

TRIPLE 9 SLEUTHS

DANGEROUS SYMBOL



MARANNA CHAN

**PRAISE FOR THE
TRIPLE NINE SLEUTHS SERIES**

“The books are full of excitement. Triple Nine Sleuths is the best detective series I have ever read. I can’t wait for the next book!”—Michelle, 11

“The books are thrilling and the characters are hilarious. I think everyone should read them.”

—Regina, 13

“I couldn’t take my eyes off the book. The author describes the action so well that when I read the part about the murder case, I could really imagine the scene playing in my head. If anyone is looking for a good local mystery series, I would definitely recommend the Triple Nine Sleuths series.”

—Anna, 11

“I got so inspired reading the series that I want to be an author when I grow up, just like Maranna Chan.”—Andrea, 10

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DANGEROUS SYMBOL

Also in the series:

DANGEROUS LIMELIGHT
DANGEROUS DESPAIR
DANGEROUS ISLAND
DANGEROUS SCHEMES
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DANGEROUS CONSPIRACY
DANGEROUS DISAPPEARANCE



MARANNA CHAN



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This is a work of fiction. Names, characters,
places, and incidents either are the product of
the author's imagination or are used fictitiously.
Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead,
events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

First Edition

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For Sandra Lim

“Our lives are marked and shaped by our regrets.
Things we all want to take back and can't.
In a perfect world, we would never hurt the ones
we love or cause hurt to befall them...”

– SHERRILYN KENYON

SAMUEL OEI

ENA: THE JUDGEMENTAL CRITIC

*He could not allow himself to be proved wrong.
Inflexible, he saw the world in black and white.*

For him, there were no exceptions.

*He was supremely self-righteous and did
not accept anything less than perfection.*

He was obsessed with cleanliness and orderliness.

He paid for his sins.

CHAPTER 1

OFFICER FAIZAH KNEW she was getting close. She caught a whiff of it again—a smell that took her back to the flat in which an elderly man had died, and no one had noticed until the smell had attracted their attention. She was a rookie officer then. The smell made her sick for two days. She never forgot it.

There was a person decomposing nearby. She considered coming back with cadaver dogs. They would be able to find the exact source of the putrefaction. She wasn't dressed for a hike. She should have worn trekking shoes instead of her pumps. Their heels dug into the soil with each step. At least she had been sensible enough to wear pants.

It was a humid and windless day. The trees were still. Officer Faizah tied her hair into a ponytail. She took out a tissue from her pocket and dabbed at the sweat dripping from her forehead. Her make-up was melting!

She was investigating Samuel Oei's Learning Technologies. The company had run a programme about

Enneagram personality typing at the Discovery Farm at Lim Chu Kang. She had been given this information by three teenagers: Stacy Rodriguez Oei, Corey Lam and her brother, Colton. Stacy had taken on the surname Oei after she had searched for the true identity of her father for many years, and had finally confirmed that he was Stanley Oei. Stacy's investigations into her parents' disappearances had led her to believe that Samuel Oei, her half-uncle, was linked to their disappearance as well as that of some other people. The three friends had discovered that these missing people were all interested in the Enneagram, or linked to it in one way or another. Officer Faizah had found all this rather far-fetched but the 14-year-olds had presented their case to her so convincingly that she decided to investigate further.

She recalled Corey's explanation about the nine different personality types of the Enneagram. At first, it was all nonsense to Officer Faizah. People shouldn't be typed, she believed. But as Corey continued to expound on the different types, Officer Faizah realised that Type One, the Perfectionist, described her quite accurately. Officer Faizah had always been conscientious, and that was why she had done well in school and excelled at

the Police Academy. She had risen through the ranks to become one of the youngest investigation officers. She had a strong sense of right and wrong, and was often critical of others. She disliked angry people. That was why she respected her boyfriend, Corporal Faris. He was so mild and patient, innocent and uncomplicated. He hardly got angry. He didn't seem to mind that she was of a higher rank than he was. He was a humble person. Using the Enneagram, Corey had explained that Corporal Faris was a Peacemaker and therefore wasn't in touch with his anger.

Corey had informed Officer Faizah of the missing people that had one thing in common—the Enneagram. Officer Faizah had pulled out these missing persons' case files and had spent her evenings poring over them. She had visited their family members to find out more.

The more Officer Faizah probed, the more she realised that Corey could be on to something.

The person who had gone missing most recently was Rebecca Sim. She had been reported missing just five days earlier. Rebecca had been abused by her husband. According to her case file, her husband was the prime suspect in his wife's disappearance. Rebecca

had left him and he had been sending her threats. A colleague had reported Rebecca missing when she stopped turning up for work and could not be contacted. Her colleague was concerned because she knew of Rebecca's history of abuse by her husband. Rebecca's husband had confirmed that Rebecca had had an interest in Enneagram personality typing for years, but she had never attended Samuel Oei's courses. However, while searching through Rebecca's computer, Officer Faizah had discovered that Rebecca had shared posts from Samuel Oei's Learning Technologies on her Facebook page.

Another person who had gone missing was Meryl Stein. She was an American scientist who had disappeared when she was working for Approaches Inc. The company was currently being investigated for their illegal activities. When she looked up Meryl's blog, Officer Faizah had discovered that she had an interest in the Enneagram as well.

Misha Chua was a biologist working at the Tropical Marine Science Institute on St John's Island. There had been no leads in the case of her disappearance. Officer Faizah had spoken to some of her colleagues and

they confirmed that Misha, too, was an Enneagram enthusiast.

Officer Faizah decided to look into these missing people more thoroughly. As she pressed on with her investigations, she found more missing people who were also linked to the Enneagram.

Officer Faizah heard a twig snap. She wasn't alone. Instinctively, she drew out her gun and scanned her surroundings. "Is someone there?" she called out. She was met with dead silence. The air was still. The leaves didn't rustle; neither did the crickets make a sound. Officer Faizah felt sweat dripping down her forehead. She wasn't sure whether she was perspiring from fear or the humidity.

"Hello?" Officer Faizah called again, scanning her surroundings. She could not see anyone. She crept towards where the sound had originated from. Suddenly, something rubbed against her leg. She jumped, but it was only a cat! Officer Faizah heaved a sigh of relief.

Just when she decided to pull out her phone and call in the K-9 unit, she noticed a symbol scratched into the bark of a tree. It was a circle with two lines inside it. It didn't look like the nine-sided star of the

Enneagram that Corey had shown her. Officer Faizah took a snapshot of the symbol on the tree with her phone and texted it to Corey.

As she waited for a reply, she peered behind the tree and she noticed that the ground there had recently been disturbed. The rotting smell was coming from there.

A grave!

CHAPTER 2

“WHAT IS YOUR biggest fear?” Corey asked her brother, Colton. They were visiting Stacy at her new flat at Ang Mo Kio after school. They had changed out of their uniforms. Corey was in beige cropped pants and a white cotton blouse. Colton was wearing jeans and t-shirt.

“My biggest fear is that you’ll find out what my biggest fear is,” Stacy quipped.

“You’re just trying to be funny. Your biggest fear is to become ordinary,” Corey retorted.

“If you’re getting that from the Enneagram,” Stacy responded, “then Colton’s fear is to be controlled.”

“I know what Corey is afraid of,” Colton said. “She’s afraid of the dark, afraid of contracting diseases, afraid of sounding dumb and afraid of losing her best friend.”

“That’s a lot of fears,” Stacy said.

“I got over being afraid of the dark when I was five. You’ll have to keep yourself up-to-date, Brother,” Corey shot back. “And I have come to terms with Stacy moving out.”

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Stacy's parents are alive! But where have they been all these years, and where is her uncle, Samuel Oei? Will Corey, Colton and Stacy solve the Enneagram Killer's riddles and find her parents before it's too late? Find out all the answers in this exciting conclusion to the Triple Nine Sleuths Series.

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“If Alfred Hitchcock’s Three Investigators were reincarnated as Singaporeans, they’d be the Triple Nine Sleuths.”—*The Sunday Times*

**SOMETHING STRANGE IS IN THE AIR:
TREES NEARBY HAVE BEEN CARVED
WITH MYSTIFYING SYMBOLS. COULD
THESE UNCANNY SYMBOLS SHOW STACY
WHERE HER MISSING PARENTS ARE?**

Bodies are found in a shallow grave! The Triple Nine Sleuths know that these victims are all connected to the Enneagram. When Officer Faizah goes missing, Corey, Colton and Stacy team up with Corporal Faris and Officer Liew to track down the killer before time runs out for Officer Faizah.

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ISLAND



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Watch out for
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