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A TERRIBLE LOVE

Once upon a time, in the countryside in Scotland, near Edinburgh, two rich families, the Gasbi and the Lebowski.

The Lebowski were a happy family with the father, James, the mother, Elizabeth and Diana their daughter. The Gasbi were composed of the grandmother named Marie, her granddaughter Marta and her husband. This neighborhood was really peaceful and everyone was in good terms but Marie was about to die because of her old age. All knew that there was an enormous fortune to inherit.

After dinner with James, Marta and Elizabeth at Mrs Gasbi's house, Marie was murdered. The detective called to investigate was Charles, Diana's cousin. When he questioned Elizabeth, she was crying and said : « I would rather kill myself than touch Marie's hair ; she was there when I was born and she raised me ! ». Charles knew right away she wasn't a suspect. Diana was sleeping at that moment at

her house and Marta would never have done anything to her grandma. James, who was a doctor, didn't seem guilty either, so Charles thought that it was maybe an accident and that Marie had finally died of old age.

However, the autopsy revealed an overdose of methylnorphine that Marie took in pills to ease her stomach pain. Was it a suicide or a murder? Charles went into Marie's bathroom and found an entire empty box of pills. Everybody had said to Charles that Marie was an authoritarian woman who liked to run her family with an iron fist and who was also fervent catholic. These traits of character excluded a suicide. So it had to be a murder. The only one who could have known that Marie's drugs could kill was James, because he was a doctor.

Charles still had doubts about James's guilt, but the police, who was also investigating, came and arrested him, because the inspector in charge said there was at the time enough clues to put James under arrest. A speedy trial took place and James was sentenced to twenty years in jail.

Diana and her mother moved to London to forget the shame and the sadness they had been through.

Twelve years after all this drama, Diana was twenty-three and she had studied at the police academy. She wanted to return to her native village for the holidays in order to see her father whom she hadn't seen for almost ten years. She bought a ticket and took the

train. Arrived at Edinburgh, she walked into the streets like she used to twelve years ago. How beautiful Edinburgh was, she had forgotten about it.

Suddenly she stopped. Charles's detective agency she thought. She asked herself if he was still in town. So she took the underground, got through the city and arrived at her cousin's agency. It was still there. She came in and saw Charles. Ten years of separation ! Diana threw herself into his arms. They were finally united.

Charles was still an handsome guy with blond curly hair and blue eyes. He was wearing a turtleneck and a suede jacket, he was good-looking. « Do you want to drink something ? », asked Charles to Diana, who accepted.

After the joy of the first reunion, the two cousins talked about THE delicate subject : Diana's father, James was in jail for twelve years and should not be released before eight more years. Diana had always refused to visit him in prison : she had been so disappointed because of him. Charles for his part had news from Marie's little daughter and her husband. He knew they led a princely life on the Riviera with the money of the inheritance.

Charles was troubled by that and said it to Diana. Especially since he had discovered that Marie's inheritance had allowed Marta and her husband to repay important gambling debts twelve years ago. This piece of news made Diana thoughtful. Her father had always

claimed his innocence but she had never trusted him. Now she considered the facts in a different way.

Diana had no difficulty to convince Charles to start a new investigation on her father's case. They decided to look into Marta's husband past.

After a few days, they discovered that Henri knew very well a chemist whose name was Jerry. Jerry was an odd and even suspicious man. Charles learnt that Jerry was at the head of a drug trafficking gang and sold illegal drugs. So, Charles and Diana understood what had happened. Jerry had sold drugs to Henri, and this one had poisoned his wife's grandmother to inherit and repay his gambling debts. But they didn't know if Marta was his accomplice or innocent of the crime. And there was another bigger problem : they had no proof of their theory. But fortunately, Diana had a plan.

She knew Marta and Henri would come back to England at the end of the week, to sell one of Marie's properties. Charles and herself had to take the opportunity to highlight Henri's guilt and to discover what Marta had done or not.

They decided to see Jerry, the chemist, and to incite him to recognize he had sold illegal drugs to Henri twelve years ago. Charles was determined to offer him a deal in exchange of his testimony. If Jerry promised to stop his illegal activity and to testify against Henri,

Diana and Charles would never say to anyone what they had discovered about him.

Charles and Diana were lucky : Jerry had changed, regretted all his dealer's past and immediately accepted the deal. But it wasn't enough to clear Diana's father and be sure if Marta had participated to the crime. The only solution was to confront the couple to Jerry to reveal the truth. Therefore, Diana and Charles organized a meeting with Marta and Henri at Charles's agency. They said to them they had found an old letter from Marie which was disturbing because of what she was mentioning about Henri.

The day of the meeting quickly arrived. Everybody was present and the sense of nervousness was felt. Charles decided to hit hard and directly accused Henri of committing the crime. Whereas the cousins thought Henri was going to protest his innocence, this one said nothing and seemed totally shocked. He just stared at his wife as he was seeing her for the first time.

And suddenly, he said it was true. Charles and Diana were very surprised because they didn't have to involve Jerry in the meeting to obtain Henri's confession. It wasn't normal, something went wrong. In their astonishment, they had completely forgotten Marta. And then they heard her voice : « Henri is innocent, I am the only one who is guilty ».

Marta began to explain the entire story. Twelve years ago, she had asked Henri to buy some drugs for her because she needed to take these drugs for her back. So Henri had done it without asking questions because he simply loved his wife so much. Marta had used the drugs to poison Marie, but she had hidden her crime from Henri.

Diana was totally shocked. So, her father was innocent and had spent twelve years in jail for nothing. She felt terrible anger towards Marta. She screamed : « But why did you do this ? Why did you let my father go to jail ? You are a monster ! ».

Marta stayed very calm. Her voice was neutral when she started again. She explained Marie had discovered Henri's gambling debts and decided to disinherit her. Marta couldn't bear this idea because she was totally in love with Henri. She knew Henri's life was at stake : the loan sharks who had lent money to him would kill Henri if he didn't repay them.

Diana still was very angry against Marta. She said : « But my father ! Had you thought of my father ? ». Marta stared at Diana and simply answered : « No... Only Henri had mattered to me ». At these words, Diana threw herself upon her and tried to strangle Marta. Henri and Charles rushed to stop her. The two women were separated and Marta collapsed in tears in her husband's arms. Charles tried to calm down his cousin and said : « It's a terrible love she is in, we will never

understand Marta, but the important thing is that your father gets out of prison ».

A few days later, Diana and Charles were having breakfast together. They were talking about James's next prison release, and Diana was overjoyed at the idea of finding her father at home. Charles's phone rang. He answered and suddenly, his face lost all color. He hung up and said to Diana : « It was the police. Marta and Henri were found dead at their home this morning. They committed suicide together. A letter found by the police explains they couldn't bear to be separated in jail ». Diana could only whisper : « What a terrible love ! ».

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