

# DEAD BY PROXY – Introducing Byron

## By Manning Wolfe

### EXCERPT

Byron was not jaded or trapped into being an attorney as many he knew were and he was not in it for the money, although that part was nice. And, he was not naive, as he was aware of severe injustices in the criminal justice system and felt improvement was needed. Byron continued to be on the playing field because he was one of the last true believers. The system was the best available right now and he actually trusted the outcome, most of the time.

Having deceased parents, one semi-estranged sibling in California, and no current plans to marry, Byron embraced the law as his mistress and his life. He simply loved it all. As most careers went, loving it meant he was devoted to it and good at it. He never glossed over a precedent or twisted a legal argument beyond its parameters. He was thrilled every time he set foot in a courtroom to do battle for his client, guilty or innocent.

Across the aisle, the prosecutor, Sebastian Roberts, relished this chance to incarcerate another criminal. Roberts moved his short spark-plug-of-a-body, decorated with a vest and bright paisley bow tie, around the courtroom as he laid out the federal government's view of the case. He looked at Byron and his client, then back to the twelve chosen members of the jury.

Byron organized his thoughts, felt excitement tingle through his fingers and toes, and stood up at the defense table. In defending Killian Tyrone, Byron's opening argument went something like this: "Your Honor and members of the jury. Today, I'd like to introduce you to my client, Killian Tyrone, the accused in this case. Now, I know what the prosecutor said about what he did, and that is probably swirling around in your brain right now, but I'd like for you to take a step back and listen to both sides of the story before you make a decision about my client's behavior, guilt, or innocence. You also heard his inference about defense attorneys, that would be me." He smiled and the jury laughed. "I'll leave it to you to decide, but I have no intention of tricking you or trying to hide the ball."

Byron pointed at his co-counsel, Michael, a shorter, younger version of himself, but with brown eyes. "My colleague, Michael Everett, and I will present Mr. Tyrone's side of the case and, when we're finished, I'm certain that you will find him not guilty."

Byron smiled at the jury and took pride in the fact that when he won, he won fair and square, and he instilled these principles in his protégé, Michael. Byron encouraged Michael not to be blinded by the legal system, nor be immune to the tricks of the trade. Byron used the tools expertly, but he wanted to win with an equal playing field, or not at all, and the law allowed for plenty of ways to win. To Byron, what was the point if cheating was involved? That only proved he was the best cheater, not the best lawyer.

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