

# Trace Evidence

By Colt-kun

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*Ryan and Ryza should spend their time doing homework and going out with friends, but instead steal their mother's work and follow the trail of clues left by trace evidence! Can you solve the crimes first?*

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# 1 - Introduction

Concerning the criminal court of the United States of America, people are innocent until proven guilty. The burden of proof lies with the prosecutor - meaning they must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty. Using evidence, they must answer three criteria to convict a person of a crime.

*Motivation - a reason to commit the crime*

*Means - a way to commit the crime*

*Opportunity - a time to commit the crime*

Evidence is the lifeblood of a case - evidence cannot be biased nor can it lie. The problem throughout all of history is finding the evidence.

In 1910, Edmond Locard came up with the 'exchange theory' that a criminal will always leave a trace of his presence behind at the scene of a crime, and will always carry away some trace of the crime with him. These are called 'objective traces' or evidence, as opposed to 'subjective traces' which are eyewitness testimonies and suspect statements. The exchange theory is considered the foundation of forensic science - which changed criminal law forever. Mr. Locard called his theory

## **Trace Evidence**

*Can you solve the crime first? It's written so you can. Remember: motivation, means, and opportunity. Pay attention to every detail!*

*Written for Brenna-bunny*

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## 2 - Case One:1

### Chapter One - Case One: 1

"`Ryan and Ryiza, I appreciate your enthusiasm for the field of science, but express concern at the choice for your presentation. Next time, please select a less gas-ly project to make a model of.' " The boy paused, and turned to his sister walking beside him. "Hey, Rii. What does `gas-ly' mean?"

She leaned to look at the slip of paper in his hand. "Which word?"

"That one," he prodded the teacher's slender handwriting.

"That's `ghastly'," she correct his pronunciation. "It means gross."

He frowned at the note. "It was not gross!"

"I'm guessing she didn't like our tiny crime scene," Ryiza stated, tugging at her backpack straps as they turned down the walk leading to their front door. "And we worked so hard on the blood spatter!"

"Well, at least we got an A on it." Ryan crumpled the note from their teacher as he shoved it into his pocket and opened the door. "Mooooom! We're home!"

As they walked into the kitchen, their mother Amelia - Amy for her friends - looked up from where she had been bent over the table to read some files. She stood, smiling at her two children as they dropped their backpacks on the floor before crawling into the bar stools across from her.

"What's this?" Ryiza asked curiously, leaning forward to peer at her mother's files.

"Uh, no." She quickly snatched the papers up from her child's prying eyes and pushed them aside under the bread box. "No more sleuthing for you two. I got the phone call from your teacher."

Both of their faces dropped. "But mom, you saw our project and liked it."

Amy sighed as she first opened the utensil drawer and pulled out three spoons, then moved to the freezer and removed a carton of cookies and cream. "You know..." she started, setting the ice cream on the counter and handing out the spoons. "You two should be doing *normal* thirteen year old things. Hanging out with your friends, listening to music, going to the movies..."

"But what fun is being normal?" Ryan asked as he hopped down from the stool and fetched the chocolate syrup and whipped cream from the fridge.

"Besides, we like helping out," Ryiza added as she shook the whipped cream can and after seizing a large spoonful of ice cream, sprayed the topping across the top before shoveling it into her mouth.

Amy chuckled and lightly chided her to take smaller bites as her son viciously attacked the carton. She looked at her chocolate-haired twins, unable to contain the soft smile from her usually stern face. She leaned on the counter as she helped herself to their snack. "Sorry guys, but I have to work the night shift tonight. There's hot dogs in the fridge and I want you two in bed, *asleep*, on time. Do your homework."

"Hey Ryan," Ryiza asked suddenly. "Have you seen my Chemistry textbook?"

"No," Ryan replied shortly. "I'm not in charge of your stuff."

"Mom?" she turned to Amy.

"It was under the TV cabinet, last I saw," she instructed her daughter. Ryiza slipped off the stool and moved towards the room she shared with her twin brother. A moment later a call came from down the hall. "Mooooom! I can't find it!"

Amy sighed and got up. "Ryiza, would you please keep track of your stuff?"

Ryan watched out of the corner of his eye until she disappeared down the hall, before reaching for the bread box.

"Remember to keep the door locked," Amy instructed as she gathered up her kit. "Wait for the answering machine before picking up-"

"We know Mom," Ryan chuckled, holding the door to their front house open for her.

"I should be home before two." She kissed both of their downy heads. "Be good, have fun-"

"Don't those...like, cancel each other out?" Ryiza teased.

"Go. To. Bed," Amy ordered, and locked the door behind her. Both stood quiet until they heard her motor start and fade down the street.

Ryiza turned expectantly to her brother. "Did you get them?"

In response, he strode to the bar stool where he had sat and removed a set of papers from under the cushion. "Good job. You gave me more than enough time to xerox them all on mom's machine," he grinned, waving the papers triumphantly.

They settled on opposite sides of the small coffee table before the silent television and spread the papers between them.

"So what have we got?" Ryiza asked expectantly, flipping open a notebook filled with scribbles and

taped in photographs. She turned to a fresh page as her brother sorted out the papers.

"Mr. Marcus Jung, dead man," Ryan quipped, tapping the crime scene report. "Shot three times, two in the chest and one in the arm. In the garage of Mr. Nick McConvile, who made the call."

"Okay...so murder?" Ryiza pressed, leaning over to read the page upside down with her brother.

"Get back on your side of the table," Ryan ordered, pushing her away. "Take notes. And maybe. They were friends, but recently had a quarrel about a sum of money Nick borrowed from Marcus," Ryan replied, reading off from the report. "Nick had slashes down his front and across his arms when the police arrived. He claims that they were in the kitchen. Mr. Jung came over to ask for the money which Nick swears he had paid back. In a fit of rage, Mr. Jung opened a drawer, pulled out a knife, and attacked." Ryiza brushed her short hair out of her eyes as she stuck her tongue out of the corner of her mouth to write across the page to keep up with her brother's dictation. "Nick ran to the garage to fetch his gun and shot Marcus in self defense. Then he called the police."

"That all?"

"Yep. They're currently searching for any eyewitnesses, and for friends who may have known about the loan."

"Hmm...no autopsy report," Ryiza commented as she rifled through the papers. "Must be pending." She scrawled in their battered notebook.

"We'll have to get our hands on that." He spread the photocopies of the photographs from the crime scene out. "Ugh. They're a bit blurry."

"We should get mom a better xerox machine for her birthday," Ryiza stated. "Considering we're the ones that use it the most."

Ryan squinted at the photos from the kitchen. "I see blood all over."

Ryiza looked at the evidence tags. "Blood matches Nick," Ryiza replied, shaking her head. "Consistent with his story."

"Hmm...looks that way..." Ryan propped his chin up on his hands. "I think we need to pay a visit to the crime scene, personally."

Ryiza grinned widely. "I'll go for that." She checked the watch on the VCR. "Let's see...Mom'll probably go to the scene first...spend roughly an hour there, then go interrogating."

"So we have forty-five minutes...give or take."

"Yeah. Then we'll have about an hour to investigate ourselves."

They sat there silently for a moment. "Hot dogs and twinkies?" Ryan suggested.

She grinned. "Just Twinkies?" They both scrambled to their feet and darted for the kitchen.

## 3 - Case One:2

### Chapter Two - Case One:2

"Anybody out there?"

"One security guard. In front."

"Do we know him?"

"Yeah, it's Jake."

"Okay, get down, you're heavy."

Ryiza smacked the top of his head. "I am not heavy!" she hissed, then climbed down from her brother's shoulders, dropping to the ground with a heavy thump with a pair of binoculars in her hand.

"You did grab the UV light, right?" Ryan asked in a hushed voice, tightening the straps on the backpack he wore that matched his sister's.

"Yes, would you stop asking?" she pushed him on the back towards the fence. "Now go say hi to Jake."

Ryan took a deep breath before stepping around the gate, Ryiza right behind him. The security guard looked up in surprised, but smiled at the double set of familiar grey-eye children. "Hey you two," he greeted. "How are you?"

"Hiya Jake," the twins returned in sync. "Have you seen our mom?" Ryan continued.

"Sorry kiddos. She left a few minutes ago. If you want, I can call her-"

"Oh no," Ryiza quickly shook her head. "We were actually wondering if we could get a look at the scene."

Jake clucked his tongue. "Ah-ah. I was given strict instructions from your madre that you two aren't allowed to 'help' anymore."

"Please Jake? We promise not to disturb anything. You know us." Ryiza gave her biggest pair of Bambi eyes that she could.

"Nope. Sorry," Jake replied, shaking his head even as he lifted the crime scene tape up. "It's against the rules, anyways."

"Oh of course," Ryan agreed, before the twins slipped under and disappeared into the house.



Ryan swung one strap of his backpack off and removed the photocopies from his backpack.

"Alright...garage is this way."

They opened the door leading to the cold room. "Geez...it's like ice in here," Ryan commented, as Ryiza pulled out a digital camera.

"Gotta love chalk lines," she stated with a grin. "Remember we used to draw them around each other on the driveway?"

"What do you mean 'used to'?" he retorted, inspecting the walls. "Well, there's spatter...seems consistent gun fire."

"Is the blood the vic's?" Ryiza questioned as she snapped some photographs for themselves.

Ryan paused for a moment to find the matching evidence tag. "Yep."

"So we assume he was shot here?" Ryiza asked, crouching by the chalk outline. "Single puddle of blood. He fell and stayed where he was." She leaned forward, peering at the cold gray concrete. "Bit of a light spray by his head."

"He was breathing," Ryan stated, joining her. "He might not have moved, but he was breathing."

"Didn't Mr. Jung say he called the police right after he shot Mr. McConvile?" Ryiza frowned. "Wouldn't he still have been alive?"

"Not necessarily. He could have died en route. But it's a possibility he waited to call. Supports the idea Marcus wanted Nick dead," Ryan pointed out. Ryiza nodded in agreement, and took another photo of the spray.

"C'mon, let's go see this kitchen," she started, standing up.

As they walked through the house, Ryan commented, "We need to see that autopsy report. Maybe the shot paralyzed Nick so he couldn't move."

"So if Mr. Jung is to be believed, he shot in self defense while it was Mr. McConvile that freaked out on him. Then why wouldn't he call right away?"

Ryan frowned as they entered the kitchen. "I don't think Marcus is telling the truth."

"Why?" Ryiza asked.

"Attacking your friend over money?"

"People do weird things about money," Ryiza reminded her brother. She looked about the kitchen. "Blood."

"We saw that in the photos," Ryan pointed out as he got a pair of gloves from his backpack, and a magnifying glass. "Careful," he instructed. "There's a ton of blood on the floor."

"But not that much on the cabinets," Ryiza noted, aiming the camera.

"And none..." Ryan side-stepped around the drops of blood. "On the walls or ceiling. Strange."

"Why?" Ryiza asked.

"Well, if the knife was swinging, wouldn't blood on the knife splatter on the walls and ceiling?" Ryan pointed at the spots as he mentioned them. "But it's only drops, on the floor. As if the blood just fell."

"But it was Mr. Jung's blood."

Ryan pulled out their notebook and inspected it. "Yeah. Definitely Marcus', not Nick's or anyone else's."

"Maybe he was attacked elsewhere and made the phone call in here," Ryiza suggested.

"His statement says he was attacked in here," Ryan corrected her. Ryiza frowned, and snapped a few more pictures while Ryan shuffled through the papers from their mother. "The investigators took the knife with them as evidence," he stated, dismayed. "Hand me the UV light. Maybe it was cleaned up or something."

"Why would they do that?" she asked, but pulled the battery-powered light from her backpack.

"Dunno. Just wanna check." He slid his glasses on, and motioned to her to turn off the lights. He ran the light up and down the wall, but picked up no traces. He sighed. "Nothing."

After his pronunciation, they heard the front door open and voices echo down the hall. Without hesitation, the twins snatched up their backpacks and materials, then darted into what appeared to be a living room. "Behind the couch!" Ryan hissed at his sister. They crouched behind a ratty-looking sofa, straining to hear the voices.

"Who turned the lights off?"

"Probably the guard."

As the kitchen light came back on, Ryiza dared a peek around the edge of the sofa, close to the ground. She spotted her mother in the kitchen, wearing her vest that claimed her investigation unit. "It's mom," she mouthed to Ryan, who winced. He nodded towards the hallway, and the two quickly moved away from the couch.

Skirting around the kitchen, they made their way to the front door by stepping along the floorboards where they joined with the wall. Ryan carefully turned the handle and pulled up on it as he swung it open, relieving the hinges of the weight of the door so they wouldn't squeak. Ryiza slipped out the opening barely wide enough, and Ryan followed. He shut the door without so much as a click, before darting down the walk after his sister.

"Bye Jake!" he called in a hushed voice.

"Thank you!" Ryiza added.

"Later you two," Jake chuckled as the twins vanished around the gate.

Amy opened the door to her small house as the clock turned to 2:36 in the morning. She stretched as she entered the living room, where the TV was blaring the late night cartoons. She sighed and dropped her bag on the floor, before turning the television off. She moved into the kitchen, meaning to heat up a frozen dinner, but found twinkie wrappers littering the counter.

"Ryan...Ryiza..." she groaned, gathering the plastic pieces up in one hand and dumping them into the trash can. She located a frozen dinner in the freezer and stuffed it into the microwave, before moving down the hall to the twin's bedroom.

She opened the door, and paused as the light from the hallway behind her fell across the bunk bed that crowded the tiny room. Ryiza had snuggled herself into her pillow, clutching a stuffed crocodile to her chest and a book open next to her. Ryan sprawled himself across the top bunk with one of his arms hanging over the side, a gameboy lying forgotten. She turned the small hand-held system off, before gently lifting his arm and placing it beside him. She kissed his forehead as he mumbled in his sleep, before crouching beside Ryiza's bed and picked the book up. She read the cover, *FullMetal Alchemist #2: The Kidnapped Alchemist*, before chuckling and kissing her daughter's cheek.

She smiled at the two children, and decided not to tell them she had discovered the ice cream fingerprints on her crime scene report as the microwave faintly dinged.

After the bedroom door clicked shut, Ryan released a sigh. "That was close," he whispered, sitting up to remove his sneakers.

Ryiza giggled softly. "Good night Rye."

"Night Rii. Sleep tight," he replied, as he laid back down.

## 4 - Case One:3

### Chapter Three - Case 1:3

Ryiza sat on her bed, bare foot and crossed legged, her head cocked to one side and her arms folded as she contemplated the pictures and the notes sprawled out across the upper bunk. "Hmm..."

"Got anything yet?" Ryan asked as he hauled himself up onto his bunk, careful not to disturb anything as he settled across from her. He handed her a popsicle salvaged from the freezer, already dripping down his fingers.

"No," she retorted. "I wish we could interview Mr. McConvile."

"Well, I'll see if I can nab Mom's notes," Ryan reassured her.

Ryiza frowned as she unfolded her legs and stretched them out on either side of her. "The blood droplets..." she started slowly. "Have something to do with it."

"I don't think he was attacked in the kitchen," Ryan pointed out. He turned his gaze to the photographs of the kitchen, neat and organized with everything having a place. "Geez...what a neat freak."

Ryiza looked at the photograph copies they had Xeroxed off their mother's notes, photos taken before the investigators got to the kitchen. "Agreed," she nodded. "The kind of guy to spaz when you leave the door open..."

The pair both turned their heads when they heard their own door open as if on cue and their mother's keys jingle as she called, "Kids! I'm home!"

"Hi Mom!" they chorused in sync before stuffing their treats into their mouths and rapidly gathered up their copy of the reports. Ryan crammed them into his pillowcase as Amy entered the room, releasing her hair from a ponytail and shaking the light blonde strands loose.

Ryiza removed her popsicle from her mouth to greet, "Welcome home. Hard day?"

"It's not even over yet," she replied, stretching. Then she rested her arms on the top bunk between her children and with a smile asked, "So how was your day?"

"Boring," Ryan mumbled around his popsicle. "It's been raining all day."

"Well if you're so bored you can come help me make dinner," she stated, patting both of their legs as they groaned. "Oh yes, how hard. Let's go you two."

Both jumped down from the higher bunk and were scolded lightly with, "Ryan! Ryiza! There's a ladder

for a reason!" They made faces at each other while following their mother into the kitchen, ignoring the grumbles about breaking their necks.

"What's for dinner?" Ryiza asked as she slid into one of the chairs at the counter.

"Well, I was hoping for something healthy...How's homemade pizza sound?"

"Made out of what?" Ryan teasingly tested and his mother lightly smacked his brown curls.

Amy got the block of cheese out of the fridge and placed it with the grater in front of Ryiza, while instructing Ryan to get out and slice the sausage for pepperoni. "So..." she started, fetching the recipe for pizza dough from her box. The twins looked eagerly to their mother as they set about doing their assigned tasks. "A photograph was taken of a cute little girl lighting a candle on a table in front of a large picture window, the flame being the only source of light in the photo."

"Okay..." Ryiza nodded, her attention focused more on her mother's words than the task of grating cheese.

"Through the window, outside, there's a body falling, the moment caught miraculously by the camera. An elderly woman, named Mrs..." Amy paused, searching for a name.

"Bob," Ryan offered with a grin.

Amy laughed. "Robbinson," she continued. "She's seventy-three, lives alone, weighs eighty-five pounds."

"That's a small woman," Ryiza observed.

"She's old," Ryan explained away, then asked, "Where was the picture taken?"

"In an apartment, seventh floor."

"Did Mrs. Robbinson live in the building?" Ryiza questioned, completely ignoring the cheese and turning to face her mother.

"Yes. On the ninth floor." Amy smiled at her children's inquisitive nature. "Now, it was night outside, and very windy, with wind up to 65 miles an hour. The cops assume she was on the balcony, and the wind made her off-balance and she fell over the balcony."

Ryan leaned over to his sister and the two whispered back and forth for a moment. Amy continued mixing the dough, and was rolling it out onto wax paper when Ryiza announced their verdict. "The photograph is faked," she proclaimed, both returning to their work.

"Why?" Amy asked.

"If the candle was the only light source," Ryan started plainly, "The camera would have had to use a flash."

"The flash would have reflected off the window," Ryiza added. "So the window would have to be open to catch the image of Mrs. Robinson's body."

"Maybe the window was open." Amy set the soon-to-be pizza crust in front of her children, who smeared the pasta sauce from a jar across it.

"Impossible," Ryan retorted promptly.

"Why?" Amy rested on her elbows on the counter, allowing her children to finish the task of laying out cheese and pepperoni on top of the sauce.

"If there were really winds of 65 miles an hour-

"-and the window was open-

"Then candle would have been blown out."

"It was murder, most likely by the person taking the photograph."

Amy nodded at her twins, satisfied, before sliding the pizza into the oven. Ryan and Ryiza shared a high five.

"What do you two want with dinner?" she asked.

"Cookies," Ryan stated immediately.

"How long until dinner is ready?" Ryiza asked politely.

"About twenty minutes."

Ryiza slid off the stool and moved for the door. "I think I'll go read my school book then," she announced.

"And I'll play gameboy," Ryan added, following after his sister. Amy grinned to herself and leaned against the counter for a moment before following. She paused outside their door, listening to their panicked voices.

"I put them into the pillow case, I swear!"

"Where did they go then? That was everything we had on the case!"

Amy opened the door and leaned against the frame with one hand on her hip. Both Ryan and Ryiza froze like they were caught with their hands in the cookie jar. Ryiza was on the top bunk, having torn apart the bedding and Ryan stood on the railing of the bottom bunk.

"If you're going to be good detectives, you'll need to get better hiding spaces," she stated, holding up

their wad of papers. Ryan swallowed hard.

“Would you believe that's my science homework?” Ryiza meekly tested.

Amy gently laughed, and crossed the room to tap her son's head with the papers. “Technically, you shouldn't have these. It's illegal.” She left them resting on his head as she turned and left the room. “Get that book read, Ryiza,” she called back to them.

Ryiza plucked the papers from her brother's head and sighed. “It's like living with the Inquisitor,” she mumbled, spreading their work out across the bed again. Ryan rested his chin on the railing for a moment, before grinning and reaching out to tap a paper.

“Or a member of the forensics team.”

Ryiza squealed in delight to see the autopsy report, along with photographs of the defendant. “We're getting mom a good birthday present,” she informed her twin, before excitedly reading the words of autopsy report. Her excitement turned to disappointment. “Drat. He died from the gunshot wound, in the garage. Rigor mortis proved it.”

“Well, here's a tidbit that'll interest you,” Ryan replied, setting the page of photographs down for his sister to see. “His chest and arms - look.”

She looked at the images, frowning slightly. “Ewww...he's all hairy.”

“He's a grown-up,” Ryan stated impatiently, before pointing out, “There's incised wounds, but no stabs wounds.”

Ryiza inspected the photographs, showing several slashes were made across the chest. “Stab wounds aren't always in assault cases.”

“Yes...but look at where they are. On his chest.”

“He said he was attacked.”

Ryan let out a puff of air aimed at his hair, hanging into his grey eyes. “Yes, but if someone was attacking you, then wouldn't you defend yourself? I mean, he pulled a gun.”

Ryiza looked at the pictures again, and noticed a lack of wounds anywhere else on the body. “Hmm...maybe he was in surprise or shock?”

“That's what Mr. McConville said,” Amy quipped from the doorway. “Come on you two, dinner's ready.” They groaned and got off the bed, walking after their mother to the kitchen.

“Get some forks, Ryiza,” their mother ordered as she pulled plates down from the shelf. Ryiza started to open the drawer, but stopped.

“Why?” she asked. “We're having pizza.”

“Oh...yeah,” Amy shook her head. “I forgot.” Ryiza sighed and moved to shut the door. She paused.

“Rye!” her grey eyes lit up excitedly. “Case solved!”



## 5 - Case One: Closed

### Chapter Four - Case 1:Closed

Amy leaned forward in her chair, her eyes intently set on Nick McConvile. “Mr. McConvile, you are under arrest for the murder of Marcus Jung,” she stated sternly.

He snorted and asked, “What?”

Amy spread the images out in front of the suspect. “This is your kitchen, Mr. McConvile, with your blood.”

“I said I was attacked by Marcus in there,” he replied impatiently.

“No you weren't.” Amy smiled in satisfaction. Her supervisor, Joseph, sat silently next to her, allowing her to unfold the story on her own. “The blood doesn't match up to your account. If you were truly attacked, it would be spattered across the walls, cabinets, and possibly the ceiling by the knife swinging. You have no defensive wounds on your arms or hands, but several slashes across your chest. The chest is actually a hard target for a knife, as limbs tend to get in the way.”

Nick scoffed a bit and pointed out, “Marcus was my friend. I didn't know what to think when he attacked. I didn't want to hurt him-“

“So you pulled out a gun?” she pressed. “And shot him? If you got him into the garage, you could have easily locked the door and called the police. No, Mr. McConvile, you wanted him dead. He came to collect and you didn't have it.” He started to protest, but she continued. “The wounds you have are self-inflicted. You cut yourself across the chest to set up a scenario where Marcus attacked you, and you shot him in self defense. But if he really attacked you, the wounds would be other places than your chest. You dripped your own blood onto the floor to make it look real. Evidence proves it.”

Mr. McConvile hotly protested with the ever cliché, “You can't prove it.”

Amy shook her head. “I already have. Besides...” she tapped a photo of the kitchen. “Your kitchen gave you away. You like things in their place, don't you?”

“Well...yes...”

“You shut the drawer,” she smirked. “You took the knife out, and naturally, shut the drawer afterwards. If Mr. Jung really went into a rage and pulled out a knife, I doubt he would have shut it after him.”

The accused sat in silence for a moment, before announcing, “I want a lawyer.” Amy rolled her eyes,

the man was full of originality.

Joseph stood up as did she. "That's your right," she replied, before moving for the door. Joseph held the door open for her, and shut it behind him.

"So who won first?" he asked good-naturedly.

"Ryiza," she smiled at him.

"Hmm. You know, I'm not supposed to allow civilians to work case." Joseph scratched his head, and looked at the two children sprawled across the seats in the waiting room. Ryan held a Gameboy and Ryiza looked over his shoulder.

"They're not civilians. They're my children," Amy corrected, smiling at the two as they argued for a moment.

"Why are they here, by the way?" he asked.

"I'm taking them to Cold Stone for ice cream," she replied easily, moving for the door. "So I'm clocking out early." The twins spotted their mother through the glass and got up.

"Go ahead. You've worked overtime all week." He shook his head. "They're going to be great investigators, like their mother."

She paused, and looked at him. "No. Like their father," she corrected gently, before the two greeted her at the door, excitedly listing what flavors and toppings they wanted. Amy laughed at some of their claims, as she wrapped her arms around their shoulders and they left the building.

## 6 - Case Two:1

*A/N: The museum of tolerance is a real place, by the way. It's pretty famous, and we were required to attend when we were studying World War Two. It's actually a really cool place - and really sad. It focuses mainly on the persecution the Jews were forced to endure, as well as racism and other inhumane abuses.*

### Chapter Five - Case 2:1

“Okay everyone, make sure you have your lunches and put them in the crates as you get off the bus. Find your buddy and stick together. Remember, if you get lost in the museum, find a security guard or one of the workers with the name tags, alright?”

“We're not little kids,” Ryan mumbled, sliding down farther into his seat as their teacher, Mrs. Tani, started to get kids off the bus. “We're thirteen!”

“Rye, cheer up,” Ryiza grinned at her brother. “At least it's not another art museum.”

“Why can't we go to the natural history one?” Ryan got up, grabbing the brown paper bags with ‘Ryan Dynne’ and ‘Ryiza Dynne’ along with ‘Room 108’ printed in large blocky letters. They hopped off the yellow, aged bus that smelled of burned rubber and plastic.

He tightened his sweater tied around his waist, and looked up at the large sign announcing *Museum of Tolerance*. He pulled a face, and when Mrs. Tani looked around the ground he pretended to be absorbed in the nametag across his chest.

“Now pay attention. I want you all to write a paper about what we see today and compare it to what you already know about the Holocaust,” she announced. “And be respectful!”

Ryiza tugged at her brother's sleeve. “C'mon, Rye. Mom said we had to go.” They fell in step with the rest of their class, entering the double doors and meeting their tour guide in the lobby.

Half-way during the video on the use of gas chambers, the lights all went on and an intercom turned on. A lady's nervous voice started, “Will all visitors please exit quickly and orderly. Meet in your groups in the park, and please take attendance. Account for each person. Thank you.”

Ryan looked at his twin, frowning. “Fire?” she guessed.

“No, an alarm would have gone off,” he replied. Mrs. Tani hurriedly called for everyone to get into two lines next to their buddy and follow the tour guide. The voices of their classmates echoed about inquiring about what was going on, as the patter of rapid footsteps marked their exit out of the museum. When

they reached the park, connected to the museum, their teacher gathered them into a group and started calling out names.

Ryan looked around at the other groups littering the grass, noting that most looked like other school classes. He chimed "Here!" after his name, and Ryiza copied immediately after him. Some adults in guard uniform were moving from group to group.

"Hey, Rii." Ryan nudged his sister's side. "Look." He pointed at the grown-ups. "What are they doing?"

"I guess they're making sure we're all okay?" she suggested.

"No...I don't think so."

A moment later one of the uniformed men made their way to their class. Ryan tugged on Ryiza's arm, and the two crept close enough to hear.

"Are all the kids here your students, ma'am?" he asked.

Mrs. Tani looked at the group for a moment before replying, "Yes. These are all mine."

"Any missing?"

"No, no, they're all here."

His face revealed frustration and worry, as he instructed her to wait with `the kids' and not to leave before thanking her and moving to the next group. Ryiza turned to her brother. "That was weird," she commented, crossing her arms.

"I'll say." Ryan watched the guards for a minute as he mulled over the short conversation. "They're looking for someone," he finally announced.

Ryiza agreed. "But why? They shouldn't have to clear out the whole place..."

Mrs. Tani turned to her class. "Kids, there's a slight emergency, so everyone sit down on the grass," she instructed politely. "Don't go to other groups or to the bathroom without asking me first, okay?"

There came a collective protest from the students, but they obeyed. An hour later, the lunches were passed out to keep them busy.

Ryan pulled out the lunchables pack and frowned at it. "I don't like swiss cheese."

"Here, this one's cheddar." Ryiza switched their packs. "I think mom just mixed them up. She was in a hurry this morning." She set about making the cracker sandwich and nibbled at it.

Ryan busied himself with squirting CapriSun into his mouth, stopping shortly to call out in surprise, "Mom's here!"

Both Ryiza and Ryan clambered to their feet and started to run to her, but were stopped short by Mrs. Tani. "And where are you two going?"

"That's our mom!" Ryan pointed at her.

Mrs. Tani frowned. "Isn't she a special investigator?"

Ryiza beamed with pride. "The best!"

She let them go, and they ran up to their mother who looked relieved to see them. "Ryan, Ryiza, are you two alright?" she asked.

"We're fine mom," Ryan frowned. "What's wrong? Why are you here?"

She sighed and shook her head. "It's hard to explain. The governor's son was visiting the museum today."

"Okay..." Ryiza looked worried, already expecting the next words.

"He's disappeared. His guardians claim he was with them one moment, and just gone the next."

"Kidnapped," Ryiza mumbled.

"Yes, and since it's the governor's kid..." Amy shook her head. "What a mess." She spotted her partner arriving in the car. She put her hands on her children's shoulders and directed them back towards the school groups. "You two. Stay with your teacher."

"How old is he?" Ryan immediately asked.

Amy emphatically shook her head. "No! N. O! This is a high profile case-"

"About a kid," Ryiza pointed out. "Wouldn't we know a lot?"

"You two-" She looked at her partner, already questioning the boy's guardians. She looked back at her twins with a mischievous grin. "Just pretend you're waiting for someone or something."

They both mirrored her smile, edging close enough to hear.

"So you were in front of the American flag exhibit-"

"Yes, yes, and Terryl asked why the flag had so many stars," the guardian made out through stifled sobs. "The guide replied that they probably didn't know how many stars the flag had, and then he led the class into the next room and we got there and Terryl was gone!"

Amy looked at both the guardians for a moment before asking, "And you didn't see anyone following you or looking at-Terryl, is it?"

"No, no." The second guardian, a man with a bushy beard, shook his head. "The museum complied with our request to have some space between Terry's class and the other groups. There wasn't anyone around."

"That they knew of," Ryan mumbled to his sister, looking away from the small group towards the school kids.

"Trent, pull the security tape starting when Terry entered the building," Amy instructed her partner. "Have you received any threats or the like?"

"Nothing out of the ordinary."

"Ordinary?" Ryiza asked.

"Well, if he's an important kid, then there's going to be threats on his life regularly," Ryan explained.

"Has Terry been acting strangely lately?" Amy asked.

"Well...he had a few arguments with his sister that were starting to get really bad." The female looked at her partner, who nodded. "Otherwise, he's a mild-mannered boy. We didn't think it was really unusual...just sibling rivalry, you know?"

"Oh yes, I know," Amy replied, a hint of humor in her voice.

"We do *not* have any rivalry," Ryiza sulked.

"Except over video games."

"Alright. I think that's all we have for you two now. We'll need a full description of Terry, including his clothes." Amy handed them some paper to write on, and turned to Trent. "Get statements from the family about any unusual activity around. Ask his teacher and his friends if they've noticed anything about the boy. I'll go talk to the tour guide."

Ryan and Ryiza started to follow her, but that was the moment that their teacher called, "Ryan! Ryiza! We're getting on the bus now!"

Ryan shot a pleading look to his mother, but she pointed her finger towards the class. "I'll let you know at home," she stated. Ryan and Ryiza glumly got back on the bus and into their assigned seat, while the teacher took roll again.

"Kidnapped, huh..." Ryan tapped the window for a moment. Ryiza's stomach growled, and she put her hand against it.

"We didn't eat our lunches," she disappointedly observed.

"We'll eat when we get back," Ryan returned. "Alright. So the trip to the museum wasn't a total loss."

Ryza laughed before asking, "Do you think we'll have to write that essay now?"

## 7 - Case Two:2

### Chapter Six - Case Two:2

Ryiza tapped her fingers on the table as Ryan busied himself with his Gameboy, trying to set a new record on the completion time in Trace Memory. "Did you know that the abduction of older children only make up half of one percent of all kidnappings?" Ryiza asked.

"Hmm..."

"Forty-four percent of them die within the first hour," she continued, ticking off on her fingers. "By the third hour--"

"Seventy-five percent, practically all of them by twenty-four," Ryan listed off for her. "You got that off a television show."

She slapped the table, making Ryan jump. "But it's true!" she stated, and then pointed a finger at him. "*Where were you this morning at ten o'clock?*"

"...at the museum. With you." Ryan finally grinned, and set the Gameboy aside. Ryiza quickly snatched it up and continued his game. "Heey-! You were just trying to distract me, weren't you?"

"Obviously, stupid."

Ryan leaned on his arm and sighed, glancing at the clock. "So...Terry! went missing at the museum...and he's the governor's son. I'm pretty sure he'll survive, since he's probably being held for ransom."

"`ppose..." Ryiza mumbled, concentrating on the Gameboy.

Ryan stared at the clock for a moment longer, before poking his finger in his mouth. He removed it, and grinned as he leaned over to his sister. "Hey Riiiiii--"

Amy opened the door to find Ryiza sitting on Ryan's stomach, giving her brother an Indian burn on his arm. "Don't you ever-*EVER* give me a wet willie!"

Amy raised an eyebrow at her children, repressing a smile. "Can't I leave you two alone for ten minutes without one of you trying to kill the other?"

Ryiza looked up at her mother, her hands still twisting her twin's skin as she smiled. "Hi mom! So, what's the notes on the case?"



Ryan finally wrapped his legs around Ryiza's neck and yanked her off, pinning her to the ground between his knees. She screamed and struggled, hitting his legs and calling him names.

"Stay there," Ryan ordered. "Cool off."

Amy walked to the counter and set her bag down. "So, what do you two want for dinner?"

"Information. Now."

Amy faked a frown. "You can't eat that."

Ryan grunted as he tightened his legs about Ryiza, who still released an endless stream of less-than-creative names for a thirteen year old. "C'mon mom, you promised."

"Let your sister go first."

Ryan sighed, and released Ryiza from his leg hold, and they both climbed into their chairs at the counter. Ryiza punched Ryan's arm and forced a fake pout. "Meanie-face ugly-butt," she mumbled under her breath.

"Takes one to know one."

"I'm rubber, you're glue--"

"Guys," Amy cut her off. "Do you want to hear the case or not?"

Immediately both fell silent, their eyes focused intently on their mother. She smiled and rolled her eyes before pulling out her case file, and leaning onto the counter. "Let's see...Terryl Montz. Eleven years old, four feet seven inches, brown-blond hair in a short style, blue eyes, wearing blue cargo jeans, a red baseball shirt, and had his black YuGi-Oh backpack with him."

"Oh great. A John Doe of kids," Ryan mumbled.

"He has a scar on his right arm - a skateboard accident from a few months ago," Amy pointed out. Her face went suddenly solemn as she read the next statement from her notes. "He's also on artificial dialysis."

"Wait--" Ryiza sat up, all attention focused on Amy. "So he's sick?"

"Not exactly," their mother explained patiently. "His kidney has problems. You know what the kidney does for the body?"

"It filters out waste, right?" Ryan guessed.

"Yes. But Terryl's kidneys don't work quite right, so he has to go into the hospital every few days and get some medicine injected that helps his kidneys work until they get a replacement for him."

The sudden gravity of the situation fell on both Ryan and Ryiza. “So if he doesn't get to the hospital, what happens?”

“Well...” Amy sought for gentle words. While she knew her children to be intelligent and logical, even downright cocky in their knowledge most of the time, she also knew they were a bit naïve to the workings of the world - despite seeing the uglier side of it almost daily through their mother's work. “He'll get really, really sick.”

“He'll die,” Ryiza mumbled, and looked to her brother.

“When did he last go into the hospital?” Ryan immediately asked, any play at name-calling or leg punching forgotten.

“One day ago,” Amy replied matter-of-factly. “He's got two days before it starts getting dangerous.”

“So we have roughly forty-eight hours,” Ryiza rubbed at her cheek. “What else do we know? Friends? Anything about the family?”

“Teacher and friends say nothing was different about Terryl today. He's a pretty normal kid - a little rambunctious, but a good student. Has a father, mother, and older sister.” Amy turned back to her notes and flipped through them. “They hadn't noticed anything unusual in the past several weeks-“

“No vendettas? No household staff or security team members fired?” Ryiza fired away, going through the usual suspects first listed as possible abductors.

“Very good,” Amy chuckled. “The elder sister didn't trust her guard, so he was released from his job. Also, the mother and father are having marriage problems - the wife has had some questionable company of late.”

“Very little chance this is a random kidnapping by a stranger,” Ryan stated thoughtfully. “Stranger abductions make up about five percent of kidnappings. It's usually someone the kid knows.”

“Could Terryl have met someone at the museum and left with them?” Ryiza wondered.

Amy shook her head at her children, already pushing ahead in their own investigation. “They just pulled the tapes on the scene. Unfortunately, cameras were only positioned at the entrance hall, and wherever there was an emergency exit, which are rigged with alarms.”

Ryan groaned. “And the whole staff must have known who Terryl was, and would have noticed him leaving with anyone. After all, the guardian said that the museum agreed to have space between groups, which is unnatural for a museum like that where they count on moving a lot of people through at one time.”

“Correct,” Amy nodded, now merely a spectator as her two children sought to find a possibility.

Ryiza looked to her mother. “Can we see the tape?” she asked with big puppy dog eyes.

"It's with the lab. I don't have it."

Ryan hopped down from his chair. "Let's go," he announced, fetching his and Ryiza's jackets from the hallway pegs.

"And where are we going?" Amy asked with a raised eyebrow as they zipped up their jackets.

"To the lab, of course," Ryiza replied.

Amy leaned on the counter, smirking slightly. "What makes you two think I'm taking you to the lab?"

"...because? You love us?"

An hour later, Ryan and Ryiza sat at their mother's desk, sharing the swivel chair with Ryan sitting on the seat and Ryiza balanced on the arm. Their attention was so intently set upon the screen in front of them, nothing short of an atom bomb could have distracted them.

"Why are all security monitors in black and white?" Ryiza asked.

"Because our eyes register movement better," Ryan replied without much thought to the fact. He sighed and hit the rewind button on the remote. "Well...here is Terryl..." he hit play again. "Entering the building."

Amid a group of classmates, Terryl didn't stand out that well. Ryan frowned as he paused the screen. Ryiza perked up. "What's up?"

"Something's wrong," Ryan murmured, leaning in closer to the screen. Ryiza again looked to the screen, also frowning.

"Play it slowly," she suggested, and Ryan complied. They watched the figures move stiffly, carefully taking note of every person. The class milled about while the teacher tried to instruct them on last minute pointers, the front desk clerks worked away at the phones and computers, and a minute or so later the guide approached. No one else entered the building until the guide led the class away.

Keeping his eyes on the monitor, Ryan leaned back. "So...our suspects..." Ryiza looked at the notebook they had copied from their mother's papers.

"Sister's guardian. They checked him out, has a solid alibi. He was with his wife and kids in Hawaii on vacation. Sister herself. Been arguing with Terryl lately."

"Doubtful she could pull anything off though. She's the definition of blonde even though it's from a bottle," Ryan chuckled to himself.

"Two of the wife's gentlemen friends that have visited lately...although she claims no relationship beyond friendship with either of them." Ryiza plopped the notebook back to the desk. "Man number one - Mr.

Richards. Drinking friend of the mother. Only real interaction he had with Terry was at one of Terry's baseball games. Man number two - Mr. Panera, personal trainer, who taught Terry and his sister karate and their mother Yoga. Both have shaky alibis, currently checking them. Maybe he left the museum on his own?"

"Terry is two years younger than us, Rii," Ryan pointed out. "And the report said he's not on any of the monitors, nor did any personnel see him leave. Somebody would have noticed an eleven-year-old wandering around on his own." Ryan stared at the screen and tapped the remote against his chin. "So he knew karate..." He paused the video when his and Ryiza's class entered.

"Ewww...Erika's picking her nose," Ryiza pointed out.

"Oh gross!" Ryan leaned closer and played the tape slowly. "Ugh! And she put it in her mouth! In her mouth!" As Ryiza squealed her disgust, the door opened and Trent poked his head in.

"How's the two youngest squad members doing?" he asked sociably.

"Okaaay..." Ryan sighed. "We've got nothing."

"Us either. But if you turn on that TV to channel eight, you'll see your mom making a press statement with Terry's parents." He pointed at the screen mounted in the corner, which Ryiza immediately located the remote for and turned to the appropriate channel.

"-has been missing for six hours now. Terry may be in need of medical attention," the Amy on TV explained. Behind her, the governor and his wife looked anxious, Terry's mother already reduced to tears.

"Please," Terry's mother begged into the microphone, "Whatever you want, we'll do it. Just let Terry come home, please."

As she burst into sobs anew, Amy led the parents away to the tune of the reporters firing away questions about Terry's abduction and if it had to do with his office and other such factors. The camera followed Terry's mother, closing in on her face soaked in tears. Quickly, Ryan turned the television off.

"No mom should have to cry like that," he mumbled, and turned back to the screen still frozen with their classmate's candid shot.

"Alright...so obviously, no one came out those doors with Terry," Ryiza sighed, turning back to the screen also as Ryan hit play.

"You two want some soda or snacks from the machine?" Trent asked.

"No thanks. We're working," they chimed in close unison, and Trent shook his head at their serious manner.

"Alright...fast forward," Ryiza instructed her brother. He obeyed, and they watched everyone run about like little ants until a flood of kid started to pass through the doors.

"This was when they gave the alert," Ryan stated, slowing the tape down and playing it. "They cut it so they had all the tapes playing together...starting-" the tape suddenly switched to four screens playing at once. "...then."

"There's so many kids I can't even find us," Ryiza moaned. "Great. We have nothing to go off of."

"Not anymore," Amy announced as she entered the room for a moment. "We think we found Terryl's backpack just now." Ryan and Ryiza looked at each other, as Amy signaled the twins to follow her into another room in the lab. Ryan and Ryiza both obeyed, waiting outside on the other side of the glass wall as Amy entered to where an agent was carefully emptying the contents on the backpack onto the table.

A box of colored pencils, a two-pocket folder with characters from the movie Robots on the cover, and a reading book. Amy pulled on a pair of gloves, then extracted a piece of paper from the folder. She looked at it for a moment, before holding it up to the window and pointing to the name.

"Terryl Montz," Ryiza solemnly read.

"Dude, he gets better grades in math than I did," Ryan complained. "He wasn't carrying much."

Then the agent opened the front pouch, and a weekly pill box was set on the table. Ryiza thought for a moment, before slowly stating, "The museum doesn't let bags inside. That's why we had to put our lunches in the boxes, remember?" Ryan recalled that being explained as an off-hand note before the trip. "Then he took the backpack to carry his pills?"

"What kid keeps pills in backpack?" Ryan asked.

"A sick one. With special privileges."

"He could have put the day's worth into his pocket or something."

The agent shook the pill box, and then popped open the compartments. "It's empty," Ryan observed.

Ryan rapped his knuckles on the glass. Amy turned to look at her son, slightly annoyed. He pointed at the backpack, and mouthed, "Where?" to which his mother replied, "Museum."

## 8 - Case Two:3

### Chapter Seven - Case Two:3

Ryan slowly turned the pages of the notebook he and Ryiza compiled of all their cases, including their most recent. Earlier notebooks, bulging with pages and pictures glued or stapled in, lined the floor under their desk.

He frowned as he looked Terry's picture. This wasn't their first kidnapping case that they had worked on, but every time he felt queasy. Murder was one thing - the victim was already dead. There really was no way to help but bring peace to the family and justice to the murderer. While time did matter, it wasn't quite as essential as a kidnapping. The victim could still be breathing, and every second spent looking was another moment lost. Both the twins understood all too well how important each instant was, Ryan reminded once again as he thought of the mother's crying face.

"When do you think mom will bring us a copy of the ransom note?" Ryiza asked, spinning about in their mother's chair on the second day in a row at her office.

"Soon," Ryan replied. "She said we can join her when the chemical analyzer gets back with his results, too."

"We're down to a day," Ryiza stated, pausing slightly before adding, "Give or take."

"The stress of being kidnapped could aggravate his condition," Ryan mumbled.

They both sat in silence again, so Ryiza sighed and turned back to the small television to play the surveillance tape again. Ryan turned to look at the screen also, and they watched as Terry entered the building again.

"Nobody knew Terry had to take those pills other than his family. It's for his kidney, right?"

"Yeah...He has to take them or he'll get really, really sick and need to go to the hospital."

A rewind or two later, a knock came on the door and Ryan spotted his mom through the window. She looked tired yet again as she beckoned them out into the hall. Quickly, both of the twins jumped up and followed her.

"Any news?" Ryiza asked. Amy shook her head, handing her daughter a photocopy of the ransom letter. The demand for several thousand dollars to be left in a bank account had been typed.

"The account?" Ryan suggested.

“Checked it. It's a foreign off-shore account under a name and address that doesn't exist. We're trying to trace it back, but it's taking some time and looks like it's going to be useless.” She motioned to a door in the chemical analyst's room, Ryan and Ryiza matching her step for step. “Ransom letter?” she asked.

The lady working shook her head. “Paper is standard printer paper. You can buy it at several office supply stores, including but not limited to Kinko's, Office Depot, and Staples. The ink is a mix made for Hewlett-Packard, a standard home printer.”

“No fingerprints, no saliva on the envelope or stamp. Person wasn't stupid.” Amy sighed and looked at her kids. “Any ideas, you two?”

Both Ryan and Ryiza shook their heads, at a loss. Amy gave them a weary smile, and nodded. “Well, you two head back to my office, get your jackets, and I'll be there in a few minutes to get us some lunch, alright?”

They solemnly headed back to their mother's small room. Ryiza paused at her mother's desk, looking at the pictures in their little frames. Most were of her and Ryan, one from a camping trip and another they had taken professionally for the Christmas letter two years ago. Taped along the side of the computer monitor were the school pictures from kindergarten forward.

“It's sad, huh,” Ryiza asked. Ryan had made himself comfortable in front of the small television set again.

“What is?”

“The thought that someone would kidnap a person's child.” Ryiza picked up her bookbag, and crammed their notebook in amid various reading material and homework. Some books spilled out, so she bent to pick them up.

“Yeah...” Ryan glanced to his sister, frowning. “Why did you bring all that stuff to the office, anyways?”

“I have to do my homework,” she retorted.

“You can copy mine later.” He waved it aside, and looked back to the screen. “They found his backpack in one of the museum hallways...” he frowned, and rewound the tape back to the beginning of Terryl's entrance into the museum. “Rii, c'mere. Look at this.”

“What?” she joined him in the chair, wedging herself in beside him between the arm rests. He pressed his finger against the screen, pausing as he did.

“Look at Terryl. He's wearing his backpack, right?”

“Yeah...”

“It's bulging.” He looked to his sister. “Something was in there that wasn't when we picked it up.”

"Maybe whoever kidnapped him took whatever it was," Ryiza suggested. "That could explain why he was kidnapped - maybe he was carrying something somebody wanted."

"That is a plausible theory..." Ryan scanned the screen as he hit play again. "There's the workers behind the counter...the teacher...the guide...all the kids." Ryan pulled a face. "None of them have backpacks. Only Terry!"

"Easy to distinguish the target."

Ryan made an agreeing noise somewhere in his throat, watching the tape intently. Ryiza joined him, so focused that the door opening made them both jump in surprise.

"C'mon, let's go get lunch," Amy stated, rubbing at her neck. "How does Burger King sound? It's close."

"Alright..." Ryiza sighed, standing up and getting her coat. Ryan looked at the screen again as the stream of kids came out.

"We can get lunch later," he announced, turning to his mom with a grin. "I think you have an arrest to make."



## 9 - Case Two: Closed

### Chapter Eight - Case Two: Closed (ready to test your theory?)

“A happy reunion tonight for the governor and his family, as their young son Terryl was returned home unharmed and in good health-“

“Terryl says he wants to take you two to a baseball game next week, by the way,” Amy told her twins as they stood in front of the television set at the lab.

Ryan grinned at her. “Sure, why not?”

“As long as he's feeling up to it,” Ryiza quickly added.

“Oh, he's fine. He had his medicine with him. Then again, you knew that,” Amy stated, looking at her children with a satisfied smile. “After all, only someone who knew Terryl intimately would know he needed his pills and what he needed when. They took all of them for the week.”

“And they took the pills as well as the clothes in Terryl's backpack,” Ryan stated confidently. “Put different clothes on him and got him out of the museum in the mad rush with all the kids. That's why he didn't show up on any of the security cameras before the alert. He left because of the alert.”

“He didn't even know he was being `kidnapped',” Ryiza added. “No one noticed because he was a kid among hundreds of kids - what's harder than a needle in a haystack?”

“A piece of hay,” Amy completing the phrase with a chuckle.

“So his guardians are locked away, right?” Ryiza asked while Amy moved them both towards the door to take them home.

“Yep.”

“And they can't make Terryl's mom cry again,” Ryan reassured his sister.

“Kidnapping your own charge...that's pretty low.”

“But it was a perfect set-up...dress him up in other clothes, say he was missing, and lead him out during the panic.” Ryan shook his head. “Only they didn't enter the building at the same time as him. He was on the tape - they weren't.”

“Is that what tipped you off?”

“Yeah,” Ryan nodded at Ryiza's question while they climbed into the car and fastened their seatbelts. “They said they were with him the whole time, right? So where were they when they entered the building? Wouldn't that be the most dangerous time to leave their charge alone?”

“And when a kid points out that-” Ryiza chuckled. “They were quick to confess and point the finger at the other.”

“Where were they?” their mom asked.

“Getting a floorplan so they knew where the security cameras and exits were. Had to put the clothes on Terryl without getting spotted by security!”