

A digital illustration of a woman with long dark hair and round glasses, looking shocked with her mouth wide open. She is wearing a light blue button-down shirt that is unbuttoned, revealing her bare torso. A man's arm, wearing a light blue striped shirt, is wrapped around her waist. The background is dark and indistinct.

CHAPTER 1

MURDER AT  
PALMER LODGE

# FICTION

Rawly Rawls

## Murder at Palmer Lodge 1

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Written by RawlyRawls

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"We're not supposed to play it, Mom. It's ... just for me." Austin clutched the rare find to his chest. He'd been looking for the board game, *Murder at Palmer Lodge*, for ages. And finally, he'd found it.

"Well, can I at least see it?" Alexis frowned at her eighteen-year-old son and looped an arm around her husband's waist. Rob was wearing an ugly Christmas sweater and watching the game on TV. She put a glass of eggnog in his hand, and he mumbled his gratitude without looking over at her. When she looked back at Austin, she saw that her son was backing out of the living room. "Don't bump into the tree, sweetie. Let's not have another accident like last year."

Austin pressed his lips together. His whole family was gathered for Christmas Eve. His twenty-five-year-old sister, Clarissa, was there with her fiancé, Brad. His cousins Beatrice and Eunice were there with Aunt Melanie and Uncle Milo. If the thing really was magic, he didn't want to open it up in the middle of all of them.

"Tell her how much you spent on it." Clarissa smiled innocently at her brother.

"It's my money. I mowed lawns all last summer." Austin gave his sister a dark look. He backed into one of the dogs and almost fell. He looked behind him. It was Subwoofer, their smaller Labrador. "Whose side are you on, buddy?" he whispered to the dog.



Subwoofer looked up at him just as innocently as his sister.

“How much money, Austin James Brawling?” Alexis narrowed her eyes.



“No way, it’s more than a hundred, right?” Beatrice adjusted her glasses and looked at Clarissa.

“You know he’s obsessed with old board games. I say it’s five hundred.” Eunice nodded.

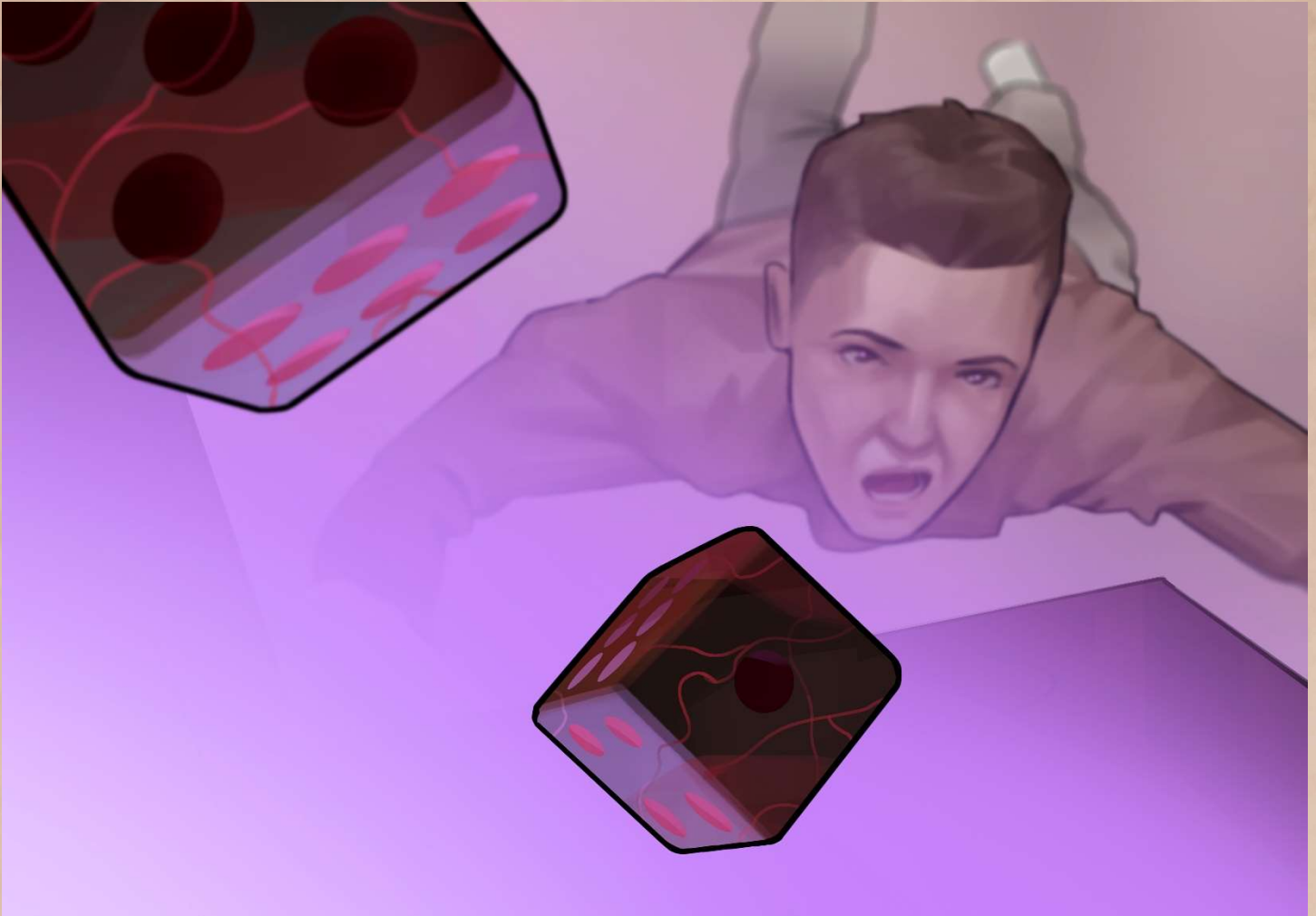
Austin said nothing. His cousins had never been kind to him. If they found out how much he’d spent, they’d never let him hear the end of it.

“It was twelve-hundred dollars,” Clarissa said with a smirk.

Austin cringed. Everyone but his sister gasped. It seemed his dad was paying attention now. “It’s really rare. The dice are made from this special kind of stone. I just ...” Austin shut his mouth. Everyone was laughing at him.

“I raised you better than to throw your money away like that.” Alexis’s heavy boobs jiggled under her sweater as she shook with laughter.

“It’s my money.” Austin spit out the words. He knew he was too old to believe in magic, but ever since he’d learned about the game, he needed to add it to his collection. And maybe ... possibly ... it was special. He’d open it up in his room. Austin turned to flee, but their larger Labrador, Woofier, picked that moment to scurry under his feet. Austin tripped, lost his balance, and watched the box sail through the air. He reached for it, but couldn’t catch it. The game crashed open, the board, cards, and dice spilling out of the box. He caught a glimpse of an elaborate map with many rooms and long halls. The black dice rolled right to his feet and stopped in front of his socks. The last thought he had was that at least he’d rolled double sixes.



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The chug of a boat's engine filled Austin's ears. He opened his eyes and went rigid with fear. The ocean surrounded him. He clutched the rail with white knuckles and started hyperventilating.

"What's wrong, boss?" A familiar feminine voice came from behind him.

Austin found that he was wearing a suit and a brimmed hat. He didn't own either. He turned around and blinked at the woman standing in a well-tailored blazer and skirt. She held her hand on the top of her head to keep her hat from blowing away. Austin gripped the railing harder, he felt woozy. He did recognize her black hair, brown eyes, and curves. "Beatrice?"



"Yeah, boss, it's me. The intrepid Beatrice, always by your side." She winked. "Famed widow and stenographer, always ready to record your adventures for profit and posterity."

"You can't be a widow. You haven't ... married." Austin grabbed his hat as it started to lift off his head. He looked at it. He wasn't one to judge, but it seemed a quality fedora. He looked over at Beatrice. Her brown eyes had sadness in them, they were framed by vintage glasses he'd never seen before. Her pert lips fell into a frown.

"Of course, you know that I *was* married. Fred was a wonderful man. He even melted your cold heart. His loss was ..." There was a tremor in Beatrice's voice. She took a moment to gather herself, sticking out her chin in defiance. "He was a magnificent man. But he's gone. And you are a two-bit-son-of-a-bitch, and you seem to have hit your head or something. Apologize."

"I'm sorry, Bea. Are we ... um ... married?" Austin was so confused.

Beatrice let out a long peel of laughter. "Like you'd ever settle down. I'm about as likely to hitch you as I am to pilot an airplane." Her giggles subsided. "When we arrive at the lodge, I'll give you some serious nursing. It seems you really did knock your noggin."

"The lodge?" Austin said.

"Palmer Lodge. Remember the invitation?" She pointed to an island. "That's why we're on this godforsaken ferry in what I will charitably call inclement weather. What a way to celebrate Christmas. They better have mulled wine and a roaring fire ready for our arrival."



"Holy shit. I'm in the game." Austin wobbled even more, his balance almost tipping him over the rail.

"Whoa, horsey." Beatrice grabbed his jacket and pulled him back to safety. "What's wrong with you?"

"Let's just ... be quiet until we arrive. I need to think." Austin was grateful for her strong arm in his, even if she was his obnoxious cousin.

"Sure. Sounds good to me boss. Let's silently stand arm-in-arm, staring at what looks to be a wonderfully ominous, and surprisingly large, lodge which just so happens to be shrouded in mist and dark shadows. A hush is just the thing for these situations."

"Right." Austin nodded. Mercifully, she did shut up for the rest of the ferry's short journey.

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A car waited for them at the rickety pier. The chauffeur stowed their bags, and they drove off. Beatrice was taking copious notes and hounding the chauffeur for details. They were in a 1933 Mercedes-Benz 770. The lodge had thirty-two rooms, two floors, and it was the only building on the island. It was constructed in 1892. Beatrice and Austin were the first guests to arrive. The game would start once they settled into their rooms. At the end of the day, the evening ferry would dock, bringing the others.



“What is the game?” Austin leaned forward, looking up the wooded drive. He could see the lodge peeking through tree trunks on a rise to the left.

The chauffeur shrugged. “I would have thought you’d know, mister.”

“Me too.” If only Austin had read the instructions before the game started. Woofers was always getting underfoot.

When the Mercedes parked in the lodge’s roundabout, a valet helped them with their luggage. “You’re early. Mrs. Palmer isn’t ready to receive anyone yet,” he said. “I’ll take you to your rooms.”

The interior of the lodge was decked out in taxidermized big game trophies and dour oil paintings. The furniture was all built of dark wood and luxurious satin cushions. There was a grand staircase just beyond the lodge's high-ceilinged lobby. Nearby, was a tall Christmas tree, festooned with decorations and unlit candles. They ascended to the second floor and were shown down a long hall to their rooms.



When he was alone with his luggage, Austin sat on the large four-poster bed and took off his hat. He let out a long, low exhalation and ran his hands through his hair. "What ... the ... fuck?" His eyes went to his suitcase. What would he find in there? Would it be his stuff, or the stuff of whoever the man was that he was supposed to be? His gaze trailed around the room, stopping on the console table by the door. He stood and walked over to it.

On the table, was a rectangular card and two dice made out of black stone with thin red veins. The card read:  
*Roll eight or less for a nap. Roll nine or more to be rejuvenated from your travels.*

"Can't I ... just take a nap without rolling?" Austin looked around the room and shrugged. He picked up the dice and rolled an eleven. There was a knock on the door. Before he could say anything, Beatrice let herself into the room, closed the door behind her, and locked it. She was wearing a nurse's uniform. Her smile was wide and warm. Austin had never seen her smile at him like that. He blinked and cocked his head. "Beatrice?"



"Yeah, boss?" She walked toward him, swaying her hips dramatically. "It's time for your treatment. You were acting quite strange on the ferry." She softly caressed his cheek and removed his jacket. She then slowly loosened his tie, tugging him toward the bed by it. "I always know the best medicine for my employer."

"I ... um ... I don't ..."

Beatrice put a finger to his lips. "Don't say something hurtful like you did before. I'd hate to ruin the mood." She pushed him onto the bed and dropped to her knees on the floor in front of him. She quickly unbuckled his belt.

"We're cousins, Bea." Austin stared at her hungry eyes. Had she always been this hot? No, she wasn't really Beatrice anymore. She was his employee. *What kind of people are we?* Was this normal?

"Well, congratulations. You didn't say anything hurtful. Just ... odd." She laughed, her face bright with mirth and anticipation. She pulled his cock out of his trousers. "There it is." She kissed her way up the shaft.

“Oh ... my God.” Austin stared at his dick. It was twice the size of one of his regular erections. He had been so distracted by everything that he hadn’t noticed the change. It was impossible to miss now. His cock stood proudly as his cousin was bobbing her lips halfway down the shaft. “That’s ... incredible.”

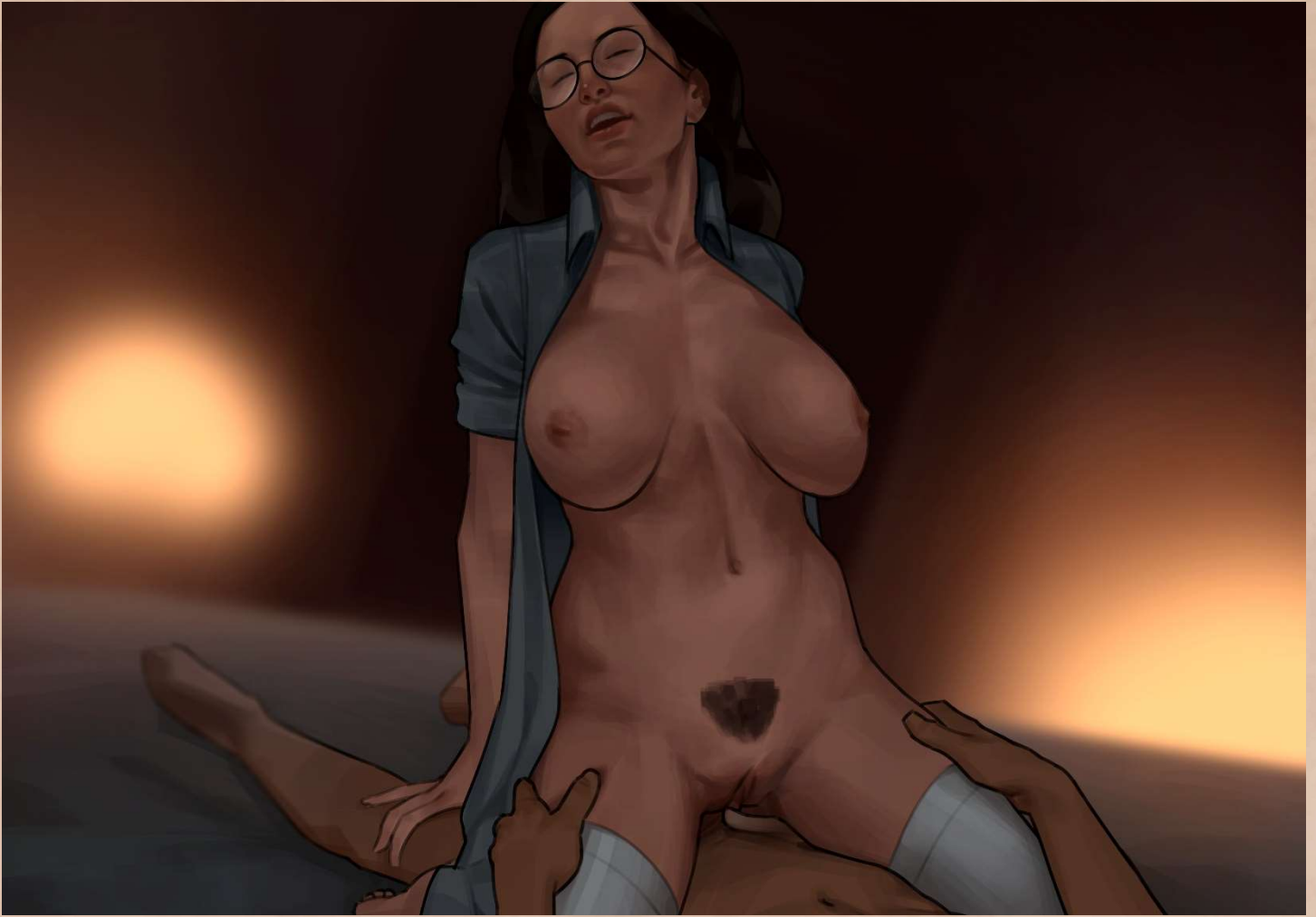


Beatrice pulled off him with a plop and gave him a sloppy smile. She stood and pushed him back to the blanket. "You usually don't say that until you're in my ass." She pulled a little bottle of oil from a pocket in her uniform and poured some onto her hands. She massaged it onto his penis and straddled him. She hiked up the hem of her uniform.

"I've ... never ..." Austin could see she hadn't put on any panties for this wellness visit. The black triangle between her legs matched the curls on her head. He stared at the narrow lips of her pussy as she held his dick and moved his head to her butthole. "Are you really ...? Ohhhhh ... shit." She was so incredibly warm and tight. Her hips were high over his, too high. He wasn't used to his new length.



“There ... now ... boss ... you’ll be ... right as rain ... soon.” Beatrice’s smile faded and her jaw went slack. “I always ... forget how big you are.” She grabbed handfuls of his shirt and slid down his cock. Her uniform bunched around her hips. “I mean ... I remember ... it’s just ... always a surprise ... that I can take it.” Soon, she was bouncing on top of him, her feet planted on the mattress. “Ah ... ah ... ah ... ah ...”



“Ohhhhh ... Bea ... Bea ... this is ... incredible.”

Beatrice barked out a quick laugh before pleasure recaptured her mind. “See ... that’s what you ... usually say ... when ... ugh ... ugh ... ugh ... you’re in my ... uggghhhhh ... ass ... eeeeeeeeeiiiiiiiiiii.” She threw her head back and let out a long wail. Her first climax had arrived.

Outside in the hall, a freckled, redheaded woman leaned her ear against the door. She smiled broadly and smoothed the gown she wore over her zaftig form. The first turn was always such a joy. But the game wasn't all spectacular bludgeons and overly seeded crinkum crankums. There was a murder on the way.

