

## Withdrawal Symptoms

Laura Sinclair stood outside Scott Puryear's apartment, watching two police officers micro-examining the dead artist's bedroom.

Laura had smelled an unpleasant odor and informed the building's superintendent. The superintendent had been enjoying cocktails and barbecued food with other tenants in the building's courtyard.

Scott Puryear had been found dead on his back, on his bed. There was a bottle of pills and a note that stated 'Genug'.

'German for enough', muttered Laura to the superintendent whose name was Dan Stratton.

'Well, this looks pretty shut and closed', the first cop said to the second. The second cop nodded.

'What can you tell me about the deceased, either Miss Sinclair or Mr. Stratton?'

Dan looked at Laura, who responded.

"Not too much, I'm afraid. Scott was an artist, as you can see by looking at his little studio. I don't think he'd shown his work too much over the last couple of years....even before COVID kicked in.

"Can you describe him personally?", Officer One asked both Laura and Dan.

Dan spoke up "Well, he was quiet. Didn't seem to socialize with the other tenants very frequently, if at all. He was reliable with his rent. He took on a responsibility for recycling and garbage on Monday nights".

Officer Two stared at Laura. She realized she was expected to say something.

"Scott and I did talk sometimes...have tea either in his or my apartment. We share...shared some interests.....art, reading ,music. Scott was a movie person.....he was coping with the pandemic by watching a lot of movies and listening to music.

"Ambient music.....sometimes nineties trip-hop", Dan chipped in.

"Spiritual jazz", added Laura.

The two officers looked at each other, as if trying to process or define these terms.

"Did he have a girlfriend. Or boyfriend?"

Laura shook her head. Scott was gay but never seemed to have company.

Officer One now tried to access Scott Puryear's laptop but the password was unavailable.

"Well, Mike", Officer One addressed his partner. "This looks shut and closed."

"Yes. Enough." the two cops turned to leave.

"Well be in touch if we need to talk further, Miss Sinclair and Mr. Stratton".

Dan and Laura nodded and then the cops closed the door.

They stayed behind after the cops' departure. Laura looked at notes of scrap paper on the desk beside the computer.

"Dan.....do you see something 'off'?"

Dan didn't respond although he looked around the apartment.

"The handwriting on these notes doesn't match the handwriting on Scott's suicide note."