

TO: Cyrianique "The Murder Queen" Hawkins  
c/o Redblade Press  
313 Columbus Avenue  
New York NY 10024

FROM: Dominic Marshall, Cell Block C1  
c/o Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority  
1 Penitentiary Row  
Stonebridge KS 67481

Dear Miss Hawkins

This is the first time I have written a fan letter to anyone but my teacher Mr. Judson thought it would be a better thing than writing about history or current events or something like that. I sure think your books are more interesting than history! The first one I read was Don't Say No which I picked up because of the woman with the hat on the cover, but after that I was hooked! I read Dead In A Ditch and The Butcher's Kiss and the short stories in Want It Hard. I don't know how you do it but I just can't stop turning pages when I have one of your books.

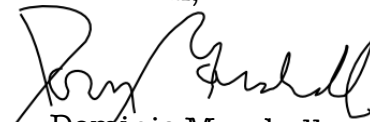
I guess you would have to say my favorite was Rules For Revenge though. That was a brilliant story and I remember I actually gasped when you explained how Owen did it. Unfortunately for me it did not seem to work as well in real life, ha ha.

Now that I have had time to think I feel bad about what I did. Using Rules For Revenge as a kind of cheat-sheet was not cool of me and I hope you do not feel like I ripped you off. However I did get caught which Owen did not. So I guess your perfect locked room mystery was not as perfect as all that. But I am not mad. It is not your fault.

I am really looking forward to Grave Train though I will probably have to wait for it to be a paperback before the prison gets it. Maybe my mom will give it to me for Christmas.

Have you ever thought about writing a book about a prison? I bet it would be really good. You could write about someone trying to escape. If anyone can figure out a way to escape from prison I bet it is you.

Your Fan,



Dominic Marshall

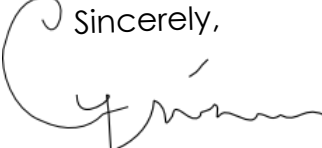
TO: Dominic Marshall, Cell Block C1  
c/o Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority  
1 Penitentiary Row  
Stonebridge, Kansas, 67481

Dear Dominic,

At first, I was unsure about how to respond to your letter. On one hand, it's always a pleasure to hear from a satisfied reader, but I have to say, most readers enjoy my works as *escapism*. They throw a murder mystery to their nasty, hidden, antisocial side to keep it quiet while they go on with their day, smiling through traffic and dull meetings and baristas getting their name and coffee order wrong.

I want people to read my books *instead of* harming people, not as a precursor to doing so. I think most of my readers get this and I'm sorry you did not.

I can only imagine what prison is like, even (or perhaps especially?) for a juvenile. If you enjoy my work, please heed my advice and reform. Owen got away with murder, but he was a twisted and wretched man, ultimately an evil one. I don't believe you can be happy for long doing the wrong thing, and I hope my work bears that out.

Sincerely,  
  
Cyrianique

P.S. I hope this isn't too personal of a question, but you mentioned that the murder in *Rules For Revenge* didn't work? Obviously, you got caught... do you mind explaining how?

TO: Cyrianique Hawkins  
c/o Redblade Press  
313 Columbus Avenue  
New York NY 10024

FROM: Eric Keery, Warden  
Sonebridge Juvenile Facility  
1 Penitentiary Row  
Stonebridge KS 67481

Dear Miss Hawkins

As a matter of policy, we screen the incoming and outgoing mail of our occupants. I would strongly recommend you cease communication with Dominic Marshall. I do not believe he poses a threat to you, but his interest in your work could interfere with his rehabilitation. When he addresses his attention to his work and duties, he is an exemplary resident. Crime novels—no matter how well written and regardless of intention—are a distraction. Given his history with your work, I hope you can understand our decision to isolate him from it.

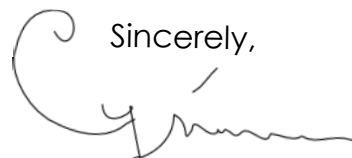
Warden Eric Keery  
Sonebridge Juvenile Facility  
1 Penitentiary Row  
Stonebridge, Kansas, 67481

Dear Warden Keery,

Thank you for taking time to respond and explain. I certainly don't want to do anything to interfere with an unfortunate young inmate's process! I really wasn't sure how to react when I got his letter, so if you think I shouldn't respond, I'll take your advice.

Do you know anything about his case at all? He mentioned something about modeling his actions on my book *Rules For Revenge*. Can I ask what he did, and how he got caught?

Sincerely,



Cyrianique

Cyriadique Hawkins  
c/o Redblade Press  
313 Columbus Avenue  
New York NY 10024

Dear Ms. Hawkins,

We can confirm that Dominic Marshall was tried in Smolan Kansas Juvenile Court on the dates between June 13, 2013 and June 17, 2013. He was convicted in the first-degree homicide of Ginette Wheeler, a crime committed on April 11, 2013, and for which he was arrested on April 12, 2013. Due to his age at the time of sentencing, his records are sealed by the court. Additional information is not available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Del Monico". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "A." and the last name "Del Monico" clearly distinguishable.

Angelique Del Monico

Detective Stanley Gross  
c/o Salina Police Department  
225 North 10th Street  
Salina, Kansas, 67401

Dear Detective Gross,

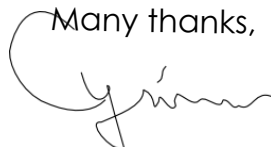
My name is Cyrianique Hawkins, and if you haven't heard of me, I'm a crime novelist. I recently became aware that my work may have inadvertently provoked or informed a crime which you investigated in 2013. I'm referring to the murder of Ginette Wheeler by Dominic Marshall.

I realize that you cannot say too much about the case, due to Dominic Marshall's youth, but he wrote to me from prison and cited my novel *Rules For Revenge*. If you haven't read it, it's the story of a man named Carter who carefully avenges himself on his business and personal rivals in accordance with a number of rules. Each chapter has a different rule, such as "Dispose Of Evidence" and "Conceal Any Motive" and, in the final chapter ("Do Not Get Caught"), it emerges that one of Carter's own victims (Owen) has murdered him.

Specifically, Owen drugs Carter and gets him into a bathroom. He puts on a gas mask, then rolls up a towel and loops two pieces of string around its ends. Owen threads the strings under the door before emptying a bottle of bleach and a bottle of ammonia into the tub. Exiting the bathroom and locking the door, he pulls the strings in order to pull the rolled towel up against the crack at the bottom. Then, letting go of one end of each string, he pulls them out and types up a suicide note. Carter is found inside a bathroom, locked from within, alone, dead, and with a towel wedged against the lower doorjamb. The police rule it a suicide.

I can't help feeling responsible for Dominic Marshall's decision to use this method on an innocent girl—if that is, in fact, what he did. As I've said, I understand that you can't discuss specifics of the case. But I'd rest better at night if I knew how you found him.

Many thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cyrianique". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail.

Cyrianique

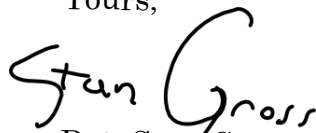
Cyrianique Hawking  
c/o Redblade Press  
313 Columbus Avenue  
New York, New York, 10024

Dear Mrs. Hawking,

I got your book. Pretty clever. I can see how Owen could get away with it.

For one thing, Owen did not take the empty bleach and ammonia bottles out of the bathroom when he left. Apparently, Dominic didn't think it was so important to "Dispose of Evidence."

Yours,

  
Det. Stan Gross