

FINDING THE BROTHER

By

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Nature v Nurture

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EXT. LAS VEGAS - VENETIAN HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

The infamous Vegas strip blazes with life. Car horns sound, revelers shout, and hawkers push their business.

Watching all this is JACK, 60, weathered face, cigar in hand. He takes in the dynamic scene, exhales smoke.

JACK (V.O.)
What are life's odds? You know,
between a good hand, and a stinker?

INT. LAS VEGAS - VENETIAN HOTEL CASINO - NIGHT

A sprawling room of casino tables and slot machines. At a roulette table, Jack's hand hovers between Black and Red.

JACK (V.O.)
Take twins, separated at birth. Two
choices, but not equal odds.

Around Jack, a group of DELEGATES mingle, their access passes on display. A drunk MAN, 25, interested in the Woman next to him, drops his pass onto the table. Jack smiles.

LATER

Pleased with his winnings, Jack walks away from the table, a delegate pass hanging out his back pocket.

JACK (V.O.)
My job? That's to improve the odds,
whatever the hand given.

Jack, stops at the conference center, reads a BANNER. It announces that night's CELEBRITY BOOK SIGNING.

INT. MIDNIGHT'S BAR - NIGHT

SUPER: ONE WEEK EARLIER

Jack rests against the bar, beer in hand. Facing him is MIDNIGHT (60), weary eyes. Someone who's run a bar too long.

They're old friends, comfortable with each other.

Midnight looks at Jack with intent, revealing one eye is Brown, one eye Blue. He pushes an envelope across to Jack.

MIDNIGHT
I read your minimum terms, online.
Five hundred dollars, cash. Didn't
know Private Dicks had websites.

Jack looks disgusted.

JACK
Midnight?! What the fuck?

MIDNIGHT
(laughs)
Ha! You only swear when angry. I need your help old friend. I ain't getting younger. I gotta know.

Jack pushes the cash back.

JACK
Christ man, I mean, how many years?

MIDNIGHT
Nearly all of them. Back to the homes. Please, for me, find my twin. Can you solve this one?

JACK
Look, I know women like the one you saw. All crystal balls and tarot cards. It's a con.

Midnight collects himself.

MIDNIGHT
Sure, but she knew. I know. I've sensed him, all my life. He lives. Remember the kids home, and the Priest?

Jack grimaces, he remembers too well.

MIDNIGHT
You saved me. I needed you then. I need you now. I got no one else.

Reluctant, Jack nods agreement. Refuses the cash.

MIDNIGHT
Where do you start?

JACK
When you were born.

INT. JACK'S OFFICE - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Dark timber, frosted glass.

A sign reads: JACK FAITH - PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

JACK'S OFFICE

Jack leans back, reflective. Drags on his cigar for inspiration. On his desk, two computer screens.

JACK (V.O.)
Computers are great, if they tell
you the answer. If not, it's time
for some old fashioned leg work.

INT. COUNTY HALL - REGISTRY - DAY

A helpful RECEPTIONIST, 30, looks up as Jack approaches.

JACK
(puts on a smile)
Hello Miss. I'd like to see the
register of births, for April 1960.

LATER

A weighty register sits open at 15th April. Under a column
titled 'BIRTHS' there's just one name - MIDNIGHT CARTER.

Jack dials on his mobile.

JACK
(to phone)
Hey buddy... Yeah, I'm here... It's
as I thought, you're the only
birth... Well, if there was twin,
it should be here... Where else? I
don't think there is a--

Jack stares down at the register, frowns.

JACK
Hey, tell me the story again, you
know, why you're called Midnight?

Jack's head bolts upright. He turns over the page.

INT. JACK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Like a man possessed, Jack types away. The computers flash
with data until a picture fills the screen of...

FELIX STAR, 60, bronze tan, whitened teeth, an example of how
plastic surgery can reverse the aging process.

A title reads: **PR Agent To The Infamous**

Jack studies Felix. He frowns - surely this can't be?

In the writing about Felix he spots a word...

HETEROCHROMIA - the condition of different colored eyes

Jack reaches for a fresh cigar.

JACK (V.O.)
 Life's not fair. Not to me, not to
 Midnight. But it was for Felix.

He hits play on a Youtube video;

INSERT: VIDEO OF FELIX

Being interviewed for TV, he leans back, dismissive.

FELIX
 Yes, some say I've taken advantage
 of others, that the people I
 promoted were twisted. Why not? We
 all deserve the right to have a
 voice. This is still the land of
 the free.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
 Did you care at all what they did?

FELIX
 Why? I'm in PR, not a Priest. And
 who wants to hear a boring story.
 Look, I didn't give my clients
 their spicy past, I just served it
 on a plate, with relish.

Felix roars with laughter.

BACK TO SCENE

Jack stares in disbelief.

JACK (V.O.)
 One goes to a rich family. Thinks
 the world owes him. The other to a
 kids home, run by a sick priest.

An alert on the screen catches Jack's eye. It reads;
"See Felix in person at his new book signing in Vegas"

EXT. LAS VEGAS - VENETIAN HOTEL ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Jack waits, cigar in hand, the access pass around his neck.

A limo approaches and out jumps Felix. An excited gathering
 of FANS run over for his photograph.

An innocent young WOMAN, 20, stands nervously for her turn.
 Felix smiles at her like a lion considers its prey.

JACK (V.O.)
 I've had a lifetime around this
 type. They have the same quality.
 They abuse the vulnerable.

Jack discreetly follows Felix's entourage inside.

INT. VENETIAN HOTEL - CONFERENCE CENTRE - LATER

A poster introduces Felix and his new book.

"Tales Of The Famous And All Their Dirty Secrets"

Jack waves the stolen pass to the security guard and heads to the back of the room.

To the side, the innocent Woman watches in awe, fully hooked.

Felix takes to the stage, beaming with delight.

FELIX

Thank you, thank you. I'm delighted to be here with my new book and all it's saucy details. And of course I will sign it for you...if you pay.

Felix laughs at his own joke.

Jack's phone rings. On screen it reads: Midnight

JACK

Hi buddy... Yeah, I'm in Vegas, been looking into that lead I mentioned... Any success?
(stares hard at Felix)
Err...I'm sorry. Dead end.

Jack ends the call, heads over toward the Woman. He whispers in her ear. Her eyes bolt open in horror and she hurries off.

JACK (V.O.)

They were orphans born either side of midnight. Different pages in a book. Very different lives.
(gazes back at Felix)
Midnight said he needed me, so I did what I do best. Protect the vulnerable.

INT. MIDNIGHT'S BAR - NIGHT

Jack and Midnight enjoy a beer, share a laugh.

JACK (V.O.)

Besides, he already had a brother.
(they share a toast)
One that didn't need finding.