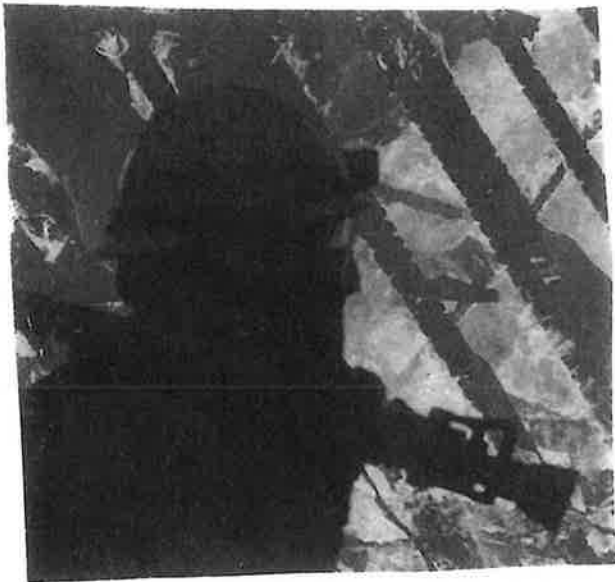


**THE SACTOWN MUTILATOR 2Ed**  
**Special Second Condensed Ed.**

**Olive Nightmare10 DE LANDEN**  
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# THE SACTOWN MUTILATORS : THE OLIVE NIGHTMARE NO 10



By DE LANDEN  
(c 2020 U.S.A.)

## SERIAL KILLER BOOKS BY WRITER DE LANDEN:

Olive Nightmare: Westwood Serial Killer (2015)

ON2: Van Nuys Homeless Serial Killer (2016)

ON3: MARS COLONY Serial Murders (2016)

ON4: Frisco Bay Serial Murders (2017)

ON5: Serial Killers Obscura (2017)

ON6: THE HILLCREST SLASHER (2018)

ON7: Killer Centric Vector (2018)

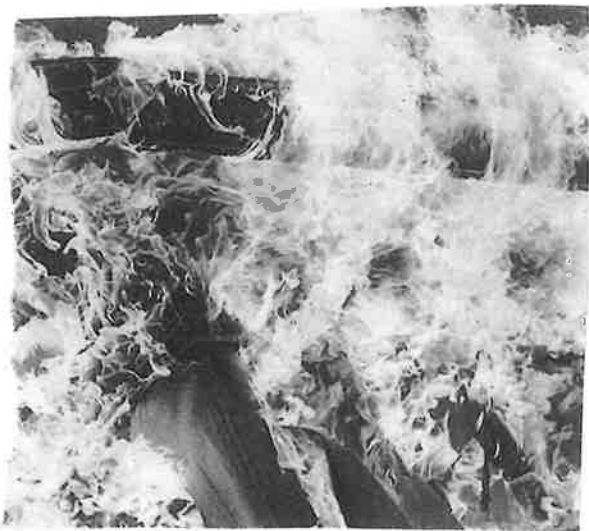
ON8: OC/Phantom Strangler (2019)

ON9: Serial Killers Obscura2 (2019)

ON10: The Sactown Mutilators (2020)

DE Landen is a serial killer, fiction writer. He grew up in L.A., and he attended and graduated from UCLA and WSU law. He spent 10 years researching and writing his books. He lives in San Diego, CA where he continues writing.

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WSPD Headquarters (West Sacramento Police Department) is located at the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and Elm Street in urban west Sacramento, California. It is a three story, modern glass building, built in the late 1990's.

On a busy Monday morning officers, suspects, and the general public come into the building through the front glass door. At the front desk is WSPD Sgt. Anne Shelly, a ten year veteran who prefers office work to being in the field.

"OK ma'am, now what were you saying about your purse?" asks Sgt. Shelly as she sits and types up a police report from an elderly lady who claims she had been robbed.

"Are you deaf? I told you. It was a brown and green purse. Some guy took it when I was in the bathroom" says Mrs. Rothstein, an elderly widow wearing a bright purple sweater.

Suddenly comes a loud, massive explosion that rocks the building and shatters all of the glass on the first floor. Flames burst everywhere, as walls come ripping apart. Gigantic flames burst out as people exit screaming in panic

A man runs out in flames, rolling on the ground in agonizing pain, as his clothes burn him to death. A woman, burning and screaming hysterically, falls down and dies.

Soon, fire and paramedics arrive to help the bloody, burning officers. They carry the wounded, arms and legs dangling, into their vehicles. Electrical fires burst loudly.

" My eyes, I can't see" scream Sgt. Shelly as she runs out of the building, crashing into the glass at the front door.

" Get those fire hoses and hatchets out now!" yells WSFD Fire Chief Scott McVey. Fire engines pull up quickly, along with paramedics who attend to the injured and burned victims.

The fiery inferno at WSPD Headquarters now spreads from the first to the second floor of the building as officers and citizens squirm in agony outside.

The firemen throw their hoses into maximum force and several firemen enter the burning building to pull people out. One fireman runs out, his helmet burnt and melted. Dark clouds engulf the entire area, as a local news copter hovers overhead.

Fortunately for the WSPD, a Coast Guard airplane that was used in the Merced Crest fire, still with fire retardant material in its cargo, takes off from a local airfield and within minutes is dropping the retardant on the WSPD building.

" Thank goodness for that, at least we managed to salvage the third floor" says WSFD Chief McVey.

Firemen scramble back and forth, and more fire crews pull up from Central Sacramento Fire Department.

" Get to that damn main electrical unit and spray it with that chemical ASAP!" orders WSFD Fire Chief McVey.

Over 100 firemen from several local Sacramento fire departments are now on scene fighting the flames. Some using ladder trucks to drench the burning police HQ structure.

One of the firefighters sprays a screaming policeman who comes out of the burning building.

The fire tears through the first floor, as huge flames lick the exterior of the second story. By now whole sections of the second floor begin to collapse.

However, the fire retardant that was dropped by the plane has managed to save the integrity of the third story.

"Hurry up and get everybody out of that first floor NOW!" screams WSFD Chief McVey, as he directs firemen who are scrambling to save officer lives.

Chief McVey orders all hoses directed at the first floor, except for fire ladder hoses that take aim at the second story.

Paramedics scramble back and forth attending to the victims of first, second and third degree burns. Dozens of ambulances come screaming onto the scene.

"Roland! Go off to the main electrical unit and cut off the main power switch if you can," orders Chief McVey.

"Yes sir" replies fireman Mike Roland, as he runs inside.



Police officers scramble frantically out of the burning building, desperate to stay alive. Firemen quickly usher people out, as they all cough from the smoke inhalation.

One officer in uniform runs around, screaming in agony, as his pants burn. A fireman quickly douses him, and a WSFD paramedic escorts him away.

A man is carried out by two firemen, passed out and bleeding. Dozens of other firemen from several local fire departments now roll onto the scene, as news helicopters hover overhead.

The fire quickly tears through the first floor as electrical burst continue. Parts of the first floor roof begin to collapse.

Luckily, the fire retardant chemical dropped by the plane has not only saved the integrity of the third floor, but has also fallen down onto the second story floor, above level 1.

“Hurry up! Get moving! Go, go, go. I want that entire building empty now!” orders WSFD Chief McVey.

Firemen continue spraying the first level from all four sides, as smoke and flames lick the sides of the building on the 2<sup>nd</sup> story.

“Roberts, go around to that parking structure and give me a current status update” shouts WSFD Chief McVey.

“Yes sir” replies fireman Roberts as he runs quickly away.

The annoying sounds of heavy trash containers banging against the roof of a garbage truck awakens Elias "Ed" Ward from his sound sleep. He pulls a sheet over his head and stares at the wood table and clock next to his bed. It is 6:30 a.m.

Elias "Ed": Ward works as a security guard for AmWest Security. He is 5'11" tall, dark hair, clean shaven, early forties. He is also an ex-Army veteran and three years out of the service. His Army buddy, Staff Sgt. Manny "Jonesy" Jones, got him his job at AmWest after he joined AA and got sober.

Ed just finished working a graveyard shift and he's tired. He just finished working and he's tired. He gets up, pours water into a pan, turns on the stove, and then plops two potatoes into the pot to boil.

He eats the two potatoes and then grabs a cup of cold coffee and falls onto his bed to watch T.V. He stares at the yellow and dingy drapes to his small studio apartment, stained from smoking cigars in his unit.

His cell phone goes off as he is watching T.V., and there's a text message saying "Get in here ASAP Ed-Jonesy".

Realizing he is going to have to function on only 5 hours sleep, he turns on the coffee pot, takes a shower, dresses, and gets quickly into his truck to go to the security office.

"Hello Jonesy, what's going on?" asks security officer Ed Ward as he walks into the AmWest security office.

"I suppose you heard about the fire at the police station right?" asks Security Supervisor Manny Jones. Manny is black, early fifties, bald headed, overweight and father of six kids.

"Yeah I saw it on T.V., pretty bad fire" replies Ed.

"Army Reserve is already setting up a temporary hut for the police staff to get reorganized" says Manny.

"So why did you call me in on my day off?" asks Ed.

"You have a new post tonight. You are covering for Sylvia at the industrial plant" says Supervisor Jones.

"Why is she sick?" asks Ed, curiously.

"No she's just....unavailable" says Supervisor Jones.

Ed sits on Manny's desk and leans over, looking him straight in the face.

"Cut the bullshit. I've known you too long. What's really going on?" asks Ed.

"OK. Have it your way. Sylvia is dead. She died last night. The cops are there doing an investigation" says Security Supervisor Manny Jones.

"Dead? Are you kidding? She's only 38" says Ed.

“ I can’t discuss it...and we never had this conversation OK” says Manny pulling out blank security logs.

“ When do I start?” asks Ed, standing up.

“ In one hour, here’s some logs, and here’s the address to the post. The other guard will give you the 411. Do not talk to the cops that are there understand?” says Manny, handing Ed the security logs.

“ Yes sir” says Ed, grabbing the logs and walking outside to his truck.

Just then Larry Brooks, the Swing Shift Supervisor, walks slowly by Ed.

“ I suppose that you heard about Sylvia Gomez?” asks Larry as he stops next to Ed.

“ Yeah. What the hell happened?” asks Ed.

“ I was the one who found the body. I went to check on her. She wasn’t at her guard post at the gate so I went to the furnace room. It was really dark in there. Then I found her body. She was stabbed in her stomach, chest, and neck. Her head was chopped off, lying in a pool of blood. Burn marks on her fingers and legs” says Larry, shaking his head.

“ It’s like an arrow through my heart. I really liked Sylvia, she always gave me cookies at staff meetings” says Ed.

Ed Ward pulls into the Carthage Industrial Plant, an old, abandoned factory with lots of heavy equipment still in it. He waves to Kyle, the guard at the post he is going to relieve.

“Hi Kyle, how are you?” asks Ed.

“Not good. Still can’t believe Sylvia died. It’s been a horrible 24 hours, what with the fire at the cop shop and now this” says Kyle, a young, part-time guard who goes to college.

“Yeah I know. I see the cops are over there working” says Ed, pointing to the two uniformed officers putting yellow tape and taking pictures. A CSI officer enters the furnace building with a white box and wearing white gloves.

“OK. Here’s the keys and the logs, got to go, it’s my girlfriend’s birthday” says Kyle. He gets on his bike and rides off.

A few hours later, Ed is going over Sylvia’s logs, cautiously eyeing the police. A white “Supervisor” truck pulls up and Ed smiles.

“Are you doing OK?” asks Manny Jones, handing Ed a cup of fresh coffee from the donut shop.

“It’s just weird and spooky, you know. I mean I keep thinking about it. All that time in the Army, never a death. Now I’m out and have to face this” says Ed.

“We will all miss her. Police station has 2-3 deaths from the fire, about ten in ICU. Bad shit” says Supervisor Manny .

WSPD Detectives Terry Hill and Reed Nelson are sitting in folding chairs in front of a metal desk in the make-shift hut put up by the Army Reserve in a field across the street from the burned out police building.

WSPD Det. Terry Hill is an old hippie type who decided to quit working database for the federal government and joined law enforcement. He still plays guitar on occasional gigs. He's in his mid-forties, short brown hair, a moustache, and deep brown eyes. An ex-Navy vet, he loves to go sailing.

WSPD Det. Reed Nelson grew up on a ranch in Montana and is an avid hunter with an extensive gun collection. He is in his early fifties, short grayish hair and wears glasses. He is also the proud father of a USC Medical student, his daughter Kim.

"All right.. I have enough to worry about right now so make this homicide meeting quick" says Captain Ashby, as police staff scatter about the hut bringing in files and furniture from the burned out building.

"Sylvia Gomez, a guard for Am West Security, age 38. Multiple stab wounds, gaping neck wounds, chest stabbed 16 times, burn marks on her fingers and legs" says Det. Nelson.

"What do you think it was?" asks Capt Ashby.

"She probably came up on an burglar that came in there looking to steal and he killed her" says Det. Hill.

“ What kind of weapon do you think it was?” asks Captain Ashby, leaning back in his favorite leather chair he managed to salvage from his office.

“ I would say a sword, or maybe a machete” says WSPD Det. Reed Nelson.

“ From the looks of the gaping hole around the neck, and the chest stab wounds, I’d say he used two different weapons. A sword or machete like Reed said, and then maybe a scalpel or surgical instrument “ says WSPD Det. Terry Hill looking closely at the Coroner’s pictures

“ Could even be a bayonet right there” says Det.Nelson

“ Excuse me Captain, but here’s the current WestView Hospital report you asked for” says Officer Maybry, putting a file folder on the Captain’s desk.

“Thank you Maybry. OK well ...I have my hands full right now with all the hell from the fire. Arson team finally is working on where the fire originated and what started it. Go talk to relatives, co-workers, the usual and see if anybody wanted her gone. Maybe Hill is right, and it’s just a botched burglary” says Capt. Ashby.

Captain Ashby is in his late fifties, gray hair, balding, short, thin, and 2 years from retirement. He worked his way up the ranks and is an ex-Army military policeman.

WSPD Detective Reed Nelson is driving back to the makeshift WSPD HQ after taking three injured officers to WestView Hospital.

As he's driving, he is listening to the police calls regarding the fire, as well as 911 calls. Besides the fire talk, there's the normal daily bullshit: shoplifting, drunk in public, domestic violence.

Suddenly he hears a call to a 911 dispatcher.

"Hey I need help there's a guy in the donut shop with a gun on Mr. Kim" says the excited caller.

"Which donut shop sir?" asks the 911 dispatch.

"Sunny's Donuts on Walnut Street" replies the man.

"This is Det. Nelson, I'm 3 blocks from that POS, send backup now!" orders Detective Nelson to 911 dispatch.

As Det. Nelson swerves his unmarked cruiser onto the sidewalk he sees a man outside Sunny's Donuts with a cell phone.

"Det. Nelson, WSPD, where is he?" asks Det. Nelson, drawing his 45 pistol from his holster.

"He ran down that alley over there" says the old man.

Det. Nelson speeds down the sidewalk, turns a sharp right, and runs down the alley as a black and white vehicle now follows him.



In the makeshift hut donated by the local National Guard unit, across from the burning police station, WSPD Joseph Ashby tries to calm down a highly excited Mayor on the other end of his telephone.

" Yes sir, I'm aware that a burning police station looks bad on T.V., but fight now I've got 3 confirmed deaths, 11 officers in ICU, and several people missing" says Capt. Ashby.

" Sir, sorry to bother you, but we have a another new homicide incident" says WSPD Terrance "Terry" Hill.

" Will you please shut up Hill! I'm on the phone with the Mayor," says Captain Ashby sternly.

" Oh, well sorry sir," whispers Det. Hill.

" Hello Mayor? Yes well the fire chief assures me that we will have 50% containment before sunrise tomorrow. Yes, sir, I'll get you that list of damage assets for the insurer" says Capt Ashby as he hangs up the cell.

" Sir, about that new homicide. This is Mr. Fernando Lopez of Lopez Tree Service. He was on Montgomery Street doing work, when he turned on the shredder, blood, bones, and human tissue came flying out. Apparently there was a human body stuffed in the chute" says Det. Hill.

" OK get back there.,talk to neighbors, witnesses, get CSI going on processing. I have my hands full Hill" says Capt Ashby.

"Yes sir," replies WSPD Det. Terry Hill.

"By the way, was there any physical evidence found around the shredder like a purse, wallet, ring, jewelry, clothing, anything at all?" asks Captain Ashby.'

"Negative sir, nothing so far except the torn and frayed female body parts" replies Det. Hill.

"All right, go back there and while CSI continues processing the scene, talk to some neighbors. Mr. Lopez, don't you clean out your machine every day?" asks Capt. Ashby.

"Yes sir, I wash it down every night after I park it in front of my house" replies Mr. Lopez politely.

"How about the shredder chute?" asks Capt Ashby.

"Well sir its fairly new, I bought it only 2 months ago, and the blades are still sharp. Truthfully, I only clean it very closely on the weekends when I'm off working" says Mr. Lopez.

"All right Hill, go earn your paycheck" says Capt Ashby.

"Yes sir" replies Det. Hill as he and Mr. Lopez exit the WSPD HQ hut. As they walk out, two news helicopters hover over the burning building, as local reporters are still on the sidewalk discussing the fire on live TV, trying to get a fireman interview.

Back in the HQ hut, Capt. Ashby takes a well- deserved coffee break and pours himself a fresh cup of gourmet java.

Ed Ward is making his 3:00 a.m. perimeter rounds at the gate surrounding the old furnace plant. In his mind he ponders the irony of 12 years in the U.S., military without experiencing combat or death, and then in the past 24 hours the burning of the police station, dead officers, and the apparent murder of his fellow guard.

As he walks slowly around the inner part of the gate in the darkness and light fog he sees the back of a man swathed in blankets and a shirt sleeping by the outer fence on the sidewalk.

"Hey you. Wake up. Can't sleep here buddy" says Ed as he flashed his flashlight on the man.

The old man turns around. He is bearded, grizzled, and bleary eyed. He rubs his eyes and stares at Ed.

"Where's that cute female guard?" he asks.

"She's not here I am. You got to move" says Ed.

"I saw those cops, did they find my coin jar?" says the man, as he puts his blankets in the cart.

"I don't know, but if they do I'll let you know" says Ed.

"OK. My names Charlie. See you around asshole" says the old man as he slowly walks away down the street.

"My names Ed. Have a good night and stay safe" says Ed.

Confusion reigns supreme at the WSPD temporary hut HQ. Captain Joe Ashby welcomes officer Al Mabry to his newly sectioned-off with dividers small office.

Captain Ashby is short, slim, balding, wears glasses and is in his 50's. Married with 2 kids and 2 grandkids, he is an avid deep sea fisherman. He has cool judgment, and is rarely mad.

"You have the latest hospital report Mabry?" asks Captain Ashby, leaning back in his favorite chair.

"Yes sir, right here" says Officer Mabry, as he hands a yellow envelope to the Captain.

Mabry is black, tall, stocky, a former high school defensive lineman, and an ex-Army MP. His wife knows the Captain's wife.

Captain Ashby quickly opens the envelope. A look of sheer frustration on his face as he slowly reads the contents:

"Three dead officers, all died of first degree burns, Carter, Diaz, and Zlyzinski. 9 victims in ICU with life threatening burns, and 27 people in the hospital from either burns or smoke inhalation" says Captain Ashby as he goes over the hospital report.

"Yes sir it's very bad, it's horrible. But at least we save 87% of the WSPD department, and a lot of other lives" says Officer Mabry, trying to cheer Capt. Ashby up.

"OK Mabry. Go and get Det. Hill and do the next of kin notification right away on the 3 deaths" says Capt. Ashby.

" All units to the corner of 16<sup>th</sup> and Maple. Manager at Eagle A1 Supply states there's a man in the store with a blow torch in his hand" says the voice of the WSPD .

" Unit 5 copy" replies Officer Miller, as he and Officer Mabry drive their patrol vehicle quickly downtown with lights blaring. They park and quickly enter the front door, as the Manager guides them and points out the gentleman.

" Drop it! Hands in the air! Get on the ground now! Orders Officer Miller, as Officer Mabry grabs the man's hands, and puts his hands behind his back to cuffs him.

The man is dressed in a dark black uniform, with a black cap. He is thin, in his forties, and has a long beard. He carefully places the torch next to him on the floor.

" What's the matter officers?" asks the confused man.

" What the hell are you doing in here with a blowtorch? " asks Officer Miller, as Officer Mabry frisks him.

" I work for Johnson Welding. See, my name tag is on the shirt" says the man, looking down to his shirt pocket.

" You didn't answer my question WHY did you bring the blowtorch in? You know about the big fire?" asks Officer Miller.

" It has a special brand of fluid on the label and I brought it in to see if I could find that special fluid. Read the label" says the man. Miller reads the label. "Uncuff this idiot" says Miller.

Ed Ward walks his perimeter around the apartment building as a light fog slowly drifts in. It's about 2:35 a.m. and, as he approaches the driveway into the parking structure, he notices a man pouring water from the apartment building valve into a plastic bottle.

"Hey! What are you doing?" asks Ed as he shines his flashlight into the man's face.

"Just getting me some water so I can wash up and shave a bit. Who's that?" asks the man, who Ed now recognizes as Charlie, the homeless man, with his cart.

"It's me Ed, the guard. OK, I don't really mind that, but it's time for you to stop pouring and leave now, OK?" asks Ed.

"OK. Hey, what's the latest on that police station fire?" asks Charlie, as he bends over and turns off the water.

"I don't know except for the fact that a couple of officers might not make it" says Ed.

"It never occurred to that idiot police chief that a serial killer would burn down the cop shop before he went off on his killing spree did it?" asks Charlie, smiling.

"Probably not. How do you know it was a serial killer?" asks Ed.

"I have a hunch about these things. I'm an ex-Army guard myself buddy" says Charlie, pushing his cart and leaving.

Reverend Peter Holstead parks his car and walks into the WSPD temporary HQ hut.

“ May I see the Captain?” asks Rev. Holstead.

“ I’m sorry reverend but the Captain is in a meeting with the fire chief, mayor, and FBI and ATF right now downtown” says Sgt. Raul Rivera.

“ OK well I brought 50- \$10 gift CoffeeMAX gift cards for your staff. Hopefully it will cheer them up” says Rev. Holstead.

“ Oh well, thank you very much. I will take them and pass them out to everyone once I get approval from the Captain. Thank you very much reverend” says Sgt. Rivera as he grabs the little bag full of gift cards.

“ Hello Reverend, nice to see you” says WSPD Det. Reed Nelson, who goes to Rev. Holstead’s church.

“ Hello Reed, nice to see you alive. Sorry to hear about the 3 dead officers” says Rev. Holstead.

“ Look at what the reverend brought us 50 gift cards for!” says Sgt. Rivera holding up the bag.

“ Sweet, thank you reverend. I know that everyone in the department will really appreciate this” says Det. Nelson

“ It’s the least the church can do to help” says Rev. Holstead, smiling.

WSPD Detective Terry Hill glides his Ford Crown Vic onto the quiet residential street in urban West Sacramento. He parks behind a tree shredder truck and exits his vehicle.

A dog barks loudly, his nose protruding from a cracked, white, wooden fence. Two WSPD uniformed police officers are putting yellow tape around the tree shredder vehicle, as people across the street stand, stare, and point. WSPD Officer Chris Miller slowly walks toward Det. Hill.

“Nelson’s not on this one?” asks Det. Hill.

“No sir. I heard he’s still working on the security guard homicide” replies Officer Miller.

“OK, so what have you got?” asks Det. Hill.

“Not much. As you know, Mr. Lopez originally called it in. They were having coffee when they detected a strange odor coming from the chute. That’s when they found the shredded human bones and tissue in the chute” says Officer Miller.

“You cleared Mr. Lopez yet?” asks Det. Hill.

“Yeah, he checks out. Everybody knows him” says Miller.

“I don’t care, he’s still a potential suspect. Any identifying evidence about the victim?” asks Det. Hill looking at the chute.

“No sir. No wallet, clothing, nothing,” says Officer Miller.



It is a bitter cold and drizzly Monday night in Sacramento, and at the corner of 18<sup>th</sup> and Main in downtown Sacramento, a man in a trench coat, hat, and sunglasses goes to a local pay phone to make a call.

"Hello this is python. Did you get the photos?" asks the man. On his left hand there's a bandage where he was cut.

"Yes I did ,but they were not very clear. You need a better camera lens" says the voice of a female on the line.

"I can do that" says the man at the pay phone.

"And I said remove the organs, not just stab or shred them, understand me?" orders the elderly female voice.

"Yes I do understand. I'll get a better lens and make sure the next one loses parts" says the man at the pay phone.

"And take better close- ups. I want to see the blood and the torn organs" says the female voice.

"OK. I'm off to build the camera. I'll call you as soon as the next 'project' is done" says the man at the pay phone.

"How soon before the next project?" asks the voice.

"Probably 2 days" says the man at the pay phone.

"See to it then," says the voice of the elderly woman, A sharp click is heard as she hangs up. The man puts the receiver down and walks off into the dark, cold, and drizzly night.

WSPD Asst. Captain Russ Buell enters the makeshift HQ hut and walks into Capt. Ashby's divided-office. Russ Buell is a transfer from the Sheriff's Office, preferring to work at metro.

Captain Ashby is on his phone talking to the fire chief.

"So what's the fire pattern looking like Mac?" asks Captain Ashby as he stares at reports of officer injuries.

He listens intently and then hangs up the phone.

"OK, thanks Mac. Just make sure your people put the tarps on everything in order to preserve as much evidence as possible...Yes I'm aware the high winds come at night. Just do the best you can, thanks" says WSPD Capt. Ashby as he hangs up the phone and grabs his coffee mug.

"You wanted to see me sir?" asks Asst. Capt Buell.

"Yes. The fire pattern, according to Mac, suggests arson. There are no 'V' burns and there's multiple fire locations. Who's charge of the fire scene right now?" asks Capt Ashby.

"Lt Harris sir" answers Asst. Capt. Buell.

"I want you and Harris to block all access to the HQ building. Nobody in or out except fire and arson, understand?" asks Capt. Ashby.

"Yes sir. We're already checking to burnt out back parking lot for DNA, prints, fibers, and evidence. But its tough going with the fire damage" says Asst Capt Buell.

WSFD Arson Investigator Ron Moore takes a few more puffs from his cigarette outside the WSPD Temp HQ, puts out his cigarette, and then walks into the hut.

" Hello Ron, was that you smoking up a storm out there?" asks WSPD Captain Ashby, looking up from his desk.

" Yeah, it was, why Captain?" asks Arson Investigator WSFD Arson Moore.

" I don't get it. An arson investigator who smokes" says Capt Ashby, giving the arson investigator a quizzical look.

" It's a strange world isn't it?" asks Arson Investigator Moore, smiling broadly.

" So what have you got for me so far?" asks Capt. Ashby.

" I think I detected paraffin coming from the snarled and melted generator on the second floor" says Investigator Moore.

" Paraffin? Are you joking?" asks Capt Ashby.

" Paraffin is an alkaline hydrocarbon commonly used as a mineral oil in cosmetics. It has a barely detectable odor, but is extremely flammable" says Arson Investigator Moore.

" You really think paraffin was used?" asks Capt Ashby.

" Possibly a cigarette tied to pillow material, squirt some paraffin on it and BOOM!" says Investigator Moore.

" Well it is possible, but I don't buy it" says Capt Ashby

Det. Terry Hill walks across the large, temporary WSPD HQ hut from the Homicide Section, past the Robbery Division, and walks to an area marked "Vice/Sex Crimes".

There he spots WSPD Christina Morro busy multitasking. She's on the phone, while typing on the laptop, and handing her card to a black "street girl", who promptly leaves.

"Hi Christina," says Det. Terry Hill, approaching her desk.

"Hold on a sec Terry" says Det. Morro, holding up a finger.

"OK, no worries Christina" says Det. Hill smiling.

"Yes, yes I understand. OK thanks, goodbye. Sorry Terry, but one of my girls just OD'd on heroin and downers," says Det. Morro, shaking her head.

"Sorry to hear that. Say, I was wondering if you wouldn't mind asking a few of your street girl informants if they know anything about the recent homicides?" asks Det. Hill.

"Well, you have to understand Terry that the reason I'm on good terms with these girls is that everything they tell me is strictly confidential. Plus, if there's a crazy killer out there, they probably might be reluctant to talk to me" says Det. Morro.

"I understand Christina, but could you ask?" says Det. Hill.

"OK, I'll talk to a few of the girls and I'll tell you if I find out anything. Only for you Terry," says Det. Morro, sipping coffee.

It is a crisp, clear Monday evening and Ed Ward is taking advantage of his day off. After seeing a movie, he drives his old red beater Ford truck to a local park and stops in the parking lot. He gets out of the truck and enters the large recreation room next to a few tennis courts.

Monday nights are when Ed Ward has his regularly scheduled AA meetings. Outside a few people are smoking and greet him as he enters.

Ed walks inside and goes to the table that has coffee and donuts. He gobbles a donut, and walks back outside to smoke his pipe.

“ So how’s it going Eddy?” asks Richie Santiago, an old friend who grew up in the same neighborhood of L.A. as Ed.

“ Not good. One of our security guards was killed. And then there’s that disaster at the cop shop” says Ed sipping coffee.

“ Yeah I heard about the fire. Didn’t hear about a security guard getting killed yet” says Richie, smoking some weed.

“ Well I can’t discuss it yet because we have to wait to notify all her next of kin, you understand right?” says Ed.

“ Yeah that’s OK. Just tell me when you want. Come on let’s get one more donut before they are all gone” says Richie.

“ Your’e right, et’s go” replies Ed.

Ed and Richie finish smoking and walk back into the rec room. As Ed and Richie are chatting by the donut table, a blond haired woman comes up behind Ed and taps him on the shoulders.

“ Karla? What are you doing here?” asks Ed, surprised.

“ You forgot. This is the once a month mixed meeting with females. Don’t worry I won’t bite, unless you want me to” says Karla, smiling.

“ Oh, that’s kinky I love it!” says Richie laughing.

Karla-Lee Baxter is blond, late thirties, divorced with one child. She has long blond hair in a ponytail, and blue-green eyes. She is originally from Michigan, but moved to California after her divorce.

“ Oh yeah, this is Richie. He’s an old friend from my neighborhood where I grew up” says Ed pointing to Richie.

“ Nice to meet you Karla” says Richie, smiling.

As they chat, more females enter the room as the speaker gets up to the podium to begin the AA meeting.

“ So how;ls it going at that halfway house Karla?” asks Ed.

“ Terrible. Some stupid bitch was up all night yelling and screaming that the aliens were going to kill her” says Karla.

A tall, bald, thin man in a crisp blue suit, wearing a Sheriff's badge, walks into the WSPD hut and is pointed by an officer to where Captain Ashby's area is.

" Captain Ashby?" asks the man, as he enters the area.

" Yes, how may I help you?" asks Capt. Ashby, looking up from the files on his desk.

" I'm Gilbert Capizzi, the WSSD Sheriff's Forensic Science Director" says the man, sitting down.

" Oh yes, I was told you were coming with the DNA analysis from the body fluids and tissue. Thanks for helping us out, as you can see our lab was burned down" says Capt. Ashby.

" Thank you. Here is the report on both victims" says Forensic Director Cappizi.

" OK let's see here. It says on victim No.1, Sylvia Gomez, 'foreign dna-negative'" says Capt. Ashby.

" Correct but on the second victim we did discover minute body fluid. Unfortunately, using the STA method, we failed to get any hit on our database or the FBI's" says Director Capizzi.

" Too bad. Well, it looks like no luck on the DNA analysis, but thanks again for helping us out" says Captain Ashby.

" No problem, and I was told to tell you that the Sheriff's Department lab is always at your disposal and use" says Director Capizzi, getting up and shaking Capt. Ashby's hand.

"What are you working on Captain?" asks WSPD Det. Terry Hill as he enters the temporary, makeshift hut of the police HQ and walks into the Captain's divided off office.

"Arson made this algorithm that predicts what was the actual cause of the fire and who the arsonist might be" replies Capt. Ashby, reading a chart intensely.

"Really? That's very scientific" replies Det. Hill smiling.

"Your'e back already?" asks Capt. Ashby, skeptically.

"Yes sir. Not much more I can do right now. The neighbors where the tree shredder was parked before the body was found said they didn't hear or see anything unusual" says Det. Hill.

"Has CSI got an ID on the body yet?" asks Capt. Ashby.

"I don't know, they're too busy to call me back" says Det. Hill, as he looks at his cell phone.

"That tree trimmer seems like a pretty badly frightened man" says Capt. Ashby.

"He was afraid I was going to deport him" says Det. Hill.

"So we officially have two homicides since the fire" says Capt. Ashby.

"Yes sir. The security guard murder, Det Nelson is on it, and now my tree-shredder case" replies Det. Hill.



“ So do you mind telling me how the hell those body parts got into the chute without anybody seeing anything?” asks Captain Ashby, sipping coffee from his cup.

“ Well sir from what I understand Mr. Lopez parks the shredder out on the street, not on his property. And he doesn’t have an actual business office” says Det. Hill.

“ Probably doesn’t have a business license either. He doesn’t wash the shredder every day after he uses it?” asks Capt. Ashby.

“ Well sir, like he said, he can usually go 3-4 days with washing down the machine. He says it saves money on his water bill to wash only on the weekend” says Det. Hill.

“ What about the neighbors where he lives?” asks Captain Ashby.

“ I was able to talk to two of them. One older lady said she heard a dog barking the night before the murder. And then a man said he thought he heard a gate slam, could have been the small metal gate that’s on the shredder truck” says Det. Hill.

“ Stay on it Hill and keep digging” says Capt. Ashby.

“ Yes sir. I’m going back to the murder scene now” says Hill, as he exits the office.

“ Captain, it’s the hospital on the line. One of the 7 officers who was in ICU just died” says Officer Mabry.

Captain Ashby gets on the inter-office line and gets more bad news. Not only has he lost another officer, but two prisoners died from smoke inhalation. He knows their families are going to sue the department.

"How's it going Joe" says WSFD Chief McVey as he enters Captain Ashby's little office.

"Horrible. Lost another officer, and two other people. Just got off the line with the hospital. Got any more news on the fire?" asks Capt. Ashby.

"I have the most recent sit-rep on the building: First floor all rubble and melted, except the steel girders. A few areas are collapsed in. The basement is gone. Second floor, all interior is reduced to rubble but some machinery is intact. Third floor, miraculously is 80% intact. The plane saved it" says WSFD Chief McVey.

"Yeah I saw the carbonization of the metal on the first floor. Any idea where the place of origin was?" asks Captain Ashby.

"Arson suspects it was the back entrance from the parking structure" says Fire Chief McVey.

"Really? Not the front entrance?" asks Capt. Ashby, a bit surprised.

"Found some burnt out pillow stuffing fibers, but they are doing a more intense analysis at the FBI lab" says Chief McVey

WSPD Homicide Det. Reed Nelson glides his black Ford Crown Vic into the small parking lot of the Mt. Shasta Electrical Co in West Sacramento.

He exits his vehicle, grabs a clipboard, and walks to the front entrance and enters.

"I'm here to see Woody Randall. Arthur Randall" says Det. Nelson, as he flashes a badge to the young lady at the counter.

"You're in luck, he just came back from a job" says the girl turning around and yelling "Woody you've got a visitor".

A tall, slim man in blue overalls, cap and glasses comes out, holding a screwdriver.

"Your'e Woody?" asks Det Nelson flashing his badge again.

"Yes sir, how can I help you?" asks Woody.

"You live at 1557 Oak? You know a Sylvia Lopez?" asks Det. Nelson.

"Yes sir. She's been my neighbor for about 8 years now" replies Woody, wiping his screwdriver with a handkerchief.

"You know her ex-husband Chris?" asks Det Nelson.

"Yes. He's a no good, drug addict, car thief. She can do better. I'm glad she divorced him. He was either high or drunk all the time. He beat he up once or twice" says Woody.

"Really. You met him personally?" asks Det. Nelson.

“ Yeah I met him a few times. He’s loud, belligerent, likes to brag about what he knows about cars and such” says Woody.

“ We’ve been looking for him. Know where I might find him?” asks Det. Nelson.

“ Well, he used to hang out at this bar down by 7<sup>th</sup> Street in downtown. There was a stripped bar across the street” says Woody.

“ Do you know which bar, there’s three or four in that area?” asks Det. Nelson.

“ No, sorry, I can’t remember” says Woody.

“ When was the last time you saw him?” asks Det. Nelson.

“ A month before she kicked him out. He got arrested for DUI for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time and she got fed up. She had to change all the locks and get a restraining order,” says Woody.

“ Did it work?” ask Det. Nelson.

“ No. He broke the lock with a drill and came in and beat he while she was sleeping. But Sylvia had a gun under her pillow and he ran out of there like a scared rabbit” says Woody, as he and the young girl start laughing.

“ OK Thanks for your help. Here’s my card, if you happen to hear where I can find Chris give me a call OK” says Det. Nelson

" This is Karly Brown KSAC News live from the West Sacramento Police Headquarters where the fire has been 90% contained" says the pretty, young black reporter facing a news cameraman on the sidewalk in front of the burnt out building.

" I am with Fire Chief McVey, Chief can you give us an update on the fire at the police station" says KSAC reporter brown, holding her microphone under the Chief's neck.

" Yes well the fire, as you can see behind us, is almost out. We have extensive damage to the first and second floor, but thanks to the retardant from the plane, the third floor is OK" say Chief McVey.

" Any idea as to how many were killed or injured Chief?" asks WSAC reporter Karly Brown.

" Well I'm not positive but we have two or three unofficially reported deaths from the hospital. About two dozen people are hospitalized with severe burns or smoke inhalation" says the fire chief.

" Any idea what could have started the fire?" asks Ms. Brown.

" I'm not going to speculate on it , but I can tell you that the arson investigators are working on it" says Chief McVey.

" OK well there you have it. This is Karly Brown KSAC live" says Ms Brown.

Det. Terry Hill parks his unmarked vehicle a block from Mr. Lopez's house, exits and walks to a next door neighbor. He rings the doorbell and waits for a response. A small child in pajamas answers the door.

"Hi I'm Detective Hill is your father home?" asks Det. Hill.

"Dad the cops are here!" yells the young girl.

A short, fat, bald man in pajama pants and T-shirt answers the door and pushes his daughter away.

"Yes, come on in please" says the man as he guides Det. Hill into the living room of his home.

"Thank you Mr. Ortega. You remember me and Mr. Lopez talking with you before?" asks Det. Hill.

"Yes I remember" says Mr. Ortega pulling up his shorts.

"You told me you heard a sound like 'a metal gate slamming' correct?" asks Det. Hill.

"Yes. I was sleepy, but it sounds metal" says Mr. Ortega.

"I noticed all of the gates on the block are wooden gates" says Det. Hill.

"Yes. I mean my house is wood and so is Mr. Lopez's house" says Mr. Ortega scratching himself.

"Did you see or hear anything else?" asks Det. Hill.

"No that's it. Sorry I can't help you" says Mr. Ortega.

“Come to pick up your paycheck?” asks Supervisor Manny Jones as Ed Ward enters the AmWest Security office.

“That was the idea” says Ed Ward, smiling.

“How’s it going at your new industrial plant post?” asks Supervisor Jones.

“It’s kind of spooky Jonesy. I mean, just walking around there all night in the dark, and thinking about Sylvia getting murdered there, it really affects me,” says Ed Ward.

“Just do your job. I’ll try to get you replaced as soon as I can. Here’s your paycheck” says Supervisor Jones, handing Ed an envelope.

“Thanks. Hear anything more from the cops about her murder?” asks Ed.

“No, nothing. They are up to their eyeballs in recovering from that fire, so it’s going to be a while” says Supervisor Jones.

“If you want to work this Sunday you’ll get overtime” says Larry, Shift Manager, looking at a chart on his clipboard.

“This Sunday? OK, put me down” says Ed, thinking about the extra money he could get.

“OK you’re on shift” says Larry, smiling.

“Thanks, see you later” says Ed as he leaves the office. He heads over to the liquor store, and cashes his new paycheck.

“ Hello Joseph I’ve brought you lunch” says Laura Ashby, Captain Ashby’s wife, as she enters his little partitioned office.

“ Well this is a real treat” says Captain Ashby, grinning.

“ Look at that desk. How do you get any work done?” asks Mrs. Ashby. Laura Ashby is 47 year old. She married the Captain when he was just in the academy, starting off. She is a short, plump brunette, Irish, with freckles and fair skin.

“ Sorry but the fire made everything a mess” says Captain Ashby as he gets up and gives his wife a kiss.

“ Come on let’s go outside and eat, it’s a beautiful day today” says Mrs. Ashby.

“ OK, if you insist” says Captain Ashby as he follows Mrs. Ashby to a small doggy park where they sit on a small bench and eat lunch.

“Here, have a pickle. So how is the recovery going?” asks Mrs. Ashby, as she hands Captain Ashby some more food.

“ Very slowly. When I think of the 3 dead officers, to die like that, trapped and burned, it’s a horrible,” says Capt. Ashby.

“ They are in heaven now dear. Just help the officers that are still on earth” says Mrs. Ashby, sipping some tea.

“ Thanks for bringing me lunch. I also have 11 officers in extensive psychotherapy” Says Capt Ashby.



It's a hazy, overcast Saturday afternoon at the makeshift WSPD HQ hut and a tired Captain Ashby sits at his desk going over fire, hospital, and homicide reports.

Sitting directly in front of Captain Ashby are Det. Terry Hill, Det. Reed Nelson, and Lt. Sharon White.

"Hill, Nelson, this is our Lt. Sharon White from Robbery Division. Due to the fire, and the manpower shortage I have reassigned her to Homicide Division" says Captain Ashby.

"Welcome to Homicide" says Det. Hill, smiling.

"Thank you sir. Thank you Captain" says Lt. White.

Lt. Sharon White is a 12-year veteran of the Robbery Division. An ex-navy petty officer, she's a no-nonsense cop, like her father was. She is tall, thin, black and humorless

"Nelson, what's the latest on the AmWest security guard homicide?" asks Capt. Ashby.

"When I arrived at the Furnace Building last time one of the cleaning people gave me an earring they found stuck on the floor. I guess CSI missed it. May be the victim's, or it may be the killer" says Det. Nelson.

"Yes, or anybody else in the world. Did you get a lab analysis on it yet?" asks Capt. Ashby

"They're working on it" replies Det. Reed Nelson.

It's Thursday morning around 6:30 a.m. and Arturo Flores hears church bells ringing as he walks down Arbor Street to his tiny flower shop. Arturo is in his late 50's, short, bearded and wears his trademark green cap.

He reaches his flower shop and pulls up the metal. He turns off the alarm system. He pulls out a glass refrigerated case, and pulls out a large wooden shelf on wheels.

He rolls the cart out to the sidewalk, and begins placing flowers on it. A woman in an SUV with 3 children rolls by.

"Hi Arturo. Don't forget the picnic Sunday" says the woman as she waves to him.

"OK. I'll tell Irma. Thank you" says Arturo, Waving back.

Detective Terry Hill drives up next in his unmarked Crown Vic and stops. He exits and approaches Arturo.

"Hi Art. How are you?" asks Det Hill, looking at the all the pretty flowers.

"Oh very fine Terry. How can I help you today?" ask Arturo

"Well I need some flowers for Sgt Shelly. Anne is in the hospital right now" says Det. Hill looking around.

"Oh...I'm sorry to hear that. I know all about that terrible fire. Here, have some roses on me. And when you get to the hospital tell her I said hello" says Arturo.

It's Monday morning around 11 a.m. and Ed Ward enters his local CoffeeMAX, only 3 blocks from his home. He enters, and immediately waves to A.J., a black third year, law student, working on his laptop.

"Hi AJ. How's it going?" asks Ed as he orders a coffee.

"Oh, you know. They have me doing all these insane interrogatories and other intense legal things" says AJ, looking up and smiling.

"Well keep at it. The bar exam is getting pretty close isn't it?" asks Ed, sitting down at a nearby table and sipping his coffee.

"That's right. I'm taking the January bar exam so I only have 4 months left of law school." Says A.J. taking off his glasses and wiping them.

Ed looks around and sees the usual crowd. In the corner is Roxy, a local street artist. She's working on a painting. Outside, her boyfriend Kevin, blond, shirtless and tan, is smoking a cigarette. Mr. Karl, the retired banker, sits reading.

"So how is the AA meetings working for you?" asks AJ.

"Oh just fine. I go once a week. Keeps me sober and I've made some new friends there" says Ed.

"Good, keep it up. That's very important" says AJ.

"So when you pass the bar get me a card" says Ed, smiling

Ed Ward is at work as security guard for Am West at his new apartment complex assignment. As he makes his rounds, a familiar white GMC with the word "Supervisor" pulls up.

"Hello Jonesy" says Ed smiling.

"Hi Eddy. How are you liking your new post?" asks Supervisor Jones, handing Ed a fresh cup of coffee.

"Oh thanks, just what I need. I like it. I like it a lot better than the industrial building. It was too weird working in their after Sylvia's death" says Ed.

"Come on man, we were both in the Army. Don't tell me it actually affected you? Asks Jonesy.

"Well it just was like...I mean I still can't believe she's dead, you know? And those homicide cops were all over Bldg 2. It just was getting to be too much for me working there" says Ed.

"Yeah, I get it. I miss Sylvia too." says Supervisor Jonesy.

"Yeah, it was just too much weird shit," says Ed.

"How is it for you in here?" asks Supervisor Jonesy.

"Oh.. very quiet. Everybody is nice. Just one drunk guy in the pool area, he's threatening to beat me up" says Ed smiling.

"Really? So what happened?" asks Jonesy.

"I pushed him into the pool and walked away!" says Ed.

Karla and Ed wander through the open area of the Mueller Art Museum in downtown Sacramento. Karla points out a particular painting as Ed looks on.

Karla is dressed in a bright white dress, her blonde hair in a pony tail behind her back, and carrying a beige purse.

"This is a Rembrandt. One of his early works. It shows the influence of his mentor, Prof. Lastma," says Karla.

"I see", says Ed, admiring the painting.

"People don't realize that Rembrandt worked in a lot of mediums, not just painting" says Karla, smiling.

"You know a lot about art don't you?" asks Ed.

"Yes. I was an art major in junior college. Rembrandt did drawings, sculptures, paintings, a lot of different mediums" says Karla.

"You never wanted to be an artist?" asks Ed.

"I tried, but my drinking kept messing me up. One night I got so drunk I destroyed my best two paintings" says Karla.

"Yeah, we've all been there" says Ed chuckling.

"I still paint for fun, but I like my job" says Karla.

"So can we go eat now? I'm getting bored" asks Ed, impatiently looking at his watch.

"Ok, we've been here over an hour, let's go" says Karla

" So, you prefer landscapes over personal portraits?" asks Karla, as she drives Ed in her sports car to the restaurant.

" Yeah...I like those outdoor paintings like beaches, mountains, things like that" says Ed, putting his hand on Karla's right leg.

" Hands off sailor" says Karla, brushing off Ed's hand.

" Oh ...sorry" says Ed, smiling.

" No funny business while I'm driving," says Karla.

" So, how's it going in the woman's AA program?" asks Ed.

"OK... I still get the craving for alcohol once in a while" says Karla adding " can we just not talk about it?"

" Yeah I hear you. You're just like Richie, he doesn't like to get into his own personal life in AA" says Ed.

" You know, he used to be a drug dealer right?" asks Karla.

" Yeah, so what? We all screwed up ,that's why we're all in AA isn't it? Don't judge." Says Ed, staring out the window.

"OK, well, he quit and works now so it's OK" says Karla.

" So, where are we going for lunch?" asks Ed.

"I don't know. You're buying so where do you want to go?" asks Karla, turning to Ed as she stops for a red light.

" How about Harry's Fish Grotto?" asks Ed.

It is Saturday morning, around 9:00 a.m. and Det. Terry Hill, Det. Reed Nelson and Lt. Sharon White are all seated around Capt. Ashby's desk.

"OK people, let's get going. Four new grisly homicides that may all be connected to one killer" says Capt. Ashby.

"Yes sir. Lt. White, however, because she's originally from Robbery Division, feels victim four was probably a robbery that went bad" says Det. Reed Nelson.

"OK ...but is it still possible that victims 1, 2, and 3 are all connected to one serial killer perhaps?" asks Capt. Ashby.

"Well sir, all three bodies were brutally slashed, hacked, and mutilated, so I'd say it's a strong possibility" says Det. Hill.

"I have to agree with that. Three homicides, none of which had the typical gun or knife weapon usually used to commit a murder," says Det. Nelson.

"The M.O. seems to be a method of killing that inflicts pain and suffering on the victims, not a quick kill" says Det. Hill.

"If that's true, then we have a serial killer on our hands. I'm going to form an ad hoc task force, you three will be the original detectives on it, understood?" says Capt. Ashby.

"Yes sir" comes the chorus of agreement from all three.

"I was too busy with the fire problem. Now we need to

Ed Ward is sitting at his chair in the apartment building rec room when a man in a blue suit walks in and flashes a badge.

"Are you Ed Ward, Am West security?" asks the man

"Yes, that's correct" replies Ed coldly.

"My name is Detective Reed Nelson, WSPD, mind if I ask you a few questions?" asks Det. Nelson.

"OK what would you like to know?" asks Ed, cautiously.

"How long did you know Sylvia Gomez?" asks Det. Nelson.

"Oh about 2 years, from working at AmWest" replies Ed.

"Did you two ever work the same location?" asks Det. Nelson.

"No sir. I worked her post after she died" says Ed.

"Was she known to use drugs?" ask Det. Nelson.

"Not to my knowledge" says Ed, getting bored.

"Do you know of anyone that might want to hurt her?" asks Det. Nelson.

"Absolutely not. Sylvia was loved by all of us. She was like everybody's big sister" says Ed.

"When was the last time you saw her?" ask Det. Nelson

"A week before she died at a staff meeting" says Ed.



Captain Ashby walks gingerly to the door of Dr. Sheldon Watson, M.D., Chief Medical Surgeon at the hospital where all WSPD fire victims were taken, and knocks on the door.

"Come in" says the voice of Dr. Watson.

Captain Ashby enters and sits down. Dr. Sheldon Watson is in his late 50's, bald headed, wears thick glasses, a nice white starched shirt, and blue tie. He is not only Chief Surgeon and Director of the Medical Center, but also a professor at the medical school nearby.

"Yes, my secretary told me you called and wanted an update on all the patients" says Dr. Watson as he looks at a file.

"Yes, thank you doctor. We are seriously understaffed right now at the department and I wanted to see if any officers are healthy and available" says Capt. Ashby.

"Well the latest report shows 4 deaths from the fire" says Dr. Watson.

"4? I thought it was only 3?" asks Capt. Ashby.

"No it's 4. One died this morning. Officer Dickerson", says Dr. Watson.

"OK, I'm sorry to hear it. OK, continue" says Capt Ashby.

"7 officers critically burned out of the 11, but two are getting ready to be released by Friday" says Dr. Watson.

It is 6: 15 a.m. on a very warm, sunny, Sunday morning and WSFD Fire Chief McVey and fireman Sam Walters are relaxing and having coffee in the break room. After 3 exhausting days of working on the police HQ fire, they looked forward to this quiet weekend off. Suddenly, a hard knock comes the front door.

“ I wish people had the decency to not bother us on the weekends” says fireman Walters.

“ It’s OK, I’ll get it” says Chief McVey as he walks to the front door and opens it. There, standing in front of him, is a young girl holding a plant, and an old man in a cap.

“ Here, this is for you,” says the little girl, handing Chief McVey the potted plant.

“ Why thank you. It’s just what we needed here at the station” says Chief McVey, winking to the old man.

“ Hi, I’m Mr. Peterson her grandfather. She insisted on this gift because you saved he uncle from the fire” says the old man.

“ Sam, come out here, and bring Bingo” says Chief McVey.

Sam walks up a few minutes later with the spotted dog.

“ Oh, he’s so pretty! I love dogs” says the girl, petting Bingo.

“ You and grandpa can visit anytime” says Chief McVey.

“ Thanks. Her name is Violet and she loves all pets, especially cats and dogs” says the old man, smiling.

Meanwhile, at the hospital where the fire victims are, Det. Terry Hill walks into Room 12, where Sgt. Anne Shelly is.

Sgt. Shelly is lying with her head on the pillow, watching TV, and sipping water from a straw and plastic bag. Her left arm is all bandaged, with a small piece of aluminum sticking out.

"Why hello Captain Hook, how's your crew?" asks Det. Hill.

"Ha, ha. Very funny" says Sgt. Shelly, smiling broadly.

"So how's it going Anne?" asks Det. Hill, sitting on the edge of the bed, ever so slightly.

"It's horrible. I can't see out of my left eye. Looks like total blindness there forever. The food is awful" says Sgt. Shelly.

"Yeah, but you are alive right? Here, I brought you some of that butter toffee peanut candy that you're always munching on" says Det. Hill, handing Anne some candy.

"Thanks. Hey do me a favor. I'll give you a \$10. Go to the liquor store and buy me some good vodka" says Sgt. Shelly.

"No can do Anne. Not going to support your bad habits Anne" says Det. Hill.

"OK, then buy me some cigarettes" pleads Sgt. Shelly.

"All right, it's my treat. But just one pack," says Det. Hill.

"Thanks. Menthol tipped please" says Sgt. Shelly smiling.

"Oh picky huh? OK, menthol it is" says Det. Hill.

WSPD Captain Ashby sits quietly at his desk as 2 men walk into his partitioned, divided-off office.

" Hello Captain Ashby. I'm Doug Hellerman with Mueller Construction" says a man in a white shirt, tie, and short dark hair.

" Oh yes. I was told yesterday that you were coming by. Please sit down gentlemen, nice to meet you" greets Capt Ashby as he points to the chairs in front of his desk.

Next to Mr. Hellerman is a man with large blueprint sheets all rolled up. He's wearing a casual shirt and jeans.

" This is Ralph Pollard. Our Chief Engineer" says Mr. Hellerman.

"Nice to meet you. So what's the story?" asks Capt Ashby.

" I just wanted to let you know we are going to start demolition work on Monday. It's already been cleared with the city and the Mayor's office" says Mr. Hellerman.

" Thank's. OK, so what do you need from me?" asks Capt Ashby.

" We ask that your people park at least 2 blocks away as the street will be closed to all traffic from 4:00 a.m. till 9 p.m."says Mr. Hellerman.

" No problem. I'll send a memo to all my staff and senior officers" says Capt. Ashby adding " we'll clear the area too".

It is Saturday morning and a light, drizzling rain pours over the city of Sacramento. Outside the makeshift HQ hut, officers and detectives of the WSPD huddle around Capt. Ashby's desk.

"Go ahead Miller, tell the detectives" says Capt Ashby.

"We interviewed the groundskeeper, a Mr. Donald Brewer. He told us that at about 2:30 a.m. he saw a man wearing a trench coat and a large hat walking around and acting weird near Sylvia Gomez's gravesite" says Officer Miller.

"This was at the cemetery?" asks Det. Reed Nelson.

"Then what happened?" asks Capt. Ashby.

"The groundskeeper went to get the security guard. When he returned, the guy was gone, and the front gate had been forced open with a crowbar" says Officer Miller.

"Was anything removed or taken from the gravesite?" asks Det. Hill.

"No, nothing was taken or damaged" says Officer Miller.

"What do you make of all this gentlemen?" asks Capt Ashby, leaning back in his chair and sipping coffee.

"Either it was some obsessed weirdo, or it possibly could be our killer. Any videos near that area Miller?" asks Det. Nelson.

"No such luck. And even if there was, it was dark and her grave is on the far side of the hill" says Miller.

Ed Ward gets up slowly and turns on the grill in his small studio apartment. Breakfast is two fried eggs and two boiled potatoes.

As he is scarfing down his breakfast a knock comes to the door. He gets up and walks to the door. Just to be safe he looks through the peephole. Stunned and surprised, he opens the door.

“ Daisy? What are you doing here?” asks Ed, confused.

“ Surprise! It’s me! Says Daisy giving Ed a hug.

“ How the hell did you find me?” asks Ed, picking up Daisy’s suitcase and guiding her into his small apartment.

“ I’m a P.I. remember? Anyways, came to Frisco for the annual PI Convention so I thought I’d make a slight detour” says Daisy, looking around the messy, cramped apartment.

“ Here, have some fresh coffee. So how was the PI convention?” asks Ed as he cleans papers off his couch.

“ It was OK. A little bit boring though” says Daisy, sipping coffee.

“ Well I’m surprised, but very happy to see you. How is Liza?” asks Ed, as he watches Daisy pull Felix the tarantula out of her purse and put it into the suitcase side pocket.

In a small corner of the make shift WSPD HQ hut, some sandbags are piled high up to the ceiling. A paper sign on one of the bags reads "Interrogation". Inside the small, sectioned-off area, sitting on a small, portable desk, is Det. Nelson talking to a large, husky black man, Anthony Warren Meeks.

Meeks, also known as "Ironman", has a long history of assault, battery, and attempted murder charges on his rap sheet.

"So, it says here the last time you were in prison was for cutting a victim's finger off, is that correct Mr. Meeks?" asks Det. Nelson.

"Yeah, but that finger thing just sort of happened, it wasn't planned" says Meeks, indignantly, as he stares at the wall.

"So, what do you know about these recent homicides?" asks Det. Nelson.

"Nothing, I just heard about it. Look the reason I agreed to talk to you pigs without my lawyer here is that I don't know anything. And even if I did, you're wasting your time because I'm no snitch, get it?" says Meeks, leaning back in his chair.

"Sure, I get it. I also get that you were spotted near the industrial plant where the guard was killed" says Det. Nelson.

"So what ? OK, I'm done here. Fuck off and have a nice day" says Meeks, standing up and leaving the interrogation area.

Ed Ward slowly rises from his bed and turns on his stove to make coffee. He delays pouring the coffee as he meditates, once again, on the death of his co-worker, Sylvia. Nothing could have been more tragic and unexpected.

He pours out some coffee. The fragmentary, weak evidence police have so far has gotten them nowhere.

Suddenly, a knock comes to his front door. Ed gets up and looks through the small peephole in the door.

"Who is it?" Ed asks, as he squints his eyes to peer outside.

"It's me, Daisy Ward", says Daisy. She is wearing a bright blue dress and carrying a leather purse.

"Daisy? What the hell, come on in" says Ed, opening the door and giving his half-sister a hug.

"Hi. I was at a PI conference in the Bay area and thought I would surprise you. Liza gave me your address" says Daisy.

"How is Liza? Please sit down" says Ed pointing to his couch.

"She had a little medical scare. They found traces of ovarian cancer on her, but 6 weeks of chemo and she's fine" says Daisy.

"Happy to hear it. Well as you can see, my tiny place is too small for you to stay" says Ed, pouring Daisy some coffee.

"Don't be silly, I'm staying at the Fremont Hotel" says Daisy.

"I hear they have really good room service" says Ed, smiling.



It is a sunny Saturday morning, around 6:15 a.m., and Captain Ashby is sitting at his desk having an impromptu meeting of the homicide division/Serial Killer Task Force.

"It says here in the profile the killer has 'paranoid-schizophrenia psychosis mania' and 'is into BDSM and pain'" states Captain Ashby.

Seated in front of Captain Ashby are homicide detectives Nelson and Hill, and Lt. Sharon White.

"Sir, does psychosis come and go?" asks Lt. White.

"Yes. You can be perfectly normal one minute, and crazy as hell the next. Go completely mad," replies Captain Ashby.

"It's in the nature of the human brain to have synapse damage malfunctions" states Det. Nelson.

"What do you think Hill?" asks Captain Ashby.

"Sounds like bullshit to me. These were not spur of the moment killings. They were deliberate and premeditated, perfectly planned for a horrific type of killing" replies Det. Hill.

"A sociopath has no conscience and low restraint levels, so I have to agree with Hill. Our guy is just a sociopath who gets off on watching people painfully die. That would account for all of the brutal dismemberments" says Det. Nelson.

"I agree with both those assessments" says Lt. White.

It's a lazy Saturday afternoon and Ed Ward of AmWest Security is making his rounds at the apartment complex he is stationed at.

Suddenly he sees a shopping cart full of bottles, cans, and blankets by a palm tree next to the sidewalk. He walks slowly forward and sees a man pouring water into the bushes. The man turns around and slowly smiles at Ed.

"Charlie! What the hell are you doing way out here. It's at least 18 miles from the industrial plant?" asks Ed, astonished.

"I'm visiting my girlfriend. She works part-time at the hospital across the way washing dishes. The question is what are you doing here?" asks Charlie, equally stunned.

"This is my new post. That industrial plant gave me the creeps, especially after Sylvia was killed" says Ed, lighting a cigar.

A white SUV with the markings "Supervisor" slowly rides by and stops. The passenger side window slowly rolls down.

"What's going on here?" asks Larry, Am West Supervisor.

"Oh well .....I was just telling him to move out" says Ed.

"Fine. Get rid of that bum and get back to work" says Larry as he slowly drives away.

"What a fucking asshole!" says Charlie, grinning.

“ Yeah, I like Jonesy better. Larry’s just a swing shifter” says Ed puffing away on his cigar.

“ So what have the homicide guys found out?” asks Charlie as he packs his water bottle in his shopping cart.

“ They think it’s a serial killer. The news media is calling him the ‘ Sactown Mutilator’” says Ed.

“ Mutilator? That’s a funny name. Say, can I get one of those cigars. It smells pretty damn good to me” says Charlie, pointing to Ed’s cigar.

“ Oh hell no. These are \$20 Macanodo cigars. Here, I have a cheap one you can smoke” says Ed, reaching into his back pocket and handing Charlie a cigar.

“ Well, the guy is just a sadist in my book. A normal killing, you get shot 2-3 times, but stabbed so many times like that, it just ain’t normal,” says Charlie, as Ed lights his cigar.

“ I agree. The killer is definitely mentally ill, but that almost always makes him even harder to figure out” says Ed.

“ Well, they will get him someday because he just keeps on doing it. Someday his number will be up,” says Charlie.

“ Oh shit! Here comes Larry again. Come on, move off for me will you please Charlie” pleads Ed.

“ OK, see you later alligator!” says Charlie, rolling away.

Detective Reed Nelson swings his personal Jeep Cherokee onto the freeway and heads north.

"Where are we going again?" asks Det. Hill, sitting in the passenger seat, sipping coffee.

"To have breakfast at the Carriage Lodge" says Det. Nelson.

They head north and exit onto a two lane rural road and pull up at a bright blue farmhouse. A dozen or so chickens are running around between the front porch and the grass.

"This is a crazy place" says Terry as he and Det. Nelson have a seat on the front porch at one of the three tables.

"You're a city boy. Don't know anything about good country cooking. I grew up on a farm in Missouri" says Det. Reed Nelson.

A kindly, elderly lady with a white apron comes out and automatically brings a plate with coffee and fresh orange juice.

"OK now I'm starting to like this place" says Det. Hill.

"What'll it be boys?" asks the kindly, elderly waitress.

"We'll have steak and eggs both of us" says Det. Nelson.

"And can I get some pancakes and syrup?" asks Det. Hill.

"Sure, I'll bring a fresh stack with the rest" says the waitress, as she turns and walks back into the house.

" This place is great, how did you find it?" asks Det. Hill.

" A friend of mine recommended it to me. Been going here for the last 12 years" says Det. Nelson, sipping orange juice.

" OK, so what do you think of these brutal homicides?" asks Det. Hill.

" I think that the killer is using different M.O.'s to throw us off track. Stabbing, shredding, mutilation each different to make us think it's not the same killer" says Det. Nelson.

" You might be right. Know what I think?" asks Det. Hill.

" Go ahead" says Det. Nelson, sipping coffee.

" I think the serial killer is the one who started the fire that burned police headquarters.. He did it deliberately to disable our ability to catch him" says Det. Hill.

" Hmm. You're either 100% crazy or 100% correct" replies Det. Nelson, skeptically.

" I mean, think about it. He got off 2-3 homicides before we could even catch our breath from the fire" says Det. Hill.

" OK here you go boys" says the waitress. She puts down two large plates, each with a T-bone steak and eggs sunny side up.

" Now You'll see what real good food is like" says Det. Nelson.

" Well, your paying so it's all good says Det. Hill, smiling .

Ed is at his post at the apartment building. It's his break time, so he decides to drive to the smoke shop to buy himself a cigar or two. He parks in front of Chicago Smokey's and goes in and buys two cigars.

He remembers he is supposed to call Karla, but he forgot his cell phone. Fortunately, there's a pay phone across the street, so Ed walks to the pay phone to call Karla. On the ground, he notices a weird photo with 10 numbers on the back.

He looks across to the smoke shop and notices a grey Crown Vic with Det. Reed Nelson in it, still shadowing him.

Ed walks across the street and knocks on the window.

"Yes, what is it?" asks Det. Nelson.

"I found this on the ground by the pay phone. Looks like either a butcher shop chop –photo, or something else. There's a phone number on the back too," says Ed, puffing his cigar.

"By that pay phone over there?" asks Det. Nelson, pointing.

"Yes, on the ground, not on the phone itself," says Ed.

"Did you see anybody around the phone?" asks Det. Nelson.

"Nope. Nobody was there," replies Ed, AmWest Security

"OK I'll look into it. Thanks" says Det. Nelson, rolling up the window, and then driving off slowly.

## EPILOGUE

Later that same night, Ed is still on shift. It's his break time, so he grabs his jacket, takes out a cigar, and heads for the old, abandoned railroad tracks to smoke.

As he reaches the railroad tracks abutting an old shack, he suddenly feels a sharp pain in his neck. A man in a trench coat, gloves, and sunglasses hits him over the head with the butt of his gun, and drags him into the shack. Ed is passed out cold.

When he awakens, he is groggy and shaken. He opens his eyes slowly and realizes that he is lying in a hospital bed. A nurse is at his side, and at the foot of the bed are WSPD Capt. Ashby, and his half-sister, Daisy Ward.

"What the hell happened to me?" asks Ed, confused.

"I came up to tell you personally that Liza died from the ovarian cancer. I got your shift address, and I followed you to the tracks. I saw a man stick you with a needle and beat you up. He tried to drag you into the shack," says Daisy.

"Liza died? I'm so sorry. Who was that guy?" asks Ed.

"He's a contract killer. He was working with an old, wealthy, widow who got her kicks from snuff films and pictures of people being dismembered and killed" says Capt. Ashby.

"So they were the two 'Sactown Mutilators'. Daisy, you saved my life girl. How can I ever repay you for that?" asks Ed.

"Simple, buy me a new .357" says Daisy Ward, smiling.