

A GENIUS THIEF AND POLICEMAN

By

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CHAPTER 1

He was jinxed from the beginning. His mother had died giving birth to him, and his father left him on the doorstep of the Orphan's Home in New York; so he was brought up in there until he was old enough to get a job; and the job he chose was being a policeman.

He had no trouble getting in a school for policemen because he had been a good student and had made very high grades. And when he graduated he was given the rank of lieutenant

At that point in his life, becoming a thief had never entered his mind; but he liked the idea of being a policeman; and he became a very good one.

His assigned partner's name was Richard Holder. Richard was just out of the Police Academy so he looked to Jim for hints on how to become a good, trained cop. Fortunately Richard was easy to get along with; and Jim was grateful for that.

But after a year of doing a good job at the Police Station, he was bypassed for a promotion, and it was given to a young man whose record was not as good as his. Jim was very angry because the same thing had happened for three years. The promotions were given to other young men whose records were not nearly as good as his; and this drove him to thoughts of thievery.

So he checked the police records on the sly and found the name of a man who had recently been released from prison after serving fifteen years for thievery. Jim took the name, Gerald Spaulding, from the record book, and finally found the address of the man in the phone directory.

Jim went to Mr. Spaulding's home to visit with him. When he arrived at his home, he walked up to the door and knocked. Mr. Spaulding opened the door with a questioning look on his face. Jim introduced himself as Jim Dixon, and then he said, "Mr. Spaulding I have a project I am about to start, and I believe that you have had some experiences that would be of value to me."

This aroused Mr. Spaulding's curiosity so he invited Jim in and offered him a seat. Jim sat down, and then approached the subject of thievery.

"Mr. Spaulding, I am thinking about becoming a thief. I have been bypassed for promotions three times, and I was far more qualified for the jobs than the three men who got them; so I am seeking revenge and I believe you can help me. To put it bluntly, I want you to teach me how to become an expert thief; would you be willing to do so?"

Mr. Spaulding was so surprised by what Jim said that it was a few moments before he answered Jim's question.

“Mr. Dixon, I will be glad to teach you all I know about being a thief; it will make me feel like I am getting some revenge against the people who put me in prison for fifteen years.”

Then Mr. Spaulding continued, “Now Mr. Dixon, how shall I go about teaching you to be an outstanding thief, one who will never get caught?”

“Well, Mr. Spaulding, I must confess that I am a police sergeant. But being a policeman is a great advantage because it gives me legal permission to go through rich people’s homes looking for clues after they have been robbed.

“I always ask them to let me see where the jewelry was kept. Then after I get that information and finish my looking at all the rooms in the house, I go back to my squad car and make notes in my little black book.

“These notes will help me know where to look for the jewels in similar houses that have not been burglarized. And I can check the records in the files at the Police Station to make sure the house I plan to rob has never been burglarized.

“Before I go to the house to steal the jewels, I will watch it several evenings to see if there is one certain evening when the family goes out for one hour or more. If there is such an evening, that will be the evening I will burglarize the house.

“And to minimize the threat of a burglar alarm, I will pull the switch outside the house that will shut off all the electricity to the house and to the burglar alarm.

“And finally, I will type up a note that will say something like this: **‘You dum cops couldn’t catch a three leged dog, much less a thief. and just to make you realy look like dum cops, I will put a artikle about your falures into the paper. Have a good day, you dumheads. And my title is the Theifing Geneus.’**

“I will use the misspelled words so the cops will believe they are dealing with a near-illiterate idiot. And after I get the jewels I will lay a copy of the note on top of the empty jewelry box.

“I plan to do a lot of thieving in the next twenty days; and the newspaper reporters will have a field day reporting the robberies.

“And when the cops see the story in the paper implying they are not smart enough to catch the thief, that should make the cops very angry, feel unfairly criticized and insulted; and that is exactly what I want!

“Does this scheme sound like a good way to rob the wealthy and get revenge on those coppers, Mr. Spaulding?”

“Jim, you have an excellent plan due to your being a policeman—an advantage I did not have. So I don’t think I can add anything to your plan that will make it any better. But do you really want to be a burglar? If you get caught you will wind up in prison. And I can tell you from experience you will not enjoy it.”

“Mr. Spaulding I have thought about doing this for a long time, and I finally decided I would run the risk and do a little jewelry hunting. And I thank you very much for your time and your comments about my plan. And if I wind up in the

Slammer, I will really appreciate it you will come to visit me –and that is not a joke; I will really appreciate a visit.

“Have a good evening.” And with that farewell, he walked to his car and drove home.

CHAPTER 2

Jim was a handsome fellow with a very sharp mind, and his fellow policemen were very envious and jealous of him; so they would tell the Chief lies about his work.

Unfortunately, Chief Orville Duncan disliked Jim also; he envied him just like the other policemen did, and he was in a position to prevent Jim from getting the promotions he deserved.

This continuous unfair treatment angered Jim enough that he finally got up the nerve to carry out his thoughts about committing a robbery. So he began watching houses in wealthy neighborhoods that had a fence around them, and the wealthy homes in the neighborhoods that did not have fences.

The family that lived in this one particular very expensive house always went to church on Wednesday night and remained there from seven o'clock until nine o'clock.

So one Wednesday evening Jim drove over to that area and parked his car in the adjoining block at six-forty-five in the evening; and just a few minutes later he saw their car pull out onto the street on their way to church. That was Jim's signal that it was time for the robbery.

He slipped off his shoes and put on a pair of work boots that were much larger than his shoes—in case he left any footprints. Then he put on a pair of plastic gloves and got his flashlight out of the glove compartment.

He grabbed the duffle bag off the seat, and walked around to the back of the house. He soon found the switch that controlled all the electricity to the house, and he immediately pulled it to the off position.

Then he went to the back door of the house, and unlocked it with his “special” tool; and a moment later he was inside the house.

He turned on his flashlight and hurried up the stairs and into the master bedroom. After a few minutes of searching he found the jewelry box in a dresser drawer, and it was not locked. So he dumped into the duffle bag the jewelry and sales slip with the lady's name and address on it.

He left the empty jewelry box on top of the dresser with his note to the police on top of it. Then he walked down the stairs and out the back door.

He hurried to his car, climbed in, and tossed the duffle bag onto the passenger's seat. Then he drove to his apartment.

When got there, he went inside and put the jewelry into a small cardboard box. Then he printed a sticker with the lady's name, address, and date on it and put it inside the box with the jewelry. To complete the robbery, he put the box on a shelf in his closet and covered it with a folded blanket.

CHAPTER 3

The very wealthy owners of the house called the newspaper early the next morning and asked them to send a reporter immediately so they could tell him about the robbery and give him the robber's note.

The paper had not yet gone to press so the reporter interviewed the owners, wrote an interesting story about the robbery, included a picture of the note, and gave all of it to the editor.

The editor was very pleased with the reporter's story and the picture of the note; so he had it all put on the front page of the paper as it had not yet gone to press.

So when Jim got to the Police Station the next morning, he found several of the policemen, including the Chief, gathered around the coffee table discussing the newspaper story that was on the front page of The New York Times.

The Chief broke into the noisy talking and said, "Thousands of people will read that story and it makes us look like a bunch of idiots. And I think we should sue that damned newspaper editor for degrading our newspaper by putting such a lousy story on the front page; and it even says the police have not yet found the thief.

"Those wealthy jewel owners have just now reported the robbery to us; so how could anybody expect us to have already caught the thief? We haven't even started trying to find him. Does this dumb reporter think we use a crystal ball to solve our crimes?"

Jim stood around for a few minutes, and then he went to the Chief and asked him if anyone had been assigned to solve the crime. The Chief promptly said with a sarcastic tone, "Jim, you're such a bright boy I'm assigning you and your partner to the job; and I want you to start— now! Go to the secretary, she will have all the information you will need to find the home."

So Jim and Richard went to see the secretary. She had read the newspaper so she had some information: the owner's name and address, and a few comments about the theft. Jim thought her notes were very good, so he got a copy of them.

He thanked the secretary for the copy of her notes, and then walked out to the parking lot with Richard. He wanted to tell Richard he was the brilliant thief, but he didn't dare to do so.

They got into the patrol car and started out to the address of the robbed house. In fifteen minutes they pulled up in front of the home Jim had robbed the night before. They got out of the car, walked up to the front door, and rang the door bell.

The maid came to the door and asked them what they wanted. Jim showed her his badge and told her they would like to talk with Mr. and Mrs. Johnson about the burglary that took place last night. The maid invited them in and then went to get the Johnsons who were outside on the veranda.

In just a few minutes they appeared, and Jim and Richard introduced themselves; and then Jim told the Johnsons why they were there.

Jim said, “Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, we would like to ask you a few questions about the burglary last night; is that all right?”

Mrs. Johnson said, “Yes, Mr. Jones, we will be glad to answer any questions we can.”

“Where were you when the theft occurred?”

“Mrs. Johnson replied, “We were at church and got home about nine o’clock.”

Then Jim asked, “Mr. Johnson, what did you think when you found your house had been robbed?”

“Frankly, I had never thought about the possibility that our house would be robbed. But on the way home from church we heard on the radio that some home on the west side of town had been robbed.

“So when we got into the house the first thing we did was run up stairs and check our jewelry box. We almost fainted when we saw the note on it.

“We read the poorly written note, and then we opened the jewelry box and found it was empty. We were very surprised about the burglary because there had never been any burglarizing in this neighborhood before.”

“How much had you paid for the jewelry, and for how much did you have it insured,” Jim asked?

Mr. Johnson answered, “We had paid twenty-five-thousand dollars for the jewels, and that is the amount they were insured for.”

“I’m so glad to hear that, Mr. Johnson; since you have insurance you are not going to have any monetary loss for the jewelry.

“Now for a final question: How quickly are you going to try to find a replacement for the jewels?”

Before Mr. Johnson could answer, Mrs. Johnson said, “I guess I will get the jewels replaced as soon as possible, but in the meantime I will continue to wear the fake necklace that I have been wearing in public ever since we got married.”

Then Jim asked, “Well, do either of you folks have any questions or anymore information that you want to give us?”

Neither one had anything more to say, so Jim said, “Thank you, and goodbye.” Then they went out, got into their patrol car, and drove back to the Police Station.

When they arrived, they went inside to the Chief’s office to give him a report on what they had learned from the Johnsons. He wasn’t particularly interested in what they had to say, so he told Jim to write up a full report and give it to the secretary; and then later he would read it.

Jim was so pleased with his success in the theft that he did nine more successful robberies in the next month. And after each robbery he would repeat his first burglary by putting the jewelry in a box and include all the information like he had put into his first robbery box.

But by the time of his last robbery the stories were so common they were no longer put in the newspaper. Jim was very disappointed that the policemen were no longer being publicly criticized, so he ceased his burglarizing.

CHAPTER 4

Jim got very bored after he quit being a burglar, so he decided he needed a new activity to give him some entertainment. He tried playing golf, fishing, horseback riding, and playing poker. None of them gave him entertainment for more than a couple of weeks; so he tried a really exciting and enjoyable activity: dancing lessons in every evening during the week.

The best part of it was he had a choice of five pretty lady teachers, and he could change to a different one any time he desired. So he took lessons on a rotation basis, changing partners periodically.

After the second rotation, he was the most enthusiastic about dancing lessons when he was dancing with Jeannie. So he worked up the nerve and asked her for a date.

She said she would have to think about it until his lesson tomorrow evening; he said that would be fine with him; but he could hardly wait for the next evening to arrive.

He got to the dance hall a little early to take another dance lesson, and had to wait for Jeannie to arrive. And when she did arrive, Jim rushed over to the door and greeted her with a big smile and a very pleasant “Good evening.”

She replied with a smile and said “And a good evening to you, Jim.” Jim immediately took her by the arm and led her onto the dance floor.

As soon as they began dancing, Jeannie said, “I’ve given your question quite a bit of thought, Jim. And I will go on a date with you this evening, and I believe it will be a pleasant evening.”

Jim was very pleased and very anxious for a date with her, so he asked, “Would you be willing to start the date at this moment instead of waiting until after the tonight’s lesson?”

Jeannie laughed and said, “Well, Jim, if you are willing to skip your tonight’s lesson, I will go with you now.”

Jim didn’t hesitate; he just took her by the arm and led her out the door. They got into Jim's Cadillac and drove to Patties Café, a very elegant eating establishment.

They walked through the entrance and were greeted by the hostess. Then she led them to a small booth, handed both of them a menu, and said. “I’ll be back after you have time to decide on your order.”

They looked over the menu and both decided to order a sirloin steak with all the trimmings. The waitress soon returned, wrote down their orders, and carried them to the kitchen.

CHAPTER 5

While they were waiting for the food to be brought to them, Jim asked Jeannie if she would like to tell him about her upbringing and her adult life.

Jeannie said, "I'll be very glad to, even though there is not very much to tell.

"I was born right here in New York, got my schooling here, and then I went to a 'Learn How to Dance' school, also here in New York.

"My dad is a pharmacist, and my mother is the secretary for the Reynolds Clothing Store. We are all Christians and go to an Assembly of God Church.

"Well, Jim, that is about it. Life has been rather boring, but not unpleasant. Now it is your turn to tell me about you and your parents."

Jim laughed and said, "Jeannie, your life has been a real dream compared to mine. You see, I am an orphan, and I was brought up and educated in a home for orphans. I graduated from their high school when I was eighteen. Then I was turned out to take care of myself.

"I decided that I would apply for a scholarship at the Police Academy School as I had very high grades during my four high school years; and thank the Lord I got the Scholarship.

"After four years of schooling at the Police Academy, I graduated at the top of the class and was given a rank of lieutenant. Consequently, many of the policemen envied me and began to treat me like I had the plague.

"To make matters worse, the Chief didn't like me either. And when it came time for me to be promoted, he bypassed me and promoted another policeman who was not as qualified as I was.

"This happened three years in a row, and then the Chief was replaced by another policeman, Jack Bradley, who treated me as a fellow policeman.

"And bless his heart, he soon saw how most of the cops were treating me; so he got them all together and read them the riot act. He made it quite clear that I was to be treated with respect or the roof would fall on them like a ton of bricks.

"I have forgiven them because I heard someone say that the Bible states that if you don't forgive others, the Lord will not forgive you.

"I finally came to believe that scripture applied to me. So by an act of my will, and with the help of the Lord, I forgave every one of the policemen who had been mistreating me."

Jeannie was astounded by Jim's story and said, "Jim, you have really had a hard life, but I believe that your life will become significantly better as a result of your positive change of attitude toward those policemen.

"And since we have a dancing lesson tomorrow, I believe you should take me home, and then take yourself home so you can get to bed at a reasonable time."

So Jim took her home and escorted her up to her door. Then he said, “Jeannie, thank you for going out with me, and listening to my self-pity story. I also want you to know that my date with you has been the best date I have ever had.”

Then Jim continued, “Good night, Jeannie; and I’m looking forward to my lesson tomorrow evening.” And with that he walked back to his car and drove home.

Jim dated her for several weeks and became quite enamored by her; and she became rather fond of him.

Then one day Richard noticed the improvement in Jim's attitude, and asked him what had brought it on.

Jim was surprised by the question; he didn’t realize the better attitude showed. But since he and Richard were good friends, Jim was not reluctant to answer his question.

“Richard, I think I am falling in love with my dancing teacher; and that is the main reason for my happy look and a better attitude. Also, since all the policemen now treat me like a normal human being, that also helps my attitude and my moral.”

The conversation between the two policemen was suddenly interrupted by their radio: “All cars in District 15: The First National Bank at Twenty Fifth and Broadway is being robbed.”

That bank was only one mile from where Jim and Richard were. So Jim turned on the siren and flashing lights and headed for it, dodging cars, and running red lights.

They pulled up near the front of the bank, jumped out of the patrol car, and ran into the bank with their revolvers in their hands.

The customers and tellers were lying on the floor, and a robber was watching over them with a revolver in his hand. A second robber was behind the counter holding his gun on a cashier who was gathering money from the registers, and putting it into a bag the robber was holding.

They had hardly gotten inside the door when the first robber wheeled around and fired a shot at Jim, but he missed. Jim returned the shot and hit the robber in the right shoulder. The robber dropped his gun and fell to the floor unconscious and with blood running from his wound.

The second robber pulled the cashier around in front of himself, and hollered, “Don’t shoot or I’ll kill this man! Drop your guns and get your hands up or I will shoot him and both you two dumb cops;” so Jim and Richard dropped their pistols.

Then the second robber came around from behind the counter, holding his gun against the back of the teller with one hand, and holding the money bag in his other hand.

As they slowly made their way towards the door, the robber continued, “I’m going to take this man with me to my get-away car where my buddy is waiting. And I’m going to take him with us as a hostage; and if you cops try to follow us I’ll kill this man and dump his body on the road.”

Jim and Richard were standing by the door with their hands up when the robber and his hostage went by and quickly rushed to the car sitting at the curb. There was a man behind the wheel, and the motor was running.

The robber tried to open the car’s back door, but he was having difficulty because he had something in both hands. The hostage took advantage of this difficulty, quickly sped around the rear of the car, and raced to the other side of the street.

The robber quickly spun around and fired two shots at Jim and Richard, but they missed them; then the robber jumped into the front seat of the car still holding the money bag and his revolver.

Since the driver had the car in gear with the motor idling, he immediately pushed the accelerator to the floor, pulled out onto the street, and started speeding past the other cars.

Jim and Richard picked up their pistols and rushed to the squad car, climbed in, and started after the robbers with Jim driving.

The car that the robbers were in was a new Cadillac that had a top speed of one hundred forty miles per hour.

Jim’s squad car was a Ford specially made for the police. Jim had never tested it, but the speedometer dial showed a top speed of one-hundred fifty miles per hour; and he was hoping it could make that speed—and it could.

The freeway was just a short distance from the bank, so both cars were on it in an instant with the robber’s car about one-quarter of a mile ahead of Jim and Richard.

The traffic was light and the robbers were trying for top speed—but so was Jim; and he was slowly closing the gap between the two cars. Finally, Jim got the squad car close enough to the Cadillac that Richard could shoot and hit it.

So Richard leaned out the window and began shooting at the rear tire on the Cadillac. But the wind speed was so high that he was having a hard time keeping the gun aimed at the right rear tire. However, he kept trying and finally hit it.

This caused the tire to deflate quickly, and the car began to weave back and forth so rapidly that the driver lost control.

The car finally skidded down into the wide ditch and rolled over twice. And when it stopped rolling, it was squashed down and lying on its top; so there was not enough gap in the shattered windows to pull the robbers out.

Jim quickly radioed for an ambulance and a doctor because he suspected the robbers were badly injured. He also requested a wrecker operator who could cut the roof open so the robbers could be lifted out of the car.

As soon as he finished the call, he and Richard jumped out of the squad car, rushed to the overturned Cadillac, and peered in through the broken windows; both robbers were dead.

Jim spotted the money bag lying next to one of the robbers; so he reached through the broken window, grabbed it, took it to the patrol car, and locked it in the trunk.

CHAPTER 6

Just a few minutes later a wrecker arrived. The mechanic driving the wrecker was also an expert with a cutting torch. So he got out, grabbed his torch, and began cutting off of the roof of the Cadillac.

Just a few minutes later the Chief arrived. He got out of his car and went over to the Cadillac; and through a broken window he examined the dead bodies of the thieves. Then he motioned for Jim and Richard to join him as he walked back to his car.

The Chief asked a few questions, thanked the two men, and then got in his car and drove back to the city.

Jim and Richard stayed at the site to help the ambulance operator and the doctor get the bodies of the thieves out of the Cadillac through the hole made by the mechanic with his cutting torch.

They finally got the bodies out of the car and into the ambulance; then the driver and the doctor got in and drove off toward Russelville.

After they had removed the two bodies from the wreck, the mechanic started trying to load the wrecked Cadillac on his truck bed.

Suddenly the gas dripping on the hot exhaust pipe ignited, and the mechanic shouted, "Run like hell because this thing is going to blow any second!"

So all the men began to run away from the two vehicles; and fortunately, all of them escaped the ball of fire that suddenly erupted from the burning Cadillac.

Two highway patrol cars arrived and the patrolmen took over directing the traffic.

Then Jim and Richard decided they had done everything they needed to do; so they drove back to Russelville and went in to see the Chief. He thanked them for coming in; and then he asked them several question about the bank robbery, the chase, and other events.

While they were reporting to the Chief, a policeman, Roy Fadden, came in, interrupted the conversation, and said, "Pardon me gentlemen, but I have some news.

"Chief, the man that got shot in the bank was not killed. Jim shot him in the shoulder so it was not a serious injury; and the doctor said he will be able to get him out of the hospital within a week. But of course then he will be put into jail.

The next morning the Chief got all the policemen together and said, "Today we must thank Jim for shooting the burglar in just the right spot, and also congratulate Richard for being able to shoot that Cadillac's tire while leaning out the window and travelling at one-hundred plus miles per hour.

"We are also mighty proud of them for recovering all that money for the bank, and for nailing all three of those bandits."

CHAPTER 7

That night Jim had a date with Jeannie, and he told her he believed he had finally been accepted by his fellow policeman.

Then Jim told her that he had quite a story to tell if she wanted to hear it; and she said she did.

So Jim told her the whole story, beginning with the radio message that had interrupted their patrolling. She was amazed at what Jim told her; but after he had finished his story, she said, "Jim, I thank the Lord that you fellows didn't get any injuries; but to be honest with you, I would rather you had a less dangerous occupation."

But Jim defended his occupation by naming several jobs to Jeannie that were far more dangerous than police work. That seemed to significantly lessen her fear about his occupation. Then he decided to let well enough alone, and took her to Patties Café for dinner.

After they finished their dinner Jim took her home, and walked with her up to the doorstep. Then he said, "Jeannie, I would love to change your status from an old maid to a young bride."

Jeannie put her hands on Jim's shoulders, and slowly backed away an arm's length. Then she said, "Jim, I do love you, but I'm not ready to become a bride yet. I want to be sure that when I do marry that the marriage will last as long as we live. I have seen the damage done by too many divorces, and I have seen statistics that showed that about fifty percent of marriages end up in a divorce.

"So I believe I need to get to know as much as possible about the man I am going to marry. And there are Counseling Organizations that have good reputations for predicting what the probabilities of a lasting marriage are. Would you be willing to go to one with me?"

Jim was rendered utterly speechless because he never dreamed he would be in such a situation. Immediately the epic of his robbery came to his mind, and he knew that he would have to lie about it or do something to nullify its effects.

He said to Jeannie, "Would you be offended if I asked for a little time to think about this? I too want our marriage to last eternally, and there are some things I need to deal with if I am going to expect our marriage to last.

"Of course I want to keep dating you while I work out the problems, but I will not be offended if you would rather we suspend dating until I get the problems solved."

"Jim, I believe we should keep dating because we will probably bring up some important things during our courtship, things that could be a stress on our marriage; do you agree?"

"Yes, I agree, but I think we must be careful not to kill our romance by digging things up too early."

“You are right again, Jim. But since we both have to go to work early in the morning, I think we should go home now so we’ll be fresh and alert for the tasks of tomorrow.” So Jim took her home, kissed her good night, and then drove home.

But he never got around to going to a counselor because his mind was constantly in a whirl thinking about what to do about returning the jewelry he had stolen.

He finally decided the best way to ease his conscience would be to return the jewelry to the rightful owners. He could do this because he had kept the stolen jewels in a small box with the ladies name and address inside of it on a sticker.

So in order to return the jewels to the correct lady he took the small boxes out of the closet one at a time.

He took out the name and address sticker and laid it aside; then he took out the jewelry and put it into a larger cardboard box lined with cotton; and included in the box he put a typed note of apology with the lady’s name on it.

He then taped the box securely and stuck on it the sticker that had the lady’s name and address on it.

He repeated the process until he had all ten boxes ready to be mailed; so he took them to a Mail Facility and deposited them.

Feeling confident that he had done everything right, he went back home and plopped down on the couch.

Then he got to thinking about several things that pertained to the jewel robberies:

“I broke the law, and I wonder what the penalty will be if they find out that I robbed those ten houses. And if I go in and confess what I have done, will they give me a shorter time in prison? And will Jeanette drop me like a hot potato when she finds out what I did?”

Those questions kept running through Jim's mind, and he did not get much sleep that night. At times he would awaken, and then he would have difficulty getting back to sleep because he couldn’t quit thinking about those questions.

The next morning he decided that he could play like he had read a story in a magazine that raised his curiosity, and go in to see if the Chief could answer the question the story had aroused in him.

The Chief was busy, but he told Jim he would take the time to try to answer his question. So Jim asked him, “If a robber turned out to be a policeman, would the penalty be the same as the penalty for a car salesman who robbed?”

The Chief answered without hesitation. “Jim, if the thief was a policeman, the penalty would be for a longer time in prison. You see a policeman is supposed to arrest the thieves, but a jury, or a judge, will make the decision on how long the imprisonment should be; but I can tell you for sure that the sentence would be longer.”

CHAPTER 8

Jim thanked the Chief and walked out of the Police Headquarters and back to his patrol car. Richard was waiting for him, and when he saw Jim's face he knew that something was wrong. So he asked what the matter was.

Jim lied and said, "I asked for a week's vacation, and he said the time for my vacation had not arrived yet; and he acted a little mad that I would ask such a dumb question."

But the question Jim had asked the Chief aroused his suspicions. So the next morning he called Richard into his office before he had time to go to his patrol car.

"Richard, when you go with Jim to interview a couple whose home had been burglarized, does Jim ever act like he had been in the house before? And I need to remind you before you answer me, that if you feed me a lie you will probably spend some time in the slammer."

Richard didn't know what to say on such a short notice, but he knew he didn't want to spend any time in the slammer. So he looked at the floor and cleared his throat a couple of times.

"Well," the Chief asked, "Richard, has the cat got your tongue?"

Richard raised his head, looked the Chief in the eye, and said, "Chief, I would never have thought that Jim could become a thief. But to be honest with you, I have heard Jim say some things that made me wonder if he had stolen jewels from the particular house in which we were searching for clues.

"For example, we went to this house that had been burglarized the night before, and asked the owners if we could look over the inside of the house;

"The owners said we could look anywhere we pleased because they wanted their jewels back, and they wanted to see the thief put in jail.

"So Jim went upstairs and I followed him. He went into one of the bedrooms and it was very dark because it had no windows. But Jim walked directly to the night stand and pulled the chain to turn on the little night light. I immediately wondered how he knew where that little night light was if he had never been in the room before.

"I think he realized what he had just done, because he quickly said, 'Boy oh boy, how was that for luck? I found that light immediately even though the room was dark.' Then he quickly turned it off and led me into another room. And after that he had me do all the turning on and off of the lights, regardless of where the switches were.

"I thought that Jim was a very honest man, so I disregarded my thoughts about the incident. But two weeks later we were walking through another house where the robber had stolen some jewelry the night before; and when we walked into a room that was darkened, Jim walked directly to the window and raised the blinds.

Then when he realized what he had just done, he said, 'I have been in this house before. When I was in high school I had a friend who lived here, and I came to visit him and spend the night; and this was our bedroom.'

"I knew that was a lie because when I was in high school I delivered newspapers to that house, and it was occupied by an older couple who had no family in this city."

Then the Chief said, "Thank you, Richard. I believe we now have all the information we need; you can go back to your patrolling."

Immediately the Chief called the District Attorney and asked him to come to the Police Headquarters. In about fifteen minutes he arrived and went to the Chief's office.

"What's up, Chief?"

The Chief said, "Have a seat, Donald; I'm afraid I have a serious problem and I need your advice. One of our men had been burglarizing a while back but we just now found out who it was.

"It's hard to believe that this same policeman has just done a great job in catching two bank robbers in a high speed race immediately after they robbed a bank." And finally he told him about Jim's poor-orphan upbringing, and how he had turned out to be such an excellent policeman despite the poor upbringing.

Then Donald said, "Chief, I think we should get Jim in here and let him tell us all about his upbringing, and then we can ask him why he turned robber for a while and then quit."

"I agree with you Donald, I'll go have our radio man contact him, and tell him to come to my office."

In about ten minutes Jim walked into the Chief's office. The Chief introduced him to Donald, and then told him why he had been called in.

Jim's face turned pale as he listened to the Chief; he immediately realized he was in serious trouble.

When the Chief finished his spiel, he turned to Jim and said, "Now, Jim, we want to hear your side of the story, and we want you to begin with your childhood."

So Jim told them about being an orphan and growing up under disgraceful conditions, but always wanting to be a policeman. Then he told them about how the badgering Chief and jealous policemen mistreated him, and that was what drove him to becoming a thief and writing idiotic notes: to get even with the policemen and make them look incompetent.

Then he said, "But when they got an honorable Chief, and the policemen began treating me as they should, I quit stealing. And shortly thereafter I sent the stolen jewels back to the ladies and included a letter of apology for what I had done."

CHAPTER 9

After Jim finished his story, they sent him out of the room. Then the Chief spoke up and said, “Well I be a monkey’s uncle if I have ever heard a story like that. Now what do you think we should do about punishing him?”

Donald replied, “Well, since he has given the jewelry back to the owners, and has such a good record with the Police Department, I believe we can cut him a little slack. I think we should recommend a two-year sentence, and then after he has served six months, I believe we should give him a full pardon and put him back on the force. The present policemen have a high respect for Jim, and I believe they would be glad to see him get back on the Force.”

Donald and the Chief then went to the District Judge and told him the complete story about Jim. And they recommended what they thought his sentencing should be. The judge agreed with them and Jim was sent to the state prison for six months. Then he was fully pardoned and put back on the police force.

But just before he went to prison, Jim told Jeannie the whole story; she was aghast by it. But she told him she still loved him, and she would be waiting for him with opened arms when he got released.

Jeannie was true to her word, and when Jim got pardoned and put back on the force, they resumed their courtship; and after two months they got married.

AFTERWORD

Jim stayed with the force until he had served thirty years; then he retired and did volunteer work for the schools.

Jeannie gave birth to a boy and a girl, and stayed home with them until they graduated from high school and entered college.

After the children were all through college, Jim retired and he and Jeanette went on a second honeymoon. They lived it like they did on their first honeymoon—lots of sightseeing, lovemaking, and mutual admiration.

And so ends the story of a genius thief, a good policeman, and his loyal, loving wife.