

FORENSIC AUTOPSY REPORT

CASE NUMBER: 18

Name of the Decedent: Alex Mercer

Age: 29 years old

Sex: Male

Date and Time of Autopsy: 11: 40 P.M. , 13th November 2025

Time of Discovery: 2:15 A.M. , 13th November 2025

PMI: A loud sound (“thud”) was heard at approximately at 2:10 A.M. Given the witness statement and immediate discovery of the body at 2:15 A.M., the time of death is estimated to be at or shortly after 2:10 A.M.

Performed By: R. Amisa, Medical Trainee under Supervision, Moncton Medical Center

Location of Autopsy: Forensic Pathologist Lab, University Medical Teaching Hospital

Authority Requesting Autopsy: Office of Medical Examiner

Summary of Case:

The decedent, a young freelance photographer, was discovered in a narrow alley behind a downtown cafe, lying supine on the ground. Visible signs of violence and disturbance, but not robbery.

Evidence / Observations from Scene:

- A wallet with ID and \$35 in cash
 - Smartphone with fingerprints
 - Partially smoked cigarette near the victim's left hand
 - A blood-stained wooden stick about 18 inches long
 - Faint tire tracks on mud leading to a nearby street
 - The decedent's head was facing east
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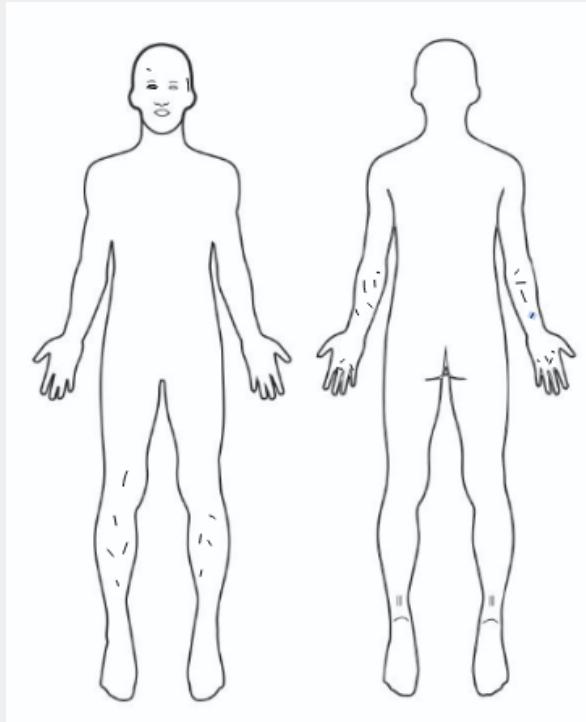
Environmental data:

- Local resident reported hearing a loud thud around 2:10 AM and saw someone in dark clothing running northbound from the alley
 - Visible signs of disturbance: Trash bins overturned, a broken streetlight flickering, A discarded baseball cap nearby
 - Faint graffiti on walls
 - Cobblestone ground
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External Examination:

- **Identifying Information**
 - a. **Apparent Sex:** Male
 - b. **Height:** 5'11"/ 180 cm
 - c. **Weight:** 175 lbs/ 79 kg
 - d. **Build:** Well-nourished and athletic
 - e. **Ethnicity:** Hispanic American
- **Clothing:**
 - a. **Outergarments:**
 - Clad in black hoodie
 - Blue jeans
 - All intact; minor dirt and scuff marks
 - b. **Undergarments:** Present
 - c. **Feet:** Black sneakers
 - d. **Accessories:** None
- **Condition of the Body**
 - **Rigor mortis:** At its peak (around 12 hours) and fixed in all major muscle groups

- **Lividity:** Present on posterior area, fixed, reddish-purple in color; consistent with supine position
 - Lips and fingertips pale with slight cyanosis
 - No sign of putrefaction is observed
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- **External features:**
 - **Hair:** Brown, short, slightly matted from blood
 - **Eyes:** Closed. No conjunctival petechiae or hematoma
 - No piercing, tattoos, birthmark, etc. present
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- **Injuries Noted:**
 - **Head Trauma:**
 - Linear laceration ~4 cm on left temporal region with surrounding contusion (~6 cm diameter).
 - Abrasion on right forehead (~2 cm) consistent with blunt force impact
 - Swelling noted around left eye; periorbital hematoma forming.
 - **Upper Extremities:**
 - Multiple abrasions across knuckles of both hands, suggesting defensive attempts
 - Minor contusion along forearms
 - **Torso:**
 - No penetrating wounds or defensive bruising observed
 - Clothing intact, minor dirt stains consistent with fall
 - **Lower Extremities:**
 - Abrasions on right knee (~3 cm), likely from contact with rough ground
 - Minor contusions on shins



- **Other observations:**

- **Mouth:** No trauma
- **Fingernails:** Short, free of debris
- **Dentition:** Intact, no recent dental work
- **Hair:** Brown, slightly damped from blood
- **External Genitalia:** No evidence of trauma
- No needle/ injection marks/ stab marks observed on any surface

Summary:

Body shows postmortem changes consistent with witness statement External injuries support a death due to blunt force trauma to the head rather than chemical influence. No evidence of sexual assault or major external injury noted.

Internal Examination:

- **Head and Neck:**
 - **Scalp/ Skull:** The scalp revealed a subgaleal hemorrhage over the left temporal region corresponding to the external examination. The skull exhibited a linear, non-depressed fracture approximately 5.5 cm in length extending across the left temporal bone. Upon removal of the calvarium, a left-sided subdural hematoma measuring- 45 mL was present.
 - **Brain:** No infarcts, tumors, or congenital abnormalities observed
 - **Neck Structures:** No fractures of hyoid bone or thyroid cartilage. No foreign material in trachea, no soft tissue hemorrhage.
- **Thorax:**
 - **Heart:** Normal size and shape; coronary arteries patent; no thrombi, myocardium appears normal; valves intact.
 - **Lungs:** Unremarkable
 - **Pleura:** Normal
 - **Ribs/ Thoracic cage:** No trauma or fractures
- **Abdomen:**
 - **Liver:** No lacerations or contusions
 - **Spleen:** No abnormalities
 - **Pancreas:** Unremarkable
 - **Kidneys:** No sign of trauma
 - **Stomach:** No suspicious material discovered
 - **Intestine:** Unremarkable
- **Genitourinary System:** Normal
- **Musculoskeletal System:** Mild soft tissue hemorrhage over forearms consistent with defensive motions or minor impact. No other abnormalities observed

Table 1.

Organ	Weight
Brain	1,380 g
Heart	350 g
Right lung	480 g
Left lung	440 g
Liver	1,520 g
Spleen	160 g
Right kidney	150 g
Left kidney	145 g
Stomach	150 mL (partially digested food; last meal estimated 2-3 hours prior to death, no pill fragments)
Bladder	80 mL of clear urine

Toxicology Report

Specimen Received: Femoral blood, vitreous humour, urine, gastric contents, and liver tissue were submitted.

Analytical Findings:

- **Ethanol (In peripheral blood):** Negative.
- **Common Drugs of Abuse In blood, urine, liver:** Negative for cannabinoids, benzodiazepines, barbiturates, cocaine.
- **Prescription Drugs (In blood):** None detected above therapeutic level (Trace acetaminophen – therapeutic)

- **Carbon Monoxide (In blood):** Negligible (1% saturation)
- **Other Toxicants (In blood/ liver):** No cyanide, carbon monoxide, or heavy metal detected.

Vitreous humor analysis: Electrolytes within normal limits; glucose 90 mg/dL; urea nitrogen normal. No evidence of metabolic derangement or toxic ingestion.

Gastric content:

- Partially digested food consistent with last known meal ~2–3 hours prior to death.
- No pills, toxins, or foreign substances detected.

Interpretation: Toxicology does not appear to be the primary cause of death. No evidence or foul play via chemical agents. The cause of death remains consistent with blunt force trauma.

Discussion:

The decedent, a 29-year old male freelance photographer, was found lying supine in a narrow alley behind a cafe. Evidence from the scene indicates struggle, but not robbery.

External examination revealed several defensive wounds along with multiple lacerations, contusions (Locations: left temporal region, right forehead, left eye, knuckles of both hands, right knee, shins and forearms), and periorbital hematoma. Internal examination was consistent with traumatic blunt force injuries— subgaleal hemorrhage over the left temporal region, linear and non-depressed fracture extending across the left temporal bone, and left-sided subdural hematoma.

Toxicology identified no chemical present to be lethal or significantly deteriorate cognitive ability.

Based on the external, internal, toxicological, and scene findings, death is most consistent with blunt force trauma to the head.

Cause of death: Blunt force trauma to head

Mechanism of Death: Intracranial hemorrhages → increased intracranial pressure → brain herniation → brainstem compression → cardiovascular collapse + respiratory failure → cardiac arrest

Manner of Death: Homicide

Evidence Supporting Homicide:

- No evidence of robbery as the victim's wallet and phone was intact, indicates that he was killed with the intention to murder.
 - Scene findings (Trash bins overturned, a discarded basketball cap nearby, etc.) along with partially smoked cigarette in the victim's hand support that the struggle/violence was a moment of surprise for the victim. Not an accident as the external and internal findings clearly reveal the traumatic blunt force injuries which would not likely happen in a case of accidental death at such a location.
 - The instrument used to injure was the blood-stained wooden stick (18 inches).
 - The murder was possibly planned preemively, suggested by the faint tire marks on mud and the offender wearing dark clothing to conceal themself. (Proved by the witness seeing someone running northbound from the alley)
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Signature

Medical Trainee under Supervision

13th November 2025

Author's Note: This mock autopsy report is based on a fictional case scenario generated using AI, as I do not have access to real forensic cases. The analysis, biological reasoning, and report structure were developed independently. This piece reflects my interest in forensic pathology and my effort to understand mechanisms of death through structured, scientific writing.