

Three blind coppers...see how they run.



SEE

HOW

THEY
RUN

CLARE REVELL

an Ellery & York whodunit

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Dedication

For Jess, who's been begging, uh...nagging, ummm demanding, hmm asking me to write this book for years. Well, here it is. And thank you for typing up this one as I dictated it. And adding the odd sentence or two. And giving me the death stare when something happened that you didn't approve of.

What People are Saying

Wow! *Dark Streets Shineth* might just be my new favorite Christmas book. The combination of an intriguing mystery and a romance (complicated by workplace issues) kept me turning the pages. ~ Erin Stevenson

Thursdays Child

Ms. Revell has certainly twisted a real heartbreaker here while keeping some deep, dark secrets hidden from us. First, what could be more heartbreaking than an emergency responder not being able to help a loved one in a life threatening, touch and go situation? And this is just the opening! ~ Donna B. Snow

1

SUNDAY 5 APRIL. RACE DAY MINUS
FOURTEEN.

DC Isabel York glanced at the clock. Where had the day gone? There was only about half an hour left before they would need to leave for the evening service. She and her fiancé, DCI Boaz Matthias, had spent the day between services with her partner, DS Zander Ellery, his wife Kate, and Gramps, Zander's grandfather. Not forgetting the baby, her honorary niece, Alezandra. It didn't seem possible the baby was three months old already.

For once the weekend on call had been quiet and eventless, just the kind she and Zander liked. Probably a good thing as her mind was on other slightly more important matters. Her wedding plans had been massively derailed late on Friday evening, when the reception venue went bust. She and Boaz had spent the entirety of yesterday visiting other venues, each one more expensive than the last. At this rate they wouldn't have a reception at all, or they'd have to wait another three years to get married. The problem was it was April the fifth and the wedding was organised for June the tenth. Eight short weeks away. The invites had already gone out. At least she hadn't bought a

dress yet.

She sighed. Maybe they should just elope and be done with it. That way she wouldn't need a dress, as any outfit would do. She had the money for one, that wasn't the issue. The problem was something else altogether. Something she was hesitant to put into words.

Boaz tucked a strand of hair behind her ear, warmth sliding down her neck as he did. "Penny for them."

"Just wondering if we should elope." Isabel rested her head on his shoulder. "Or do a Zander and Kate and just marry giving everyone two days' notice, only without anyone getting shot this time."

Kate laughed as she fed Alezandra. "A shotgun wedding. Literally."

Zander came in with a tray of tea and cake balanced in his hands. "As I've said a hundred times, Is. The church is free because you and Boaz are both members. And you already have that booked for the service. Simply have a cake reception there for everyone who attends the service. Problem solved. We can make the cakes or buy them, along with milk, coffee, and tea bags. There are plenty of cups and plates at the church. The home group could serve, as they do for funerals. We could get sandwiches as well if you wanted. Then all you need to worry about is the wedding cake. Assuming you have that organized."

"Oh, no...the cake." Isabel's stomach fell. After the reception plans had collapsed, how could she have forgotten that important detail? "The reception venue

was providing it. It was all part of the package. I certainly can't make it, I burn toast."

"Your cooking has improved a lot over the past few months. You make a passable shepherd's pie now." Zander set the tray on the coffee table. "But yeah, don't serve anyone toast."

Boaz whipped out his phone. "I'll ask Mum to make it. She loves baking and her cakes, as you know, are legendary. How many layers was it?"

She would have given him the death stare as he'd been there when they'd picked out said wedding cake, but she didn't see the point. It wasn't his fault his brain could only remember work stuff, or that the wedding was crashing down around them as they spoke.

Instead, she picked at her thumbnail. "Three. The bottom layer is fruit, with no nuts, the middle one is chocolate sponge, no cream, and the top one is plain madeira. With white icing, yellow roses, yellow ribbon, and a cute bride and groom on the top."

Her eyes burned with moisture and her lips started to tremble. She'd put a great deal of effort into planning this for over a year, and now it was all falling apart. A *dis-as-ter* as her favourite TV judge always said. She was seriously beginning to wonder if it was all worth it as she buried her face in Boaz's shirt.

She took in a deep breath, his familiar woody scent grounding her. Of course it was. This was a hiccup, a bump in the road. Actually, it was more like a jolly big asteroid than a bump. The more she thought about the unfolding catastrophe, the better the idea of eloping seemed.

Boaz voice rumbled over the top of her head. "Hey, Mum, it's me. I have a massive favour to ask regarding the wedding cake. As you know the venue fell through and they were supplying the cake. I don't suppose there is any chance..." He paused and rubbed Isabel's arm. "Brilliant, thank you. Three layers, fruit, chocolate, and madeira. No nuts. Yellow roses, ribbon, cute traditional cake topper. But one that doesn't have the bride's assets on display." Boaz gave Isabel a thumbs up and continued talking. "Sure, I'll let her know. Thank you. Love you both. Yeah, tell Dad I said hi."

He ended the call and kissed the top of her head. "Sorted. She said she'd video call you at some point this week once she's made a few drawings. And when she goes to buy the cake topper you can either go with her or she'll video call you. That way it's one you like. I know it's not what we planned, but it'll be just as good, if not better. You'll see."

Gramps smiled at her. "Nothing wrong with a church reception, lassie. That's what Zander's gran and I had. Few sandwiches and a bit of cake, cup of tea. Nothing fancy. You don't need fancy. The day is about the two of you and the commitment you're making. Nothing else."

Isabel glanced from him to Boaz. "It would be cheaper."

"Especially as we've lost all we've paid for the other place. Plus, doing it this way means that we don't offend anyone with sitting them next to someone they can't stand." He winked. "By sitting Zander next to,

say, DI Holmes for example. Or between DI Holmes and DCI Britton."

"Don't even think about it," Zander growled.

She pursed her lips. "Too late, already thought it and mentally done it. And this way everyone who's attending the wedding gets to be part of the reception."

Zander smirked. "Shame the Guv's country manor isn't near here. Else you could have the reception in his banqueting hall. I'm pretty sure he has one. Then you can have him on the top table next to you."

Kate frowned, lifting the baby onto her shoulder. "Country manor?"

"He's the Earl of Dorset," Zander chuckled. "Something we constantly tease him about. Bit too far to travel for dinner though."

"Just a tad," Isabel said.

Zander's phone rang. He scowled. "DS Ellery." His face changed as he listened. "We'll be right there." He pocketed the phone. "Is, you need to stop thinking how quiet it's been all weekend."

She looked innocently at him. "Why blame me?"

"Because I know you and I wasn't thinking anything remotely connected to the QT word. We got a call, and it's not a good one."

Kate's mouth puckered. "But you're babysitting. It's my turn to go to church tonight."

"I'll do it," Boaz said. "That way you and Gramps can still go to the service and Zander and Is can go to work."

Zander jerked his head. "Thanks. We'll take the service car. It's parked on the grass out the front." He

kissed Kate and stood. "Sorry, love. Don't wait up, this could take some time." He kissed the baby's cheek. "And you be good for Uncle Boaz. No partying without me."

Alezandra burped and gurgled.

Boaz pretended to sulk. "Spoilsport. We were planning a rave, complete with noisy nursery rhymes, fluorescent pink milkshakes, psychedelic nappy changes..."

Isabel kissed him firmly on the lips. "Behave. I'll call you tomorrow." She headed out into the chilly April evening with Zander. "I love the way Boaz calls Gramps, Gramps."

"He's family, same as you. Gramps adores the both of you. He keeps asking when you're moving back home. Here, you can drive."

Isabel took the keys and unlocked the car as she laughed. "I don't think Kate would like that. Or would she? Live in babysitter. Hm...no. Anyway. What have we got?"

"Assault. One seriously injured. Half a mile from here."

~*~

Dressed in a white forensic suit, Zander strode past the two ambulances and several marked patrol cars, blue lights flashing on all of them. He showed his ID to the officer with the clipboard at the crime scene that was already taped off. "DS Ellery and DC York." He ducked under the tape and headed up to the front

door. "Hey, Phil."

PC Phil Weston held out a clipboard for their signatures. "Hey, Sarge. We got the 999 call about half an hour ago. We found Mrs. Trainer in the bedroom. The paramedics are working on her now."

Zander pulled the shoe covers over his feet, checking Isabel had done the same before they followed PC Weston inside. "Who made the call?"

"Her son, Mikey. He's seven, locked himself in the bathroom, and won't come out. He's terrified."

"Not surprised. Is he still on the line with the operator?"

"No. He rang off and won't pick up the phone again. We've tried talking to him through the door, but he's not answering. The coroner is upstairs. Third door on the right."

Zander took the stairs two at a time. He paused in the doorway, taking in the scene, and swallowed hard at the carnage in front of him. Blood splattered the floor, walls, and even the ceiling. Four paramedics worked on a woman lying on the bed.

Arend Van Houten, the Dutch coroner, stood next to the crib. "Zander, Isabel. This is my colleague Dr. Rayna Upstead. Today is her first day with us." He indicated the blonde woman beside him. "Rayna, meet DS Zander Ellery and DC Isabel York. Two of my favourite detectives."

Zander inclined his head. "Hello, Dr. Upstead. Thanks for the flattery, Arend. What have we got?"

Arend sighed. "It's not good. We assume from the crib there's a baby, but there are no signs of her. Just a

lot of blood. We're assuming the other bedroom belongs to the kid in the bathroom. My guess is he either witnessed or heard the assault."

Zander turned away, bile rising rapidly. He clamped a hand over his mouth and ran down the stairs. He made it outside just before he threw up. Turning away, he wiped his mouth on a tissue and leaned against the wall. Several deep breaths later, he felt no better.

Isabel appeared beside him. "Are you all right?" Concern filled her voice and her eyes. "It's not like you to throw up at a crime scene."

Please God, don't let the baby be hurt, too. He shrugged. "I'll be OK. Go back inside and give me a few."

"Sure. I got this." She headed back inside.

Zander pulled out his personal phone and texted Boaz. *Silly question. Is Alezandra OK? Can you send me a photo?*

Boaz replied instantly with a photo of the smiling baby lying on a rug on the floor. *Is everything all right?*

No. Really rough call. Thx for the pic. He ran his finger over the screen, before putting the phone away. He sucked in a deep breath, headed back inside and up the stairs.

Isabel glanced at him. "They're about to take Mrs. Trainer to the hospital, but it's not looking good. She still hasn't come round. I've issued an Amber Alert for the missing baby."

Zander turned to two of the PC's. "Go with her and don't leave her side. I want her guarded until I say

otherwise. I'll arrange for someone to relieve you at some point."

Isabel headed to the bathroom and stopped short by the door. It had been almost broken down, a hole almost through the centre. There was a mallet on the floor. "No wonder the kid won't open the door."

Zander had to agree. The crime scene looked like something out of a horror film or his worst nightmares. "Someone bag this and let forensics do their stuff with it."

Isabel tapped on the remains of the door. "Mikey? You OK in there?"

Sniffing came in response.

Isabel slid down the wall and sat beside the door. "My name's Isabel. I'm a police officer. We came in response to your phone call. The paramedics are looking after your mum and about to take her to the hospital. Did you want to go with her?"

"No..." the voice sounded young.

She looked up at Zander and then back at the door. "Are you hurt?"

"I ran away so he wouldn't hurt me like last time."

"That's OK. You called us. That was really brave. Can you open the door?"

"Not safe. He might come back."

Zander's heart broke. "My name's Zander. I promise you're safe. Whoever hurt your mummy won't come back. There are lots of police officers here now. We can't find your baby sister. Do you know where she is?"

"In here. With me. Safe."

The door unlocked. Isabel pushed it open a little. She raised herself up to check inside the bath. Relief filled her expression and she raised her phone, cancelling the alert.

Zander held his ID around the door. "See. And Isabel has one just like it." He pushed the door open a little farther. Just enough for them to peep around the edge.

The kid sat by the bath, phone on the floor in front of him. His cheeks were red, eyes swollen, and tears still fell. "He tried to hurt Lily. Mummy tried to stop him, and he hurt her. So I took Lily and hid her in here."

"Who hurt them? Did you know him?"

Mikey studied his hands. "It was Daddy," he whispered.

Rage filled Zander. He couldn't imagine ever hurting Kate or the baby and would happily bring the death penalty back for anyone who did. "Is there someone we can call to look after you?"

"Grampa." He held out the phone. "He and Nanna live by the park."

Isabel took the phone and scrolled through the contacts. "Are they Mummy's or Daddy's parents?"

Mikey looked at her for the first time since they'd opened the door. "Mummy's. It's Mum and Dad P. Daddy doesn't have any parents. Grampa's last name is Principal."

"OK. I'll go and call them. Zander will stay here with you. He's also known as Pinktieman. He's a superhero when he's not a policeman. Can I take the

baby? Get someone to check she's all right?"

"OK." He carefully picked up the baby and held her out. "Go with the nice police lady, Lily. She'll look after you."

Zander smiled at the kid. "You like football? Who's your favourite team?"

Mikey eyes brightened slightly. "Liverpool. I have a shirt in the bedroom."

"I like Chelsea, but don't tell my Gramps that. He supports Reading. Every Saturday he'll wear his football shirt and listen to the game on the radio. He gets in a right strop when they lose." Zander had to get the child out of the house as it was a crime scene. "You ever been in a police car?"

Mikey shook his head.

"Want to go for a ride in one to your grandparents' house? Maybe we could find you a helmet, put the lights and sirens on?"

"OK. Can Lily come as well?"

"Of course she can come. Arend, shut the bedroom door. Kid's coming out." Zander waited until the door closed before he stood up and held out a hand. "Shall we?"

Mikey cautiously took his hand. "I'm scared. What if he comes back?"

Zander squeezed it gently. "It's OK to be scared," he said quietly. "I get scared lots too. But you're quite safe with me."

Mikey studied him. "What are you scared of?"

Zander thought for a moment. "Snakes. Thunders. And cucumbers."

"Cucumbers aren't scary."

"I think so. So did my cat when I was little. She'd jump like three feet in the air, yowl, and run away if she saw one. She'd hide behind the sofa for the rest of the day, just in case it was lurking somewhere ready to jump out at her."

Mikey eyed him with skepticism. "Silly cat." He walked down the stairs with Zander, and then stopped at the front door, his face reflecting the blue flashing lights in the darkness. "Wow. Did they all come because I asked for help?"

"Yup." Zander squeezed his hand. "See, that's what we're here for. Even when someone breaks the law, and we arrest them, we try to help them as well. You know you are a hero."

Mikey's eyes widened. "I am?"

"You saved Lily from being hurt and called for help." He led the boy over to a car with two officers and Isabel standing beside it.

Isabel's eyes softened as she looked at the young boy. "Mikey, this is Rick and Clara. They'll drive you over to your grandparents' house. Zander and I will come and see you in the morning. Is that OK?"

Mikey hesitated. "Lily is coming, right? I can't leave her behind. He might come back."

Isabel pointed to the car. "She's all ready to go. See? We even found a car seat for her. I promise, there will be a police officer outside all night and another in the house with you. You'll be perfectly safe."

WPC Clara Fleming kneeled down. "Hi, Mikey. My name's Clara. Would you like the lights and sirens

on? My boss says it's OK."

He hesitated a little before he climbed into the back of the car.

Zander turned to PC Rick Parslow. "I've got a unit coming to sit guard outside the house, along with a family liaison officer. Don't leave until they've both arrived. Kid says his father did this. Last thing I want is him coming back to finish the job."

As the car pulled away, he turned to Isabel. "Are you all right?"

She shook her head. "Nope. You?"

"Nope." He sucked in a deep breath. "Let's just go do this. Just glad both kids are OK. If Mikey hadn't acted when he did..." he broke off, sick at heart.

Back in the house they worked the scene as thoroughly as they could.

Isabel picked up a teddy. "This is heavy. I wonder..." She turned it over, and grunted. "Zander, it's a nanny cam. Like the zebra on my desk." She bagged the bear. "You're meant to be safe in your own home."

"Is that thing still recording?"

"Yeah. We need to get this to the tech blokes."

Zander rubbed the back of his neck. "I also need to hear that 999 call. And we need to check traffic cams and see if we can track down Mr. Trainer." He glanced at Arend and Rayna, who were packing up. "Arend? Any chance you can hurry up the test results?"

"First thing tomorrow. Just glad we found that baby unharmed."

Zander heaved a sigh. He'd seen a lot of things in