



The Wife

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Osborne Smith became a detective after his wife died. “It’s time to go.” In the living room, Edward speaks to Osborne. Neighbors called Osborne antisocial except Edward Jones, who is Osborne’s. Actually, Edward is not a professional assistant. He is Osborne’s roommate, which means he must bear this pessimistic man and is often forced to participate in some bloody cases. Edward is different from Osborne. The beauty of life is much more important than the cruel cases, Edward always insists.



Photograph from Mingsong Yang, *Eastern Europe*, Jul., 2019

“Today will be wonderful.” Edward says to Osborne.

Osborne shoves his hands in his pockets and looks up at the ceiling. He stands there a good while, squinting, wondering what sorts of concrete-wall anchor bolt would be best for the job. And then he puts on his navy suit and does up the top button of the

black shirt.

“Leave the top button undone if you are not wearing a tie.” Edward continues.

“I’m not some urchin who is renting out deck chairs,” Osborne protests. “Before definitively buttoning it up.”

Now, they finally get out of the house.

But at the dooryard, within a minute, there is a lanky man rushes out of the opposite house.

“Please! Please help my wife! She was stabbed! And there is so much blood... blood...oh my god, what should I do...” The lanky one cries, kneeling on the floor, holding the head with his red hands.

Edward walks over and pats the lanky one’s shoulder, when Osborne puts on the gloves and enters the opposite house. “Everything will be fine. We will help you. He is a detective,” Edward feels so sorry for his neighbor. “Would you mind showing us your house?”

Mr. Bennett, their neighbor, is crying. He and his wife have been here for two years. But Osborne and Edward have hardly seen them. Mr. Bennett is a hospital security working night shifts that he usually comes back in the morning and goes to work at night. Mrs. Bennett, a business

woman, has earned lots of money. She often curses her husband because he makes less money. To Edward, Owen is always smiling and speaking gently even if his wife is dissatisfied with him.

When Osborne enters the house, he finds no trace of dust in every room except the bedroom. In the bedroom, a thin woman with blond hair in silk pajamas is lying straight on the bed. Her chest is full of blood. The wound is about 3cm long and right in the heart. There are no signs to show that the woman was struggling, so the murderer must be an acquaintance and familiar with the body structure, Osborne

thinks. The woman's eyes are closed, perhaps she was killed during sleep. But it is also possible that the murderer closed her eyes after the killing.

"When did you leave your home last night?" Osborne asks.

"As usual. About 8:30 p.m. so I can arrive the hospital before 9." Owen replays.

"And when did you come back this morning?" Osborne continues to ask.

"About 7 a.m. and then I found her dead." Owen's eyes turn red.

Edward is a little confused, "Did you find out that

your wife had any unusual behavior yesterday?"

"No. She was the same as usual. But I know my wife and one of her partners have some disagreements because of funding issues."

"Do you know his name?"

"Er... Michael." At this time, the ambulance comes and takes his wife away.

When they go out of the house, an old woman comes over and says, "Yesterday I saw a big guy come to Owen's house and I heard the guy and Owen's wife quarreling."



Photograph from Baomu Song, Shanghai, Apr., 2019

"Really? What time was it? What did the man look like?" Edward asks.

"About half the ten. I didn't see him clearly." After saying that, the old woman turns back to her own house and shuts the door.

After that, Osborne asks Edward to get the job record of the hospital. It shows that Owen indeed started working at nine and left at half the six. The identification report shows that in addition to Owen and his wife's fingerprints, there is an unknown fingerprint in the bedroom. At the same time, it shows that his wife died between 11 and

12 o'clock last night. Has Osborne read the report, he goes to find out who is Michael — he is a suspect. According to Owen, Michael is very tall and big, which is similar to the description from the old woman. But it is strange that the unknown fingerprint is tested to be a woman, and no one knows Michael in the company. Who is Michael?

In the evening, Edward goes out for investigation. Osborne stands in front of the television, thinking the case happened this morning. He slowly twists the wedding ring on his fingers as if looking for something else to say. He still finds it painfully difficult being

the one to take charge of a conversation. That was always something his wife took care of.

This case seems to have entered a dead end. They can't find Michael. And Owen did not have time to commit the crime.

"We must be miss something." Osborne feels something wrong and speaks to himself. He knows the feeling of losing a wife.

What if there is no man called Michael at all? Osborne thinks.

And then, he goes to Owen's house alone. He finds a hidden door in the bedroom and smashed it. In the corner of this dark room, he finds a few large clothes which don't match Owen. There are also many shoe lifts. Then, Osborne receives a call from Edward, who says, "The staff of the hospital said Owen had gone to the toilet for a long time at ten. It is Owen who killed his own wife because he couldn't stand the curse of his wife anymore. He disguised himself with clothes and copied fingerprints from others to confuse the police."

