

Chapter 43

In Chapter 43 of "We Solve Murders," Max Highfield finds himself comfortably situated in an opulent library that he now feels he belongs to, unlike a few years ago. The library is expansive, adorned with floor-to-ceiling shelves and windows, exuding an atmosphere of refined elegance with dark oak and green leather. The lighting consists of grand chandeliers and brass reading lamps, and Max imagines transforming such a space into a luxurious pool and gym area if it were his home.

Amid this splendid setting, Max seeks out Henk, who is engrossed in a medical periodical from a plush leather sofa. Their interaction begins with a light exchange about the philosopher Spinoza, whom Henk asserts was crucial to the works of great thinkers like Kant and Goethe. Max thanks Henk for meeting him, reflecting on the challenges he faces at his current agency and expressing his commitment to remain true to himself.

The conversation takes a turn as they discuss Jeff, a deceased figure from Max's past. Henk, seemingly indifferent to Jeff's fate, offers a philosophical remark about those who live by the sword often meeting dire ends. Max humorously references a film he starred in, "Die by the Sword," to lighten the mood. He then broaches the subject of his safety, seeking Henk's assistance in ensuring full security coverage, suggesting a lucrative offer of two million a year for ambassadorship duties.

As the discussion unfolds, Max hands Henk a disturbing card reading, "You're dead." Henk acknowledges the potential lapse in care from Max's current agency and shows a willingness to investigate further. The dialogue shifts to the aftermath of Jeff's death, with Max confirming that clients are gravitating towards Henk. Their banter incorporates humor regarding Max's film experiences, emphasizing their camaraderie.

Max, feeling satisfied with their conversation, decides to formalize a contract with Henk. As he departs, he notices an elderly woman sobbing quietly while reading about grief. Attempting to lend some comfort, he offers her an autograph, only to be met with the reality that she does not recognize him. This interaction highlights the complexities of grief and human connections, leaving Max reflective on his own emotional expressions.