



## Connected: A Case of Unique Proximity

**David Random**

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*Connected is a wholly absorbing and spellbinding mystery from the start.*

A unique spin on the common police procedural, *Connected: A Case of Unique Proximity* by David Random is an exciting page turner.

Harvard psychology professor Olek Janko has been brutally murdered. It is seemingly an open-and-shut case: the murderer has outright confessed, and an eyewitness has corroborated his story.

Initially unsure why he is summoned for the case, veteran police detective Joe Antonelli, better known as “the Bull” because of his large stature and tenacity, discovers that the murderer and the eyewitness have a special bond: Gary and Maynard Vaughn aren't just brothers, they're conjoined twins.

With this unprecedented set of circumstances, the legal system struggles to determine a fair verdict that doesn't require the incarceration of an innocent man. Just when it's seemingly clear that no adequate verdict can be reached, an unexpected discovery changes the course of the case.

Not just because of its novel concept, *Connected* clips along nicely, exploring the legal nuances of its truly bizarre case. The plot is believable, with Joe and his protégée Cassie adhering to solid detective work in order to establish the facts and reach their conclusions. The text is also an intriguing look at the inner workings of a sometimes flawed legal system, with insightful commentary on the daily stresses and frustrations that those involved with the law endure for the sake of complete transparency.

Language is alive with concise details and vivid imagery. Scenes and characters are established quickly yet integrate seamlessly into the text. Random's knack for exposition is clear from the start. Maintaining plot so well also adds to the effectiveness of the story, with no clunky introductions to get in the way of the investigation at the heart of the story.

Dialogue keeps with the quick pace of the book, too, and is always useful and necessary. Even seemingly benign conversations become important, both establishing impressive foreshadowing and developing character motives. Once introduced, characters are easy to distinguish from each other, with good characterization aiding the text well.

Though it's seemingly clear from the book's open who committed the murder, *Connected* is still a gripping mystery, supplying more questions as the story unwinds. Details that initially seem unimportant resurface later with amplified meaning, throwing the validity of the whole case into question.

*Connected* is both aesthetically pleasing and well designed. Chapter breaks are chosen well, parlaying the drama of the text. Random avoids the tired approach of ending each chapter on a cliffhanger, instead opting to gradually build off of each section break to a place where a suspenseful moment is especially effective.

*Connected* is a wholly absorbing and spellbinding mystery from the start.

AMANDA ADAMS (May 11, 2017)

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