

ROBERT RILEY

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The Messenger Arc: Fools Company (part 2)

Meeting with D.C. Harvey for the third time was a great boost for me – and one that got me on the right track. He wanted me to meet with a double time killer who only a month before was living an ordinary life. There seemed to be a connection with Jiri here, but neither of us was certain what that connection was. I was pleased that D.C. Harvey was not only experiencing encounters of the supernatural kind but was keen enough to share them with me. He had a belief that I was working for some kind of higher purpose... whatever that meant, and that the clues that I revealed to him that dated back to my first experience as a child were somehow all coming together, symbol by symbol, piece by piece.

I tried to stay on the fence as much as possible. I didn't want speculation to cloud my judgment and decided to take things as it happened. After the things we'd been through, from the parachute case, to the underground case, his visitations from Jiri and my breakthrough from my previous psychological crisis, D.C. Harvey was hooked. He asked me to tell him everything I knew about Jiri Ivanov. How embarrassing was it when I told him that since I had the book, I have received many messages, made contacts through him, gone to the extremes of demand and then fell into a slump where I refused to even acknowledge the book existed. I had gone the full spectrum, but still, I knew next to nothing about the man whose gift to me has put me on this fascinating journey.

I made a deal sealed with the clinking of coffee cups in a 24 hour fast food place – a promise that stated: once we finished this Sean Best case, we would work together in learning all there was to know about Jiri Ivanov.

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Sean Best looked like he was no older than twenty years of age. His hair was short, bowl cut. He looked thin and withdrawn, and wore thick rimmed glasses and patchy stubble. Sean Best sat behind a thick glass window panel. The room was specially made for dangerous persons such as himself. The moment I arrive there with D.C. Harvey, Sean looked at me with soulful curiosity, tilting his head slightly assuming a comfortable posture which he kept throughout the entire conversation. His mouth gaped dry as he watched me sit in the plastic chair. D.C. Harvey pulled up a second chair next to me and watched as we seemed to relate to one another in silence. Sean was the first one to speak.

'Do I know you?' he said with a low tone scratched up voice.

I shook my head. 'No I don't. But I've heard a lot about you.'

'No you haven't.' He replied. 'You haven't met ME before so how can you know anything?'

The banter went on for a while. He said nothing of substance, and we made little progress. I felt a burning in my pocket. The book was calling. I asked to leave the room for a moment to which I retrieved the book and opened up to a clear, crisp new page. Jiri had a pointer:

ASK Sean about the hole in the wall THEN ask Sean about the person he saw on the other side. Ask him what his name was.

Take each question "one in time"... let him exhaust his tongue before leading.

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My Best

Jiri

I closed the book and went back into the room. Sean looked at me as if he was sharing a personal joke with himself about why I'd left the room. He laughed, chewed on what he had left of nails on his hands, and stared. I asked the first question on Jiri's list:

'Sean, tell me about the hole in the wall.'

The smile disappeared, and suddenly we were heading into a serious two way conversation. The question knocked him back to the beginning when all this began.

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As Sean recounted, the team arrived in the new office. Gareth "Wazza" jumped into the prime seat like a child calling "First!" – His place assured that his monitor screens were away from prying eyes. Sean stood in the centre of the room and looked at Wazza with disgust beyond the need for words. Eric, Sean's friend came in and immediately claimed a desk as far away from Wazza as possible. Clara, the tall, leggy and devastatingly pretty brunette - as Sean remembered her – glided in with the breeze and found her desk. Much to Wazza's approval, she was sitting right in his eye line. Realizing this Clara moved immediately taking a seat at the back of the room next to Sean, their backs to Wazza. The rest of the room, supernumeraries who came in, did their work and went home... end of discussion filled the rest of the allocated desks. The new office was now officially claimed.

There was an area of wall, a vast space between Sean's desk and Wazza's where a planter had been placed giving adequate cover and screen to prevent the shit from flying forms of harassment from Wazza. Behind the plant however was a piece of A4 paper stuck to the wall with tape.

'What do you think that's covering?'

I had already felt the breeze and thought it was an air vent. I told Wazza to leave it alone. Naturally, he came over moved the plant and pulled the paper away. There was a hole through to the abandoned side of the building – the side that never got renovated. Sean told Wazza to put the paper back. Instead, he put up a picture of a topless model from a magazine he subscribed to.

Nobody dared to argue with Wazza. He had a dark streak in him. He would make you life hell if you disturbed his play. Sean was already getting annoyed with him, having spent the last year in an office on the other side of town, he had hoped this time, and he would have been assigned away from the idiot.

Sean decided to change his work pattern to avoid seeing Wazza. It also meant seeing less of Clara whom he had something of a crush on. His only other friend in the office, Eric was an early bird and suggested Sean does the same. They had 24 hour access to the building, so it didn't matter when they started.

Where Eric started at 7am, Sean decided to come in at 5am, half a day before Wazza's arrival at 9am. This way he would get what he needed to get done and then handle the in-office politics afterwards.

The 5am office was a dark and frightful place. The dark half of the building seemed eerie in the darkness. The windows looked like charcoal black dead eyes staring out. Sean was not one to explore the overactive imagination and could deal with it without much thought. He swiped in, made his way up to

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the office and settled in for an early-bird Tuesday. The office was cold. He left his coat on. The poster of the topless model fluttered with the breeze that came through the hole in the wall.

In no less than ten minutes of setting up for the day, Sean became aware of a light. It shone through the poster that covered the hole, illuminating the midriff area of the model. That seemed to be quite unusual considering that the wall was boundary between the renovated half and the abandoned side. Sean peeled the topless model from the wall and saw that the night was coming from a room on the other side. It looked like an office - much like his own - gently lit with wall lights. There were desks with old computers sitting with blank screens. Sean could smell coffee. He swapped eyes for the strain of looking, and realized that there was somebody sitting at a desk in the middle of his view. Whoever he was, he sat with his back to Sean. There was one thing that didn't make sense. It was unbelievably cold through that hole. But that fact didn't matter for the person shouldn't be there in the first place. In any case, the office shouldn't even exist. It really didn't seem possible.

The man in the swivel chair suddenly turned around slowly, shuffling his feet steadily until he revealed himself. Sean couldn't move away even if he wanted to. He was suddenly looking the man right in the eye. The man had slick back hair and wore a striped shirt and grey chino trousers. He smiled and said:

'Hello you...'

The shock pushed Sean away from the hole. He realized right there and then that he knew the face, and he knew the voice. Sean was looking at himself, but a different type of self. It was like he had a twin. The shock didn't last for long and curiosity brought him back to the hole. Looking back through, he could see himself again: a smarter, more confident version of himself – sitting on the floor up close to the wall on the other side.

The higher state of Sean spoke to the lesser Sean directly, as if he'd been expecting him. 'You realize you could be like me if you really pushed hard enough.'

Sean felt the energy pass into him. He nodded.

'You secretly want Clara, don't you?'

Sean nodded.

'But what you don't know is that Eric, your friend already plans to make moves on Clara. Now that you've opted for the early bird shift, he's going to move forward, make his move on her. You'll see, he said he would be here at 7am, but he's not going to be.'

Within an hour of talking to his higher self, Sean started to change. He believed everything that was being told to him. Everything was true.

'I'm a mirror image of you Sean.' The slick haired Sean said. 'I'm everything you want to be. I have power, I have money... I have Clara. All you need to do is, "get rid of Eric". Then you'll be on the path to live life like a king.'

Sean questioned. 'What do you want me to do?'

'Tonight, you have to kill Eric. Then you must bring him here to the abandoned entrance and we can get rid of the body together. You will be living like a king... I promise you that.'

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Sean had told D.C. Harvey and me this much after posing that first question as prompted by Jiri. It was clear what had happened. He spoke as if it was still true however, that it was still going to be given everything he ever wanted. This was a clear case of possession. He did kill Eric that night; stabbed him in his sleep. The following morning after that, he was told to go after Wazza who was pummeled to death with a fire hydrant the following night. Both bodies were brought into the abandoned side of the building. Both bodies were given to the entity that had manipulated Sean Best to the point of murder, selling him a belief that he would certainly be living life like a king if he only did what was told. Three weeks after the two murders, Sean had already been questioned many times by the police. He acted perfectly normal. Clara – his prize – had however left the company and many other staff had fears of dangers with being in the location. The Rock Deveron Company had gone into disarray with mass relocations granted by 90% of the staff. Until she could leave, Clara worked in another office for three weeks. One day, Sean encountered her in a car park of a supermarket. He asked for a lift home. On the journey, he tried to tell her his feelings. She laughed.

‘She shouldn’t have laughed.’ Sean said frowning. ‘I decided she had to go to.’

The attempt to end her life ended when she managed to roll from the car. Later that night, the police caught up with Sean. He was in the first place they looked for him: sitting on the floor in his office, having broken down the wall with his axe and trying to squeeze his way through into the other world where he so desperately wanted to be. The only thing is, the reality was he was trying to crawl into the burnt shell of a room that was black with fire. Everything he believed was just an illusion.

Or was it?

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After meeting with Sean, I sat with D.C. Harvey. We both agreed that the only thing they could do, was go to that office and confront whatever it was that had taken Sean to such a dark place. There was significant data for me to believe there was a dark entity residing there. D.C. Harvey also had a chance to check the abandoned side of the building for those two bodies that hadn’t yet been found.

It was going to be an extremely long night.

(To be continued...)

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