

The Marked Stallion

written by

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INT. DETECTIVE'S OFFICE - DAY

Pan shot of the office.

A coat on the hanger next to the office door, move onto a storage of documents with many drawers.

The camera keeps on panning towards the half-opened window with a cloudy sky outside, and next the Detective's desk.

Feet up on the corner of the desk, legs crossed, and on the center of the desk we see a name plate, it says NEIL HARROLD, CHIEF DETECTIVE. We also see the back of a picture frame.

Pan moves up to DETECTIVE NEIL, a tall athletic blonde man on his 40s as some grays show in his hair, dressed in a worn out business attire. He wears a badge clasped to his belt.

Laid back on his chair with the eyes closed and mouth opened, asleep, taking a nap with hospital bills in hands, on his belly.

A stuttering chubby man, HORACE, 47, with facial hair and sideburns, in a vest, coat, tie, and COCONUT HAT barges in frantically. He also wears a badge.

MAN

De- Detective Neil! Detective Neil!

Detective Neil jumps off his chair in distress. Gathers flying pieces of hospital bills and shoves them in a drawer of the desk.

DETECTIVE NEIL

What is it HORACE?

Horace puts hand up on the wall to recompose himself.

HORACE

(panting)

D- Damn, sir. Th- Those flights of stairs really take one out huh?!

Detective Neil sits back on his chair, fixes back strands of hair that fell on his face.

DETECTIVE NEIL

Horace, what's this hurry for?

Horace, that was taking off his coat and coconut hat and placing them on the hanger, turns to Detective Neil.

HORACE

O- Of course! I- I just overheard  
the police department talking about  
a case that is to be sent to us!

DETECTIVE NEIL

(scoffs)

Okay...? What's new about that?

HORACE

D- Detective, s- sir! Th- this  
time, it's not just a s- simple  
case. N- no... It- It's the "marked  
stallion", sir.

Horace does very subtle quotations with his fingers.

Detective's eyes widen and face freezes. He then stands up  
quickly and goes to the window, leaning on it with his hands.

DETECTIVE NEIL

How... Are you certain?

HORACE

U- Unfortunately so, sir. H- His  
signature mark was painted on the  
ground next to the body. The  
Policemen downstairs were very  
emphatic about it, sir.

Horace says while looking nervously at the Detective.

DETECTIVE NEIL

(sighs)

... The horse graffiti.

HORACE

Th- That very one, sir.

DETECTIVE NEIL

We are not taking this case,  
Horace.

HORACE

W- What? What do you mean? W- We're  
talking about a b- billionaire  
murder case here!

DETECTIVE NEIL

Doesn't matter. I can't risk it.

HORACE

Lo- Look, I- I know of your past  
with this criminal...

(MORE)

HORACE (CONT'D)

B- But wouldn't it be good t- to finally put them behind bars?

DETECTIVE NEIL

(harshly, stressed)

Cut it, Horace! I can't put my daughter at risk also...

HORACE

I- I know, sir! I- I remember quite well... The fire that killed your wife-

Detective punches the wall, not enough to break it, next to the window his hands were leaning on. Turns to Horace.

DETECTIVE NEIL

It didn't "kill" my wife! She was murdered!

He reaches for the picture frame on his desk. It has Detective Neil, his late wife VIVIAN, a tall slim woman with dark hair, and their daughter LUCY a dark blonde child.

DETECTIVE NEIL (CONT'D)

My daughter was hit by falling debris, Horace. Put under a coma, for God's sake!

Detective is pointing at the daughter on the picture, while having it turned to Horace.

DETECTIVE NEIL (CONT'D)

What other reason are you looking for? I am not joining this case.

Horace grabs the desk.

HORACE

I- I am just saying, sir... Y- Your daughter is already at risk just by being y- yours.

Detective scoffs.

HORACE (CONT'D)

A- As long as the criminal figures out her location, she is a target. A- And not to say anything but the news people were not so respectful that day, h- huh?

Detective's hand goes to head to fix hair that has fallen onto face again. Eyebrows furrowed and eyes squinted.

HORACE (CONT'D)

Y- Your daughter appeared on the news that day, right?

Detective nods in agreement, silently.

HORACE (CONT'D)

If the mysterious criminal saw it, he knows her face, and the ambulance that took her. Frankly, it would not be too hard to find a young child placed in a coma at the General Hospital.

He glimpses at the family picture on his hand and places it carefully on desk. He fixes its placing particularly to his liking.

DETECTIVE NEIL

Maybe... Maybe you are right, Horace. As long as he is free, he is a threat.

Detective Neil turns to Horace, and sighs.

DETECTIVE NEIL (CONT'D)

Okay. What's the case?

HORACE

W- Well-

A fumbling, rookie-looking trainee detective, CLARA, bursts into the office, with paperwork, almost falling from the folder, in hands.

CLARA

Detective Neil! Investigator Horace! New case- Oh.

As she sees they both turning to her with serious expressions. Greets each with a respective subtle nod.

CLARA (CONT'D)

Sir. Sir.

Clara tries to compile all the paperwork with both hands, and hands it to Detective Neil, clumsily.

CLARA (CONT'D)

Thank you, sir! But gotta tell you, this is a good one.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE NEIL'S OFFICE - LATER

There is an INVESTIGATION BOARD on the wall. It is empty in the center, with pictures around of other crime scenes that all share in common, the Marked Stallion's horse graffiti.

Detective Neil and Horace's HANDS putting up pictures on it with RED PINS and connecting them with a RED STRING.

HORACE (O.S)

A- Alright then! Th- The  
billionaire murder case.

Horace's hands pin a picture of ARTHUR, an old fancy man, pampered and dressed in couture.

HORACE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Th- This is Arthur. Th- The dead  
wealthy man.

Detective Neil's hands make Xs on top of Arthur's eyes on the picture.

Horace's hands wrap a red string around the pin that was places to hold Arthur's picture. He connects it to a picture of NATASHA, an old skinny lady with a bob haircut and pearls necklace.

Detective Neil's hands put up two photos, one of ARNOLD (42) a serious middle-aged man, and another of PHILLIPA (20), and young adult woman.

DETECTIVE NEIL (O.S.)

Was that it for the direct family?

HORACE (O.S.)

Y-Yes. N- Now, for the regulars  
inside and out the mansion.

Camera pans away from the board to the office's window, it's dark outside.

HORACE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Y-Yes. Then we also have some  
regulars in and out of the mansion.

Horace shows a list.

DETECTIVE NEIL

Very well then. Tomorrow, 6 a.m. At  
the mansion. Let's see who here has  
gotten their hands dirty.

INT. MANSION'S OFFICE - MORNING

INTERROGATION MONTAGE BEGINS:

All mute, suspense but techno melody plays over. Camera is constantly panning back and forward the both ends of the table, cutting to each interviewee.

Detective Neil sits on one end of the table, and Horace types on his computer next to him.

Natasha, the widow, is first, very emotional. Then we see Arnold, looking unphased. Finally, Phillipa who has EarPods in her ears.

The Detective taps his own ear with his pen, indicating for Phillipa to take them out.

As soon as she does so, sound is back, and the techno melody stops.

PHILLIPA

Uh, sorry.

DETECTIVE NEIL

That's alright, Phillipa. Now tell me. Where were you on the tragic night of the murder? And be as specific and detailed as you can, alright?

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE NEIL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Detective Neil is looking at the Investigation Board.

Horace rushes in and shuts the office door. He pants.

HORACE

A- Alright! A- All testimonials printed. H- Here.

Horace drops many typed papers on Detective Neil's desk.

DETECTIVE NEIL

Oh, this is going to be a long night.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE NEIL'S OFFICE - LATER

Horace lays on the desk, using his arms as pillow.

Detective Neil reads some papers. His eyes look heavy as he seems to be making an effort to blink and open them back up every time.

Horace wakes up. And stands.

HORACE

I gotta run to the bathroom.

Detective Neil accompanies him with his eyes. Looks too tired to move more than that. And slowly falls asleep.

Horace leaves the office.

INT. DETECTIVE NEIL'S OFFICE - LATER

Horace abruptly wakes the detective up.

HORACE

Detective Neil! D- Detective Neil!

DETECTIVE NEIL

What is it Horace? Let go!  
You would think it was that easy  
huh?

HORACE

Look, sir! A letter.

Horace points at the letter under the office door, on the ground. Detective Neil stands up analyzing the situation.

DETECTIVE NEIL

When- When did this get here?

HORACE

I- I am not so sure, sir. It was  
there when I came from the  
bathroom...

Detective Neil picks up the letter. Inside there is a photo of Arthur, dead, and on it, written in red sharpie, says: "How has Lucy been? Is General Hospital treating her right?".

Next to the text, there is the same horse mark as in all of the marked stallion's past crimes.

Detective Neil realizes by the wording that his daughter is in danger.

He rushes out of the office.

INT. GENERAL HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

Detective Neil rushes through the corridor of the General Hospital. He looks at the room numbers. Slides and turns to a hospital room. Empty.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Detective Neil slowly walks into the room. He can't take his eyes away from the empty bed. Sits on the end of the bed. He pauses for a minute.

Takes out a photo of the family he had folded up, from his wallet.

DETECTIVE NEIL

I... I am sorry, Vivian... I  
couldn't protect our little star...

Tears run through his face.

DETECTIVE NEIL (CONT'D)

After you were gone she was all  
that I had... I shouldn't have  
gotten myself involved. That, that  
monster was always causing stir,  
but until I got involved in one of  
his cases, Lucy was left alone.

Cries.

DETECTIVE NEIL (CONT'D)

Don't know what else to do here,  
Viv. I need you. I need Lucy... She  
could be anywhere right now.

Stops and sniffs.

DETECTIVE NEIL (CONT'D)

There is nothing else left for me  
here now? Could I finally join you-

A nurse rushes through the door, DAVE (38), who looks through some papers on hand. He talks before looking up and seeing Detective Neil's state.

NURSE DAVE

Oh, great! You came back, sir! You forgot all of the patient's medical records. They are important you know? Here-

Nurse Dave looks up and sees Detective Neil crying, now confused.

NURSE DAVE (CONT'D)

Oh... Sorry, sir. Is everything alright?

Detective Neil who slowly realizes what Nurse Dave had just said, stands up slowly with a serious expression.

DETECTIVE NEIL

What were you saying right then and there? Medical Records?

Nurse Dave Cleary shows him the papers he has in hands.

NURSE DAVE

Yes, sir. The patient was transferred, but the man that accompanied her forgot some of her papers.

DETECTIVE NEIL

Which man???

NURSE DAVE

Well, he checked in as... Neil Harrold... But now that I see your badge... He was very euphoric and seemed like in a hurry, that's all I saw.

Nurse Dave glances over Detective Neil's shoulder, and sees a Coconut Hat on the hanger.

NURSE DAVE (CONT'D)

And oh, that's his hat.

Detective Neil abruptly turns and looks at the Coconut Hat. Rushes towards it. Grabs it. In shock.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

Flashes of the scenes of Horace hanging his coat and Coconut Hat on the hanger of the office, and of him wearing it at the mansion.

END FLASHBACK.

CUT TO:

DETECTIVE NEIL  
(whispering)  
Of course...

He turns abruptly towards Dave. He grabs the paper he had in hands, while now also holding the Coconut Hat.

DETECTIVE NEIL (CONT'D)  
Please, can I see her transfer  
request?

Nurse Dave nods accordingly and gestures for him to follow him.

INT. HOSPITAL HALL - MOMENTS LATER

We see Detective Neil with Lucy's transfer request. He reads it while makes a call.

DETECTIVE NEIL  
Thank you! I will come see here  
soon, please keep her under  
observation for now since she was  
just transferred there, alright?  
Thank you.

He hangs up and dials again. Fakes distress.

DETECTIVE NEIL (CONT'D)  
Horace! Lucy is gone! I don't know  
where she is! Meet me here at  
General Hospital in 5. We are  
searching this whole city!

Neil hangs up. He dials again, back to his normal composure.

DETECTIVE NEIL (CONT'D)  
Hey, it's me. Listen carefully, I  
need help with something.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - LATER

Detective Neil is fiddling with an apartment's lock. He breaks in.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

He walks in and sees an investigation board that was disguised as a regular piece of wall furniture, left opened.

It has many pictures of Vivian, with hearts drawn on.

Detective Neil is focused on the board when we hear the door of the apartment that was left opened, SHUT. He turns suddenly.

Horace stands in the dark with a different posture.

HORACE

I see you've already figured it out, huh? How smart.

DETECTIVE NEIL

Horace? Yo- Your stutter...? It was you all this time??? Why?

HORACE

Why? Vivian left me for you. You don't even knew me, but was very adamantly of taking my beloved.

DETECTIVE NEIL

What?

HORACE

Yes, I have know Vivian since middle school. She was... everything.

DETECTIVE NEIL

How have I never heard of you?

HORACE

Oh I bet you have! She was talking about me to a therapist!

DETECTIVE NEIL

You were the aggressive boyfriend??

HORACE

Nah, I wouldn't call it aggressive.

Detective Neil's hands clasp into fists.

HORACE (CONT'D)

It doesn't matter anymore! She called the cops on me because of YOU. Thank God they were bribable, ha!

Detective Neil looks a mix of shocked, angry, and confused.

HORACE (CONT'D)  
I loved her! And you took her from  
me!

DETECTIVE NEIL  
IF YOU LOVED HER SO MUCH? WHY DID  
YOU KILL HER?

HORACE  
THE FIRE WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE  
KILLED YOU! The one day she was  
late to work... And little Lucy...  
Ha, she was just collateral damage.

Detective Neil goes in for a punch.

Horace shows his clocked gun in hand. Neil freezes.

DETECTIVE NEIL  
Horace... Be careful now.

HORACE  
I AM TIRED OF YOU, MAN. Always  
bossing me around on the cases. You  
know what?

Detective Neil has his hands up, defenseless.

HORACE (CONT'D)  
Case closed.

Horace shots Detective Neil on the chest. Neil falls to the  
ground.

Clara and a bunch of policemen barge in.

Policemen disarm Horace and immobilize him. Clara goes to  
check on Detective Neil.

He stands up with no problem.

HORACE (CONT'D)  
WHAT? HOW?

Detective Neil unbuttons some of his shirt, and takes the  
folded bullet from inside. He shows the bulletproof vest.

DETECTIVE NEIL  
You really thought I had no plan?  
It all clicked when I saw your  
coconut hat. Thank you for leaving  
me that clue by the way.

He puts his hand on Clara's shoulder, who was looking at Horace's board in shock.

DETECTIVE NEIL (CONT'D)  
 You got this, Assistant Detective?.  
 And thank you for setting up this  
 whole trap.

Clara turns very happy.

CLARA  
 WHA- REALLY? OH, THANK YOU, THANK  
 YO-  
 (huff coughs)  
 Thank you, sir. You won't regret  
 this. I won't let the force down!

Detective Neil keeps walking. Hands now on pockets.

CLARA (CONT'D)  
 Wait, sir. Where are you going? Are  
 you gonna collect the evidence?

DETECTIVE NEIL  
 No, that's alright! I just hired an  
 Assistant Detective to help me out.

Before he steps out the door. Turns his head.

DETECTIVE NEIL (CONT'D)  
 I am going to the only place I want  
 to be.

INT. NEW HOSPITAL (HOSPITAL ROOM) - DUSK

Detective Neil sits next to Lucy, who is attached to some  
 appliances.

He looks at her, glances at the heart rate monitor and  
 notices a nurse walking into the room.

NURSE 1  
 Excuse me! Great news, sir! The  
 patients vital signs are getting  
 stronger by the hour! I am very  
 confident that she might surprise  
 real soon!

Detective Neil smiles and nods accordingly.

Nurse leaves.

He turns to Lucy, and fixes some hair away from her face.