

# Chapter 41

In Chapter 41 of *We Solve Murders*, Max Highfield arrives at The Wilberforce, a private members' club in London that oozes sophistication and wealth. The atmosphere is one of quiet elegance, with its oak paneling, polished leather chairs, and the low hum of conversation that indicates both exclusivity and tradition. Max, who is familiar with this setting from past film shoots, expects a straightforward entrance, but he is immediately confronted by a stern porter. The porter refuses him entry due to the trainers Max is wearing, citing the club's strict dress code. Max protests, arguing that his trainers are expensive and stylish, but the porter remains unmoved. After a brief exchange, during which the porter recognizes Max as a film star, he relents and offers Max a pair of brown brogues to wear instead. Max is not pleased with the shoes, as they clash with his outfit, but he accepts them, aware that his need for privacy and discretion in the meeting outweighs his fashion concerns. Despite the inconvenience, Max chooses to comply, feeling a mix of frustration and resignation. The exchange brings to light Max's ability to adapt to uncomfortable situations, a skill honed over the years through both his work in the public eye and personal experiences.

As Max puts on the ill-fitting shoes, his mind drifts to the complexities of his relationships and professional struggles. He reflects on his deteriorating connection with Jeff Nolan, his estranged friend who has been distant and unresponsive. This silence leaves Max questioning what might have caused the rift and whether it's something that can be repaired. In contrast, Max finds a sense of opportunity in his dealings with Henk van Veen, realizing that aligning with Henk could potentially benefit his career. However, as Max mentally prepares for the meeting, his unease grows when he recalls the threatening note he recently received, which chillingly states, "You will die, Highfield." The note, though vague, sends a wave of anxiety through Max, and he can't shake the feeling that the message could be connected to

the larger web of threats surrounding him. As he continues to digest this disturbing piece of news, he turns to his therapist's advice for comfort, reminding himself to focus on moving forward rather than dwelling on the dangers that might lie ahead. Despite the guidance, Max remains unsure of how to balance his personal growth with his professional drive. He questions whether his ambition is pushing him too far or if he's merely playing the role that society expects of him.

As the porter leads Max toward the library where he is to meet Henk, Max feels a mix of anticipation and apprehension. He's accustomed to facing challenges head-on, but this situation feels different. He reflects on how therapy has helped him manage his emotions better over the years, yet some of the therapist's advice regarding his ambitions and relationships continues to feel out of place. Max has spent much of his life chasing success and recognition, and it is not easy for him to change his mindset. Though he's made progress in controlling his reactions, the pressures of his career, combined with the personal threats, have left him feeling conflicted. As Max ascends the stairs to meet Henk, he is marked by a sense of foreboding, understanding that the conversation ahead could either provide answers or lead to more complications. The weight of the uncertainty he faces in his career and personal life intensifies with each step. Nevertheless, Max is resolute in his determination to navigate these challenges, knowing that whatever unfolds will shape the course of his future.