. ‘But Ronnie Campbell, the murderer, has escaped from prison.’

‘OK,’ said Logan. ‘I’ll meet you in my office in about fifteen minutes.’

She put on jeans and a T-shirt over her swimsuit and walked quickly to her car.

* * *

Jenny Logan was an inspector in the Edinburgh Police. During the ten-minute drive from Portobello to the London Road police station, she thought about Ronnie Campbell. She knew that he had gone to prison for murdering a man called Craig Sinclair. That was about seven years ago, just after she had joined the police, but she couldn’t remember anything else.

Sergeant Grant was waiting for Logan in her office. He was fifty-nine but looked younger. His hair was thick and black and he had a large black moustache. He was holding some papers with ‘Police Record: Ronnie Campbell’ written on the front.

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‘Tell me what’s happening,’ said Logan, putting her beach bag in a cupboard under the window.

‘Campbell escaped from a prison van near Dundee some time this morning,’ said Grant. ‘They were moving him down to Saughton.’ Saughton was a prison in the western part of Edinburgh. ‘Campbell escaped at a petrol station and got away. We found out later he’d stolen a car, a dark blue Audi.’

‘What have you done so far?’ asked Logan.

‘We’ve told the newspapers, the radio and the TV stations. We’ve given them the car number, and described what Campbell was wearing.’

Logan said nothing and thought for a moment.

‘Is he dangerous, do you think?’ she asked Grant.

‘Possibly,’ said Grant, putting Campbell’s police record on Logan’s desk and pointing to it. He opened his mouth to say something else but just then the phone rang. Grant answered it. He listened, said OK twice and then put the phone down. He looked at Logan.

‘Someone’s found a young woman’s body in Holyrood Park. We’re wanted over there immediately.’

‘Today was my day off,’ said Logan.

‘Not any longer!’ said Grant.

A few minutes later, Logan, with Grant beside her in the car, entered Holyrood Park. Holyrood Park is one of the most beautiful places in Edinburgh. Inside the park is Arthur’s Seat, the tall hill that stands over all of Edinburgh. There are also lakes and fields. What other capital city in the world has such a large area of wild, green and open land so close to its centre? Edinburgh people know it well and love it; tourists do not often go there.

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As she drove past the Palace of Holyroodhouse, the Queen's palace in Scotland, Logan remembered that in the middle of the sixteenth century there had been a very bloody murder inside the palace itself. She asked herself what they would find as she reached the group of police cars.

Logan parked her car on the grass at the side of the road behind the last police car. She got out and looked up at Arthur's Seat. The sky was blue and it was still warm, but Logan began to feel cold at the unfairness of a young woman's early death.

There was a group of people, almost all men, standing about a hundred metres away on the hillside. Logan and Grant walked up the hill towards the group. When they arrived, people moved back to let them through. Logan stepped forward and looked down at the body of a young woman in her late twenties. There was a wide cut across the woman's throat and blood everywhere. A dark-haired woman in blue trousers and a white shirt was studying the body carefully. This woman was Helen Robertson, the police doctor. Logan had met her a few times.

'Helen,' said Logan softly.

Robertson looked up.

'Jenny,' she said. 'Hi. A bad business, I'm afraid.' She turned back to the body but went on talking. 'As you can see, someone cut her throat with a knife. It's almost cut her head away from her body and there's a lot of blood.' She pointed at the ground near the body.

'Time of death . . . Probably between two and three this afternoon.'

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Robertson continued to move round the body. She touched it as little as possible, only when she needed to see something better.

‘I can’t be sure until I’ve carefully . . .’ She stopped as she looked more closely at something.

‘Yes?’ said Logan.

‘Well, look at how the cut starts at the bottom of the neck here on the right and finishes close to her left ear. I would say the killer stood behind her and held her head back with his right arm. Then he cut her throat, holding the knife in his left hand.’

‘I see,’ said Logan. ‘How sure are you?’

‘Sure enough,’ said Robertson, looking up with a serious smile on her face. ‘And I’d also say he, or she, is quite a bit taller than this woman.’ She nodded her head at the body on the ground in front of her. ‘And this woman’s actually quite tall herself. I’d say about 165, 170 centimetres.’

‘Thanks, Helen,’ said Logan. ‘If there’s anything else . . .’

‘I’ll let you know,’ finished Robertson. ‘There is one other thing. The killer will probably have blood all over his clothes.’

‘OK. That’s useful.’ Logan turned to Grant. ‘We need to find the knife, if possible,’ she said. ‘Get some people to search the park.’

‘Right, madam,’ said Grant.

Logan looked at her watch. It was only five o’clock. It would be light for a long time yet. ‘The park’s a big place but they can look till it gets dark,’ she said. ‘They’ve probably got another four or five hours at least.’

Grant moved away and started giving orders to some of

the police officers standing around. Logan walked some metres away from the body and allowed the sunshine and fresh air to take away some of the coldness of death.

A few minutes later, Grant came back towards Logan with Helen Robertson.

‘I found this in her pocket,’ said Robertson, passing Logan a clear plastic police bag with a rather dirty envelope inside it.

Logan took the bag and held it carefully so that she could look inside the envelope. It was empty. On the back of the envelope there were a few words: eggs, bread, milk, matches. Someone’s shopping list. On the front was the name Morag Mackenzie but no address.

‘You haven’t had time to read Ronnie Campbell’s police record,’ said Grant, ‘but the name Morag Mackenzie is in it. She’s not one of his favourite people.’

Logan gave the bag and the envelope back to Helen.

‘Helen, could you give this to the scientists,’ she said. ‘I want to know if there are any fingerprints on it. And I want to know if they can tell me anything about the handwriting.’

Logan turned to Grant. ‘Well,’ she said, ‘it looks as if Ronnie Campbell may be dangerous. You’d better tell me what you know about him.’