

THE REVEALING HAND

Dennis's Brother - Chapter 4

By Erik Rees FBIP(dip)

One day we were invited round to Edna and Dennis's for dinner. There were quite a few other people there and it was going to be another good evening. Dennis was a Pernod man and he was holding his own drink in one hand, when he passed me my whisky with the other.

As he did so, he said quietly, "I'd love a quick word with you before you leave Erik, so can you hang on until the others have gone?"

"Of course", I answered.

Sure enough, when only we were left, host and hostess settled down and we were shattered to hear that Dennis's brother had committed suicide.

He explained that apart from the shock and dreadful disbelief he had suffered at the news, Eddie's death had cost Dennis an enormously heavy financial loss. They had been in business together and a huge some of money had disappeared without trace.

My friend had also been puzzled by the interest that the police had shown in the death. Apparently, he died in a hotel room and the police had questioned Dennis

for many hours. They wanted to know what he knew about his brother's business affairs and what his involvement had been.

The information that Dennis had, seemed to leave the police uninterested and they kept on wanting to know matters about which he had no knowledge. On top of all this, my friend kept receiving frightening telephone calls from someone, often late at night, or in the small hours of the morning. The caller warned him against telling the police anything he knew about his brother's business affairs. Dire consequences were threatened to himself, as well as his family, if he were to open his mouth!

He told us that the police didn't seem to believe him when he spoke about the 'phone calls. They kept on and on about his brother and eventually the policemen changed and the Fraud Squad were now hounding him.

Dennis looked weary and full of despair.

"How did Eddie kill himself?" asked my wife quietly.

"An overdose" came the reply. "I had to go along to the mortuary to identify the body". He shuddered and was silent.

We talked about the grim business for a few moments longer and then my friend said,

“ Actually Erik, I was wondering if you would like to see the note that he left.”

“Have you got it here?” I asked.

“Yes, he left a few. One for mother, one for his wife, this one for me and even one for the hotel where he was staying overnight. Here’s mine,” he said, handing me the piece of notepaper.

I was utterly amazed by what I saw. I couldn’t believe the absolute lack of any sign of depression in the script. No guilt, no fear or even worry. No trace of doubt or lack of confidence. No shock or despair, no mental trauma whatsoever. What it did show was excessive emotional zeal, self-confidence, haste and total goal-orientation.

This was simply NOT the handwriting of anyone about to kill himself.

(SUICIDE NOTE) (5)

Dear Ben,

Believe me stupid; believe me idiotically
guiltless — but please don't believe that had
I known the true position I would ever have
harassed personally, or allowed you to invest
in Capricorn or Asters.

I have paid the price for my
stupidity, and my family will continue paying.
I have written to Sikelster & I know that
Lawleys will go to great lengths to avoid
publication — which will certainly help you to
some degree.

Love
Edith

Fig. 4

The script should have shown signs of stress, anger, desperation and / or examples of some panic. There should have been indications of regret, not just in the contents of the note but also in the form of the writing such as:

Irregular pressure, falling lines, lack of rhythm, lack of continuity - it could have been quickly done, but the continuity should not have been so fluent, - unevenly sized letters, - especially in the middle zone - uneven spacing between words and certainly some repaired or retraced letters. In other words, there wasn't the slightest sign of any agitation or stress.

“I don’t trust this letter, Dennis,” I said. “This guy is absolutely relaxed and happy. In fact, he’s looking forward to life!”

My friends both looked blank.

“What do you mean?” asked Dennis.

“I don’t believe he committed suicide”, I answered.

“I saw his body” said my friend. “I identified it.”

I asked if he had any other examples of Eddie’s writing and he had. Apart from the note to his mother, there were some letters he had written before all this happened.

After studying them, I could see no significant difference between any of them, apart from a certain increase in the right slant on the suicide note and that was all. This merely showed an increased sense of urgency, expression and involvement but nothing at all in the way of any despair.

I explained again to our friends, why I didn’t believe in his brother’s demise – certainly not a self-imposed death.

“If Eddie is dead, then I am convinced he was either killed accidentally, or murdered”

I said.

“Maybe he was forced to write the note,” suggested Dennis.

“No,” I answered. “He would still be under great stress if he was made to do something like that. His script just doesn’t show it and it would *have* to.

After some more conversation, we realised how late it had become. We said our good-byes and then went home.

For nearly two years this situation hung over us. Every so often Dennis was harangued by the police, who were desperate to clear up the matter. Then, one day they told him that they would not worry him any further and that they accepted that he was not involved in the way that they had thought.

Of course, the relief was tremendous. Dennis and Edna had had to sell their house due to the financial disaster and they ended up in a much smaller but lovely house, nearer to us. Life then began to become normal again for them.

Six months after Dennis was let off the hook, Eddie rang up from Cape town in South Africa, trying to apologise for the trouble he had caused and explaining that all was well and that he wanted to make up for lost time.

Dennis was too disgusted with him and the rest of the family agreed that they never wanted to see him again.

Never having understood graphology, they thought I was brilliant and they began to understand the frustration I was experiencing, day in and day out, through this country's lack of use of the discipline that was now my full-time profession.

In due course, the police explained everything. Apparently Dennis's brother had become mixed up with the Mafia. They had done him a favour by setting him up in a lucrative business and had told him that one day he would have to repay the debt. The day came and the man had to pay them a sum of money that he could only scrape together, if he used the family's savings.

Dennis had identified, not a dead brother but one heavily drugged. The attendant at the Crematorium was bribed and had no choice but to co-operate.

Instead of cremating Eddie, they used a pig.