

Late for Love by M.K. Scott

EXCERPT

Gus placed his hand on the page. "I got it. We could ask her if there was anyone who wanted to kill her sister."

The wide grin announced his friend thought this was an obvious question. To some it might be, but not to the parrot party club owners who knew nothing about Lyre's disappearance. Jake shook his head before replying. "We don't want direct questions that might make her suspicious. We might try some parrot talk and allow Lorelei to tell us stuff without realizing it."

"Parrot talk? Are you the bird whisperer now?" Gus inquired with a dismissive sniff.

"No. I do watch television, especially on Saturday mornings when that vet show is on. Parrots tend to pick out their feathers when they are distressed. Sometimes, they're aggressive. Other times, they won't eat or talk as much and perform repetitive behavior. Lorelei will immediately tell us she's not Lyre and her sister isn't there, possibly hoping that'll get rid of us. It's important to listen to how she says it."

"Got it." Gus held up a thumb to indicate comprehension. "If she breaks into tears, then maybe she actually cared for her sis."

"Possibly." Jake tapped his pen on his friend's hand to get him to move it, which he did. "I'm more interested in her explanation about her sister. Will she say her sister is dead? She might say her sister is missing. Could be she might say her sister isn't there, indicating nothing."

"Don't forget she could just slam the door in our faces or possibly not open it at all."

"There is that. I can only work with what I know currently. If we're able to see the bird, I can make a visual inspection asking if the bird was pulling out its feathers when she got it. I'm not sure how long the bird was alone, but I'm sure it was distressed being locked up without food or water. Then I could mention that sometimes birds are impacted by the owner's emotions. I might ask if Lyre was afraid of something."

"I thought the sisters weren't close," Gus pointed out.

"Could be," Jake conceded even though it galled him to do so. It sort of ruined his plan about questioning the sister. "People say stuff like that all the time, especially when they don't want to talk to the police. Not being close could mean a lot of stuff, too. Maybe they didn't do lunch or share clothes, but they did have a general idea of what was happening in each other's lives. Lorelei could be good for supplying a friend's name or a boyfriend. They might know more."