

Bad Cop, Bad Cop

Reed's Realm

“Johnston. Homicide,” Martin said as he picked up his phone.

In his right hand he held the binoculars that he was using to watch the warehouse for signs of people going in and out. With dusk creeping across the sky and the sun’s light dimming, the beat cop was finding it harder and harder to see the areas of the warehouse that were now hiding in the ever growing shadows.

“Hey, it’s Reed. Where are you at?” Reed asked from the other end of the line.

“I’m actually parked in a lot across the street about a half a block away from warehouse 22 at the moment. Where are you?” Martin asked, leaning forward to get a better angle at a person walking out from behind the warehouse.

“I’m standing right beside you,” Reed said stopping next to Martin’s open car window.

The beat cop jolted in his seat. “Ah, shit! Man, what the hell are you trying to do? Get shot?” Martin yelled. “Did anyone ever tell you not to creep up on people like that?”

Laughing, Reed said, “So, are you going to shoot me with your binoculars or your cell phone?”

“Dude, that’s not even funny,” Martin returned, still holding the slim cell phone to his ear.

“You know, I think that you can stop talking into your cell. I can hear you just fine from here,” Reed said.

Martin closed his cell phone, rolled up the windows on his car, and got out, closing the door softly behind him. He said nothing to Reed, and was purposefully not looking at him, but a hint of a smile played on the darker man’s lips.

Martin put on his police issued navy blue windbreaker and gave Reed his best “go to hell” look. “Are we ready?”

“What?” Reed asked, trying to look innocent. Despite his best efforts, he slowly broke into a full fledge smile, and then chuckled.

“You suck, dude. That’s what,” Martin returned.

Reed could not hold back his laughter any longer and busted out a huge rolling laugh that could be heard for about a block. Martin could not help but to start to laugh too. Two men laughing hysterically typically wasn’t a good thing on a stake out, but no one seemed to be around to notice.

“Alright, what is our next move, Reed?” Martin asked as they started to walk in the direction of warehouse 22.

“Well, I thought that we might ask some of the citizens who hang out at the port at night if they have seen Willings,” he answered. “Did you come up with anything today?”

“I went around with Willings mug shot and asked the dock workers if they had seen him around. No one recognized him, which isn’t surprising,” Martin said.

Reed shook his head, “So, you came up empty.”

“Maybe not totally empty,” Martin replied as they arrived at the road that crossed in front of the warehouse.

After looking for traffic they started across the road.

“This might be a shot in the dark, but a lot of the dock workers said that this area was worked by a dealer named Todd Jones. He’s a popular native of New Orleans. He’s known on the streets as TJ,” Martin stated.

“I don’t guess I have ever had the pleasure of meeting this TJ,” Reed said.

”You’ll probably recognize him when we pick him up tonight. He’s a frequent guest at the luxurious New Orleans detention facility,” Martin added.

Reed stopped and looked seriously at his friend and colleague, noticing only peripherally that they were at the northeast corner of warehouse 22. “And why would we pick him up? We don’t even know if this TJ person has anything to do with all this. I’m not so sure we should waste time looking for this guy. We’re not trying to bust a drug dealer. We’re looking for a murderer.”

“Yeah, I see what you are saying, but this is our best option the way I see it,” Martin said. “Think about it. If this area of the port is TJ’s turf, then he is going to know everything that happens here. He’ll have good eyes out day and night making sure that no other sets are trying to work his zone. Either TJ knows what happened in this warehouse, or he had a hand in it. Right

now, what else do we have to go on? Since you haven't said anything, I take it that you didn't hit the jackpot at Drake's today, either."

The detective shook his head, his shoulders slumping. "I pretty much came up empty there, but I do have some leads to follow up on. I am going to be meeting with Warin Drake himself. I'm hoping that I might be able to get some answers from him," Reed explained. He wasn't sure taking the time to track down the drug dealer would be fruitful, but they had little to lose. Given the lack of information the Drake's had put forth so far, Martin had just as much chance finding something as Reed did.

"I see where you are coming from, Martin, and if you think that we can find this TJ fella and he can shed some light on all this, then I say let's bring in the drug dealing bastard. It never breaks my heart to give a guy like that a hard time."

"Now you're talking my language, man," Martin said as he flipped his black Kangol cap backwards and adjusted his shoulders. "First thing we got to do is find one of these 'good eyes', and that shouldn't be very hard to do," Martin said. "Follow me."

A 'good eye' was a staple for drug dealers, and almost as bad of a plight on society. A good eye acted as a look out for drug dealers, and would do anything it took to get a message to their boss that the cops were putting heat in a certain area. Good eyes usually worked for their next fix, which meant they were loyal to their dealers, but only up to a point.

Martin and Reed walked up the boulevard toward the nearest busy intersection that was only about three blocks away. With the sun nearly gone and a cool breeze blowing across the river, not many people remained on the streets. Most of the people who legitimately worked in the area were already at home with their families.

"How will we know a good eye when we see him," Reed asked.

"I'll show you," Martin responded, intently studying the conspicuous group on the corner. "Move over here," Martin said as he ducked behind the building that they were walking beside so they would be out of sight.

"Look, here is the plan," Martin said. "In five minutes, I want you to go back out and start walking towards those guys. Make sure that you have your coat open and your badge showing on your belt clip."

"What are you going to do?" Reed asked. Martin's plan sounded more like an attempted suicide.

“I’m going to work my way around the building and to the other side. When they see you, the good eye will take off running. If they are all good eyes, they’ll all run in a different direction. We want someone who runs,” Martin said.

Martin pulled out his 9mm and popped out the clip, giving it a quick glance before sliding it back into his hip holster. He then looked back up at Reed.

“If they all run, which one do we get then?” Reed asked.

Martin smiled, “The slowest one.”

It was Reed’s turn to give the “go to hell” look. “You know no one likes a smart ass, Martin,” Reed responded.

Martin laughed and clearly enjoying the triumph of revenge from Reed’s window scare. A wide, boyish grin covered the darker man’s face.

“Remember, in five minutes you start up the street,” Martin reminded.

Reed looked down at his watch and preset the alarm for five minutes, then looked back up to Martin, “Five minutes to the second.”

“Setting your watch? That is so you,” Martin said with a wink before leaving to make his way around the building.

Reed started to feel that little rush down in the bottom of his stomach that let him know whatever he was about to do would be dangerous. He pulled out his weapon and checked the clip, and then returned it to his holster as Martin had done moments before.

Reed glanced down at his watch. Almost one minute had gone by. Reed took a quick look around the corner to make sure that the targets were still at the corner. In that split second glance, he was able to see all three of them standing at the corner talking.

Reed could not help but think about his days back at Quantico while he was in FBI training. These old red brick buildings reminded him of the training course there that on which every cadet had to be certified. He remembered the day that he was up for urban certification. He vividly recalled the moments before his trial, impatiently waiting his turn at the course, his foot tapping as he stood behind a red brick building like this one.

Normally, during his training, Reed had been very focused and hardly nervous. On the day he was set to run the course, though, he had been a nervous wreck. It didn’t have anything to do with his certification test, but with the conversation he had with his wife before leaving the house.

“Reed, could you just stop for a minute and talk to me. Is a minute of your time too much for your wife to ask for these days?” Samantha asked, an all too familiar venom in her voice.

Reed, without looking at her, quickly checked his gun Case, which he kept beside the bed. “ Look, Sam. You know I’m in a hurry to get to the range. I’m already running a little late.” Reed looked up at his wife. By the look on her face, he knew the conversation was not going to end quickly. “Can you image what they would do if I didn’t make my certification time? They could make me retake the whole course if they wanted too,” Reed added. He picked up his case and walked over to Samantha.

“When I get back tonight, we can sit down and talk about whatever you would like, okay? But right now I have to go,” Reed said, kissing her on the left cheek.

Samantha stood there motionless, her shoulders slumped in defeat. Reed was almost to the door when Samantha finally spoke up. “I won’t be here when you get back tonight.”

“Where are you going?” Reed asked.

“I am sorry, Reed. I can’t do this anymore. I’m leaving here. Leaving you,” she added.

“What are you talking about?” Reed asked, dumbfounded. “And why are you springing this on me right now?”

“I’m not happy and if you were ever home, or ever gave me any attention at all you would know that I hate it here and I’m miserable,” Samantha said. Her shaking hand brushed her long blonde hair back from her face. Tears welled up and then began to streak down the same cheek that Reed had just kissed.

“But again, that would require you to stop living and breathing the FBI for a moment, and we couldn’t have that, could we?” Samantha asked as more tears ran down her face.

“Well, what do you want me to do here, Sam?” Reed asked. He held the gun case at his side.

“Just go, Reed. That’s what you want to do,” she said.

Reed sat the case on the floor and crossed the distance to Samantha. He wiped away some of the tears from her face. "Sam, I love you. We can work this all out. I know we can, okay."

Samantha looked at the floor as more tears ran from her eyes. "Just go," Samantha said again.

Reed turned and walked back to the door, picking up his case along the way. He looked at Samantha again and said, "Everything will be okay, Sam. I'll see you tonight. We'll talk this all out, okay?"

Reed watched as Sam shook her head, wiped her face, and walked into the kitchen of their small home without another word.

Reed's mind came rushing back to focus with the sound of his watch going off, signaling that five minutes was up. He turned off the alarm. How ironic that he set his watch as a little joke for Martin, and yet it turned out that he really did need it.

He shook his head in disbelief, closed his eyes, and took a deep breath. He turned and walked up the sidewalk towards the three guys that were still standing on the corner. Reed unbuttoned his coat and opened it so that his NOPD badge was in plain sight clipped to the front of his belt. Although he was trying to act calm and collected, his heart was pumping a huge amount of adrenaline through out his body.

It wasn't fright that set him on edge. He just knew that any moment, one of these guys would notice him and the chase would be on. He only hoped that Martin had enough time to get into position.

Reed slowed when he got around fifteen yards from the three of them. They still hadn't seen him. He was close enough to hear their voices and laughter, but could not totally make out what they were saying. All three of the men looked to be in their late teens or early twenties. Two of them were dressed almost exactly alike. They had black jeans on with blue hoodies. The third guy was wearing a blue pair of Nike basketball shorts, a white tank top, and a white with blue pin striped New York Yankee's baseball hat pushed and tilted to the left side of his face so that the front bill was half way between his left eye and left ear.

Reed only got two steps closer when one of the hoodie twins caught sight of him. His eyes squinted in the oncoming darkness and then went wide. It was obvious that he saw the street lights glimmer off of Reed's badge.

“FIVE-0,” he yelled as he took off running.

The other two glanced at Reed and then began running as well. All of them scattered in different directions. It was the Yankee’s hat guy that turned and ran down the side of the building where Martin was supposed to be waiting. Reed hoped that when he turned the corner, he would see that Martin had already caught the guy.

When Reed followed, all he saw was a street walker and Mr. New York Yankee blasting down the sidewalk at full speed. There was no sign of Martin.

Even though Reed knew it would not do any good, he yelled, “Freeze. NOPD!”

The runner never looked back and never slowed his sprint, which was a lot faster than Reed’s. At least until the Yankee started passing the alley way. Something moved across Reed’s field of vision in a blur, followed by a pro football like collusion. Martin had been waiting for just the right moment to take Mr. Yankee down.

Martin rolled him over and cuffed him before Reed made it there to assist.

“Get off me, mother fucker,” the punk kid said, jerking and still trying to get away. Martin put his elbow in the criminal’s back. “I said get the fuck off me man,” he yelled once more.

“Hey, shut your mouth,” Martin returned, putting more pressure on the kid’s ability to breath.

“Don’t tell me what to do, bitch. I know my rights, and you ain’t got no right hassling me, pig! I didn’t do shit. I know my fucking rights,” the street punk yelled.

“Oh, you know your rights, huh,” Martin said as he picked him up, pushing his cuffed hands backwards towards his head before dragging him back into the darkened alley way. Martin then slammed him up against the wall with such force that his Yankee’s hat went flying off his head.

“Your rights,” Martin repeated, pushing him against the wall and leaning in close behind him so that his mouth was right behind the punk’s left ear. “You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be disregarded as bullshit, and if you keep resisting me you will have the right to have my foot in your ass! Any questions about your rights now?” Martin asked.

Reed stood at the entrance of the alley to make sure no one had thoughts of intervening and being a hero for the punk. Reed wasn't too surprised to see that no one seemed to notice or care.

"What do you want from me, man? I didn't do nothing. I swear, man, I don't know what this is about," he pleaded, calming as he realized there was no escape.

"You want to know what this is about, huh? I'll tell you if you chill the hell out. It's about your boss, TJ. I need to know where I can find him," Martin responded.

"T who? Man, I don't know no TJ. You got the wrong guy. I don't know nothing," he answered.

"Well, shit, I guess we do have the wrong guy," Martin said looking over and winking at Reed, who walked over to the two of them.

"Yeah! Yeah, man. I don't know no TJ. So can I go now?" he asked.

"See, there's a little problem. I can't let you go and have you run to the NOPD and tell them about this little misunderstanding. That could hurt a guy like me. If the Internal Investigations ever even found out I was lookin' for TJ, it could land me in prison. I just can't have that," Martin said.

"Whatcha mean, man," the Yankees runner said, a hint of worry in his voice.

"I think it's time you went for a swim in the Ole Miss," Martin said.

"What?" the street punk asked, now scared as hell. "You can't dump me in the river man, you're a cop."

"That's why we'll get away with it. Look, I'm really sorry, dude. It's just a case of being in the wrong place at the wrong time." Martin shrugged his shoulders. "Hey partner, cuff his ankles and I'll go get the car," Martin said to Reed.

"What if he starts to yell and make noise while you're getting the car? Remember that last guy? He almost blew it for us when a patrolman overheard his squealing," Reed responded, trying not to totally crack up as he bent over and put his cuffs on the kid's ankles.

"Oh, shit, man! Come on, y'all. Please don't—," was all he got out before Martin interrupted.

"You're right. Let's cap him now and I'll get the car. Then we can drive him ten or so miles out and roll him into the river," Martin said.

“Sounds good to me,” Reed agreed.

Martin then grabbed the punk by his shirt and started to drag him further into the alley. “Let’s do it behind the dumpster here,” Martin said.

The Yankee fan began kicking and screaming. “Please don’t do this, man. I won’t tell. Please,” He pleaded.

Martin put him facing the red brick wall of one of the buildings backed up to the alley.

“Here we go,” Martin said, drawing his gun.

“Okay! Okay! I’ll tell you where TJ is. Please, just don’t kill me, man,” he yelled.

Martin looked over at Reed, his face away from the kid, and smiled. “You’re bullshitting me. You don’t know TJ. You already said you didn’t,” Martin told him.

“No, man, I do. I do. TJ is Todd Jones. He’s a dealer. He works the dock area here. Please man! I’m telling you the truth. Please,” he said.

“Tell us where he is,” Martin demanded.

“He stays at the Fairmont Motel over on 53rd street and K. Please don’t tell anyone I told you, okay, man,” he said, his voice trembling.

“What room is he in?” Reed asked.

The kid just faced the wall and looked down at the ground, saying nothing in response.

“The room number or the deal is off,” Reed yelled.

The Yankee punk shrugged his body in a frustrated fit. “He’s in room 117. Now can I please go?”

“Just one more thing,” Martin said. “What’s the knock?”

Again, the kid said nothing. Martin grabbed his head and pressed it to the wall, his nose and face contorting.

“The knock?” Martin asked again.

“Three, one, and then two, twice,” he replied.

“Good job! That didn’t hurt too much now, did it?” Martin said. “Now here is the deal. We’re going to let you go now. Don’t ever let us catch you down here again!”

“Okay, man, y’all won’t,” he said, looking from Martin to Reed.

“And, if by some chance you lied to us,” Martin paused to finish taking off the cuffs. He spun him around so that they were eye to eye. Martin just stared at him before he finally continued. “When we do find TJ, we’ll tell him that you wanted us to send him your best. You understand me?”

“Yeah, but I swear he is there, man. He’s cutting and weighing, getting ready to hit it tonight. He’s there, I swear,” the punk said.

Martin reached down and took the cuffs off his ankles. When he was free, the punk grabbed his New York Yankees hat and took off running like a shot down the alley.

“Remember, we can find you where ever you hide,” Martin yelled as the kid rounded the corner.

Martin looked back to Reed when the good eye was gone. “Well, what do you think?” Martin asked, raising his eye brows and smirking a little.

“I think we’re going to hell. That’s what I think,” Reed returned, shaking his head and laughing. “Now let’s go and get TJ.” Reed waved a hand toward his friend and they both began to walk back down the alley in the direction of their parked cars.

“Hey Martin,” Reed said.

“Yeah,” he responded.

“You ever do anything like that before?” Reed asked.

“Do you really want to know?” Martin asked.

Reed looked over at Martin for a brief moment before returning his focus back in front of him.

“No, I guess not,” Reed said. “I’m just glad you’re one of the good guys.”

“Amen to that brother,” Martin said with a smile. “Amen to that.”

