

IS FOR QUARRY

SUE GRAFTON

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BERKLEY BOOKS, NEW YORK

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“The spunkiest, funniest, and most engaging private investigator in Santa Teresa, California, not to mention the entire detective novel genre.” —*Entertainment Weekly*

Back in 1969, a lot of young people were hitting the road and disappearing. More than one of them wound up dead—including the girl in daisy-patterned pants who was found in a quarry off Highway 101 in Lompoc, the victim of multiple stab wounds. Eighteen years later, she’s still a Jane Doe—and the cops who found her are still haunted by the case. Anxious to solve it, but no longer in their prime, they turn to Kinsey Millhone for help. If nothing else, they’d just like to identify the body. But this ice-cold case heats up more quickly than they expect. And for Kinsey, it will lead to a lot of dangerous discoveries—including some about her own past . . .

“Grafton is so good that when you’re immersed in one of her books—and even afterward—you can believe that there is a Kinsey Millhone in Santa Teresa, California, who is a private investigator and lives in a converted garage and dines fairly often on Big Macs.” —*The Cleveland Plain Dealer*

“Kinsey Millhone is Grafton’s best mystery, one that has been unfolding deliciously since the letter ‘A.’”

—*San Francisco Chronicle*

“[A] first-class series.” —*The New York Times Book Review*

“D is for Dependable. Sue Grafton returns with *Q is for Quarry*, the seventeenth spoonful—and one of the tastiest—of her mystery alphabet soup . . . Based on an actual, unsolved murder . . . [the book’s] foundation in fact is apparent throughout and provides a grounding in procedural detail . . . that is so convincing . . . cunning . . . one of the most satisfying stories to come from the ever-dependable Grafton in years.” —*The Washington Post Book World*

“Q is for quite a good read. Sue Grafton’s alphabet thrillers just keep getting better . . . Q is quintessential Grafton. It is so well written that many readers might consider it her best . . . Fans who love Q because there’s a strong focus on Kinsey’s past . . . tasty tidbits for those of us who know that Kinsey is still trying to come to terms with her parents’ deaths . . . One of Grafton’s most admirable traits as a writer is her respect for the victims of a crime as well as the people who solve them. Solid methodology and a straightforward writing style are the groundwork for Grafton’s two decades of success. Q is so neatly and superbly unraveled, it’s sure to inspire many a fan to return to *A is for Ali* and begin the series again.” —*USA Today*

“Well written . . . wonderfully realized . . . Kinsey plumbs the closeness and isolation of these tiny desert towns . . . This faint poignancy is intensified once the reader learns that Grafton has built her book on an actual unsolved case, extrapolating a fictional solution from available evidence. Her final bare account of this young girl who remains unidentified provides its own haunting epilogue.”

“Involving . . . It’s narrated by Kinsey with her usual wry humor and eye for telling detail.” —*The Orlando Sentinel*

“Sue Grafton still spins a wicked mystery.” —*Marie Claire*

“Another class act from Grafton . . . Should a contest be held to name the credible private eye mystery fiction, Kinsey Millhone would certainly rank at or near the top. The central figure in Sue Grafton’s long-running series conveys a verisimilitude, in both her professional and private lives, that makes most of her competitors seem like cartoons. Believability is once again the cornerstone of Grafton’s latest and most ambitious novel, fiction founded on fact . . . an intriguing story, convincing in detail and satisfying in development. Still, what lifts this above the crowd is the character of her protagonist Kinsey Millhone, who rings true both as a detective and as a woman.”

—*The San Diego Union-Tribune*

“*Q is for Quarry* is a different approach for Grafton, who now has the name and the clout to try some real-life crime-solving . . . This book was inspired by real unsolved homicide in 1969 . . . and readers are encouraged to come forward with any information . . . one of Grafton’s best.”

—*Hartford Courant*

A NOTE TO THE READER

Q is for Quarry was inspired by a real case in which the body of a young woman was found in Santa Barbara County, California, in 1969. The victim remains unidentified; however, with such advancements as forensic reconstruction, it is still possible that someone may recognize this Jane Doe and that the case might even be solved. A reconstruction of the victim's face, created by Betty Gatlin, an internationally recognized forensic artist who is a fellow of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, appears on the final page of *Q is for Quarry*. It is the hope of the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department and Sue Grafton that, even after all this time, a reader or two may recognize Jane Doe and come forward with her identity.

TITLES BY SUE GRAFTON

Kinsey Millhone Mysteries

A is for Alibi
B is for Burglar
C is for Corpse
D is for Deadbeat
E is for Evidence
F is for Fugitive
G is for Gumshoe
H is for Homicide
I is for Innocent
J is for Judgment
K is for Killer
L is for Lawless
M is for Malice
N is for Noose
O is for Outlaw
P is for Peril
Q is for Quarry

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Q

If you purchased this book without a cover, you should be aware that this book is stolen property. It was reported as “unsold and destroyed” to the publisher, and neither the author nor the publisher has received any payment for this “stripped book.”

While inspired by a real case, this is a work of fiction.
Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product
of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any
resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business
establishments, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.
Q IS FOR QUARRY

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO

Bill Turner and Deborah Linden

Bob and Nancy Failing

and

Susan and Gary Gulbransen.

Thank you for making this one possible.

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Special thanks, also, to Joe Mandel, Gregory Spears, and Chris Kovach for the use of their names.

It was Wednesday, the second week in April, and Santa Teresa was making a wanton display of herself. The lush green of winter, with its surfeit of magenta and salmon bougainvillea, had erupted anew in a splashy show of crocuses, hyacinths, and flowering plum trees. The skies were a mild blue, the air balmy and fragrant. Violets dotted the grass. I was tired of spending my days closeted in the hall of records, searching out grant deeds and tax liens for clients who were, doubtless, happily pursuing tennis, golf, and other idle amusements.

I suppose I was suffering from a mutant, possibly incurable form of spring fever, which consisted of feeling bored, restless, and disconnected from humanity at large. My name is Kinsey Millhone. I'm a private detective in Santa Teresa, California, ninety-five miles north of Los Angeles. I'd be turning thirty-seven on May 5, which was coming up in four weeks, an event that was probably contributing to my general malaise. I lead a stripped-down existence untroubled by bairn, pets, or living household plants.

On February 15, two months before, I'd moved into new offices, having separated myself from my association with the law firm of Kingman and Ives. Lonnie Kingman had purchased a building on lower State Street, and though he'd offered to take me with him, I felt it was time to be out on my own.

That was my first mistake.

My second was an unfortunate encounter with two land-lords in a deal that went sour and left me out in the cold.

My third office-related error was the one I now faced. In desperation, I'd rented space in a nondescript cottage on Caballeria Lane, where a row of identical stucco bungalows were lined up along the curb like the Three Little Pigs. The block—short, narrow, and lined with cars—ran between Santa Teresa Street and Arbor, a block north of Via Madrina, in the heart of downtown. While the price was right and the location was excellent—in easy walking distance of the courthouse, the police station, and the public library—the office itself fell woefully short of ideal.

The interior consisted of two rooms. The larger I designated as my office proper; the smaller I was using as a combination library-and-reception area. In addition, there was a galley-style kitchen, where I kept a small refrigerator, my coffeepot, and my Sparkletts water dispenser. There was also a small, musty half-bath with a sorrowful-looking toilet and sink. The whole of it smelled like mildew, and I suspected at night wee creatures scuttled around the baseboards after all the lights were turned off. By way of compensation, the building's owner had offered unlimited cans of an off-brand paint, and I spent the better part of a week rolling coats of white latex over the former pulsating pink, a shade reminiscent of internal organs at work. He'd also agreed to have the rugs cleaned, not that anyone could tell. The beige high-low, wall-to-wall nylon carpeting was matted from long wear and seemed to be infused with despair. I'd arranged and rearranged my desk, my swivel chair, my file cabinets, sofa, and assorted artificial plants. Nothing dispelled the general air of weariness that infected the place. I had plenty of money in savings (twenty-five thousand bucks if it's anybody's business) so, in theory, I could have held out for much classier digs. On the other hand, at three fifty a month, the space was affordable and satisfied one of my basic principles in life, which is: Never, never, never to live beyond my means. I don't want to be compelled to take on work to meet my overhead. The office is meant

serve me, not the other way around.

Since the bungalows on either side of mine were vacant, I was feeling isolated, which may account for a newfound ambivalence about my single status in a world of married folk. Except for two brief failed marriages, I'd been unattached for most of my natural life. This had never bothered me. More often than not, I rejoiced in my freedom, my mobility, and my solitude. Lately, circumstances had conspired to unsettle my habitual content.

Earlier that week, I'd encountered my friend Vera with her husband, (Dr.) Neil Hess. I was sneaking in a late-afternoon jog on the bike path at the beach when I'd spotted them sauntering along ahead of me. Vera was a former employee of California Fidelity Insurance, for which I'd also worked. She had met Neil, decided he was too short for her, and tried passing him off on me. I knew at a glance they were smitten with each other, and despite protests to the contrary, I'd persuaded her that he was her perfect match, which had turned out to be true. The two of them were accompanied that afternoon by their eighteen-month-old son in his stroller and a grinning golden retriever pup, frolicking and prancing, tugging at his leash. Vera—massive, lumbering, milky, and serene—was clearly expecting again, apparently in mere days, judging by her swollen state. We paused to chat and I realized that in the three and a half years since I'd last seen her, my life hadn't changed a whit. Same apartment, same car, same work, same boyfriend in absentia in a relationship that was going no place. The revelation generated a prolonged pang of regret.

Meanwhile, Henry, my beloved landlord, was off cruising the Caribbean in the company of his two siblings and his sister-in-law, Rosie, who owns the tavern half a block from my apartment. I'd been bringing in his mail, watering his houseplants once a week and his yard every couple of days. Rosie's restaurant would be closed for another five days, so until the three of them returned home, I couldn't even have supper in familiar surroundings. I know all of this sounds ever so faintly like whining, but I feel morally obliged to tell the truth.

That Wednesday morning, I'd decided my attitude would greatly improve if I quit feeling sorry for myself and got my office squared away. To that end, I'd gone to a thrift store and purchased two additional (used) file cabinets, an upright wooden cupboard with assorted pigeon holes, and a funky painted armoire to house my accumulation of office supplies. I was perched on a low stool surrounded by cartons I hadn't unpacked since I'd moved into Lonnie's office three and a half years before. The day felt a little bit like Christmas in that I was discovering items I'd long forgotten I had.

I'd just reached the bottom of box number three (of a total of eight) when I heard a knock at the door. I yelled "I'm here!" When I turned, Lieutenant Dolan was standing on the threshold, his hands sunk in the pockets of his tan raincoat.

"Hey, what are you doing here? It's been months." I got up and dusted my hand on the seat of my jeans before extending it to him.

His grip was strong and warm, his smile almost sheepish, as pleased to see me as I was to see him. "I ran into Lonnie at the courthouse. He said you'd rented this place so I thought I'd pop in."

"That's great. I appreciate the visit."

"I see you're getting settled."

"About time. I moved in February fifteenth and haven't done a thing."

"I hear business is slow."

"It is—at least the kind of jobs I like."

I watched while Con Dolan made a circuit of the room. He seemed ill at ease and covered his discomfort by wading through a steady stream of small talk. He chatted idly about Lonnie, the weather, and miscellaneous matters while I made what I hoped were the appropriate responses. I couldn't imagine what he wanted, but I assumed he'd get down to his purpose in due course. He had never been the type to drop in unannounced. I'd known him for ten years, the greater portion of which he'd headed up the homicide unit of the Santa Teresa Police Department. He was currently out on medical disability, sidelined by a series of heart attacks. I'd heard he was eager to return to work full time. According to the scuttlebutt, his chances ran somewhere between slim and none.

He paused to check out the inner office, glanced into the half-bath, and then circled back in my direction. "Lonnie said you weren't crazy about the place and I can see your point. It's grim."

"Isn't it? I can't figure it out. I know it needs something, but I can't think what."

"You need art."

"You think so?" I let my gaze trace the bare white walls.

"Sure. Get yourself some big travel posters and some double-sided tape. It'd perk the place right up. Failing that, you might at least wipe the dust off the artificial plants."

He was in his early sixties and his cardiac problems had left his complexion looking sour. The usual bags under his eyes had turned a dark smokey shade, making his whole face seem sunken in a circulatory gloom. He was apparently marking the time away from the department by shaving every other day, and this wasn't the one. His face had tended to be pouchy in the best of times, but now his mouth was pulled down in a permanent expression of malcontent. Just my kind of guy.

I could tell he was still smoking because his raincoat, when he moved, smelled of nicotine. The last time I remembered seeing him he was in a hospital bed. The visit had been awkward. Up to that point I'd always been intimidated by the man, but then I'd never seen him in a cotton hospital nightie with his puckered butt on display through a slit down the back. I'd felt friendlier toward him since. I knew he liked me despite the fact his manner in the past had alternated between surly and abrupt.

I said, "So what's up? I can't believe you walked all the way over here to give me decorating tips."

"Actually, I'm on my way to lunch and thought you might join me—if you're free, that is."

I glanced at my watch. It was only 10:25. "Sure, I could do that. Let me get my bag and my jacket and I'll meet you out in front."

We took off on foot, walking to the corner, where we turned right and headed north on Santa Teresa Street. I thought we'd be going to the Del Mar or the Arcade, two restaurants where guys from the Police gravitated for lunch. Instead, we soldiered on for another three blocks and finally turned into a hole-in-the-wall known as "Sneaky Pete's," though the name on the entrance sign said something else. The place was largely empty: one couple at a table and a smattering of day drinkers sitting at the far end of the bar. Dolan took a seat at the near end and I settled myself on the stool to his left. The bartender laid her cigarette in an ashtray, reached for a bottle of Old Forrester, and poured him a drink before he opened his mouth. He paused to light a cigarette and then he caught my look. "What?"

"Well, gee, Lieutenant Dolan, I was just wondering if this was part of your cardiac rehabilitation."

He turned to the bartender. "She thinks I don't take very good care of myself."

She placed the glass in front of him. "Wonder where she got that?"

I pegged her in her forties. She had dark hair that she wore pulled away from her face and secured by tortoiseshell combs. I could see a few strands of gray. Not a lot of makeup, but she looked like someone you could trust in a bartenderly sort of way. “What can I do for you?”

“I’ll have a Coke.”

Dolan cocked his thumb at me. “Kinsey Millhone. She’s a PI in town. We’re having lunch.”

“Tannie Ottweiler,” she said, introducing herself. “Nice to meet you.” We shook hands and then she reached down and came up with two sets of cutlery, encased in paper napkins, that she placed in front of us. “You sitting here?”

Dolan tilted his head. “We’ll take that table by the window.”

“I’ll be there momentarily.”

Dolan tucked his cigarette in his mouth, the smoke causing his right eye to squint as he picked up his whiskey and moved away from the bar. I followed, noting that he’d chosen a spot as far from the other drinkers as he could get. We sat down and I set my handbag on a nearby chair. “Is there a menu?”

He shed his raincoat and took a sip of whiskey. “The only thing worth ordering is the spicy salami on a kaiser roll with melted pepper jack. Damn thing’ll knock your socks off. Tannie puts a fried egg on top.”

“Sounds great.”

Tannie appeared with my Coke. There was a brief time-out while Dolan ordered our sandwiches.

As we waited for lunch, I said, “So what’s going on?”

He shifted in his seat, making a careful survey of the premises before his gaze returned to mine. “You remember Stacey Oliphant? He retired from the Sheriff’s Department maybe eight years back. You must have met him.”

“Don’t think so. I know who he is—everybody talks about Stacey—but he’d left the department before the time I connected up with Shine and Byrd.” Morley Shine had been a private investigator in partnership with another private eye named Benjamin Byrd. Both had been tight with the sheriff’s office. They’d hired me in 1974 and trained me in the business while I acquired the hours I needed to apply for my license. “He must be in his eighties.”

Dolan shook his head. “He’s actually seventy-three. As it turns out, being idle drove him out of his mind. He couldn’t handle the stress so he went back to the SO part-time, working cold cases for the criminal investigations division.”

“Nice.”

“That part, yes. What’s not nice is he’s been diagnosed with cancer—non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. This is the second time around for him. He was in remission for years, but the symptoms showed up again about seven months ago. By the time he found out, it’d progressed to stage four—five being death, just so you get the drift. His long-term prognosis stinks; twenty percent survival rate if the treatment works, which it might not. He did six rounds of chemo and a passel of experimental drugs. Guy’s been sick as a dog.”

“It sounds awful.”

“It is. He was pulling out of it some and then recently he started feeling punk. They put him back in the hospital a couple of days ago. Blood tests showed severe anemia so they decided to transfuse him.”

Then they decided while he was in, they might as well run more tests so they can see where he stands. He's a pessimist, of course, but to my way of thinking, there's always hope."

"I'm sorry."

"Not as sorry as I am. I've known him close to forty years, longer than I knew my wife." Dolan took a drag of his cigarette, reaching for a tin ashtray on the table next to us. He tapped off a fraction of an inch of ash.

"How'd the two of you hook up? I thought he worked north county. You were PD down here."

"He was already with the SO when our paths first crossed. This was 1948. I was from a blue-collar background, nothing educated or intellectual. I'd come out of the army with an attitude. Cocky and brash. Two years I knocked around, not doing anything much. I finally got a job as a pump jockey at a gas station in Lompoc. Talk about a dead end.

"One night a guy came in and pulled a gun on the night manager. I was in the backroom cleaning up at the end of my shift when I figured out what was going on. I grabbed a wrench, ducked out the side door, and came around the front. Guy was so busy watching to make sure my boss didn't call the cops he never saw me coming. I popped him a good one and knocked him on his ass. Stacey was the deputy who arrested him.

"He's only ten years older than me, but he's the closest thing to a mentor I ever had. He's the one who talked me into law enforcement. I went to college on the G.I. Bill and then hired on with the PD as soon as a job opened up. He even introduced me to Grace, and I married her six months later."

"Sounds like he changed the course of your life."

"In more ways than one."

"Does he have family in the area?"

"No close relatives. The guy never married. A while back, he was dating someone—if that's what you want to call it at our advanced age. Nice gal, but somehow it didn't work out. Since Grace died, the two of us have spent a fair amount of time together. We go hunting and fishing any chance we get. Now that I'm out on medical, we've done a lot of that of late."

"How's he dealing with all of this?"

"Up and down. Too much time on his hands and not a lot to do except brood. I can't tell you how many times I heard that one: guy retires after thirty years and the next thing you know he gets sick and dies. Stacey doesn't say much about it, but I know how his mind works. He's depressed as hell."

"Is he religious?"

"Not him. He claims he's an atheist, but we'll see about that. Me, I always went to church, at least while Gracie was alive. I don't see how you face death without believing in *something*. Otherwise, it makes no sense."

Dolan glanced up just as Tannie appeared with two large plates loaded with freshly made sandwiches and fries, plus two orders for the other table. Dolan interrupted his story to have a chat with her. I occupied myself with banging on the ketchup bottle until a thick drool of red covered the southeast corner of my fries. I knew he was leading up to something, but he was taking his sweet time. I lifted the top of the kaiser roll and salted everything in sight. Biting in, I could feel the egg yolk oozing into the bun. The combination of spicy salami and snappy pepper-hot jack cheese turned out to be the food equivalent of someone hollering *Hot Damn!* on the surface of my tongue. I made one

my food moans. Embarrassed, I looked up at them, but neither seemed to notice.

When Tannie finally left, Dolan stubbed out his cigarette and paused for an extended bout of coughing so fierce it made his whole body shake. I pictured his lungs like a set of black cartoon bellows, wheezing away.

He shook his head. “Sorry about that. I had a bad cold a month ago and it’s been hard to shake.” He took a swallow of whiskey to soothe his irritated throat. He picked up his sandwich and continued his story between bites, taking up exactly where he’d left off. “While Stacey’s been laid up, I’ve been doing what I can to get his apartment cleaned. Place is a mess. He should be out of the hospital tomorrow and I didn’t want him coming home to the sight of all that crap.”

He set his sandwich down to light another cigarette, rolling it over to the corner of his mouth while he pulled out a cylinder of papers he’d tucked into his breast coat pocket. “Yesterday, I went through a pile of papers on his kitchen table. I was hoping to come across the name of a friend I could contact—somebody to cheer him up. Stace could use a little something to look forward to. Anyway, there was nothing of that nature, but I did find this.”

He placed the curling sheaf on the table in front of me. I finished my sandwich in one last bite and wiped my hands on a napkin before I reached for the papers. I knew at a glance it was a copy of Sheriff’s Department file. The cover page was marked 187 PC, indicating it was a homicide, with a case number following. The pages were held together with fasteners, sixty-five or seventy sheets all, with a set of handwritten notes inserted at the back. I returned to the cover page.

Victim: Jane Doe

Found: Sunday, August 3, 1969

Location: Grayson Quarry, Highway 1, Lompoc

Under “Investigating Officers,” there were four names listed, one of them Stacey Oliphant’s.

Dolan leaned forward. “You can see he was one of the original investigating officers. Stace and me were the ones who found the body. We’d taken a Jeep up there and parked off the side of the road to go deer hunting that day. I guess there’s a gate across the road now, but the property was open back then. The minute we got out, we picked up the smell. We both knew what it was—something dead for days. Didn’t take us long to find out exactly what it was. She’d been flung down a short embankment like a sack of trash. This is the case he was working when he got sick. It’s always bugged him that he never figured out who she was, let alone who killed her.”

I felt a dim stirring of memory. “I remember this. Wasn’t she stabbed and then dumped?”

“Right.”

“Seems odd they never managed to identify her.”

“He thought so, too. It’s one of those cases really stuck in his craw. He kept thinking there was something he’d overlooked. He’d go back to it when he could, but he never made much progress.”

“And you’re thinking what, to have another go at it?”

“If I can talk him into it. I think it’d make a world of difference in his attitude.”

I leafed through the photocopies, watching the progression of dates and events. “Looks like just about everything.”

“Including black-and-white prints of the crime scene photographs. He had another couple of files but this is the one caught my eye.” He paused to wipe his mouth and then pushed his plate aside. “It give him a lift to get back into this and see about developing some information. He can act as lead detective while we do the legwork.”

I found myself staring. “You and me.”

“Sure, why not? We can pay for your time. For now, all I’m suggesting is the three of us sit down and talk. If he likes the idea, we’ll go ahead. If not, I guess I’ll come up with something else.”

I tapped the file. “Not to state the obvious, but this is eighteen years old.”

“I know, but aside from Stacey’s interest, there hasn’t been a push on this since 1970 or so. What we could crack it? Think what that’d do for him. It could make all the difference.” It was the first time I’d seen any animation in his face.

I pretended to ponder but there wasn’t much debate. I was sick of doing paperwork. Enough already with the file searches and the background checks. “Stacey still has access to the department?”

“Sure. A lot of folks out there think the world of him. We can probably get anything we need—within reason, of course.”

“Let me take this home and read it.”

Dolan sat back, trying not to look too pleased. “I’ll be over at CC’s from six until midnight. Show up by eight and we can swing over to St. Terry’s and bring Stacey up to speed.”

I found myself smiling in response.

I spent the early part of the afternoon in my new office digs, hammering away on my portable Smith Corona. I typed up two overdue reports, did my filing, prepared invoices, and cleaned off my desk. I started in on the bills at 3:00 and by 3:35 I was writing out the final check, which I tore from my checkbook. I tucked it in the return envelope, then licked the flap so carelessly I nearly paper-cut my tongue. That done, I went into the outer office and moved all the unpacked boxes back into the closet. Nothing like a little motivation to get the lead out of your butt.

My supper that night consisted of a peanut-butter-and-pickle sandwich, accompanied by Diet Pepsi over ice. I ate in my minuscule living room, curled up on the sofa tucked into the window bay. In lieu of dinnerware, I used a fold of paper toweling that doubled as a dainty lip wipe when I'd finished my meal. With spring on the move, it was not quite dark out. The air was still chilly, especially once the sun went down. Through the partially opened window, I could hear a distant lawn mower and the occasional fragment of conversation as assorted people walked by. I live a block from the beach on a side street that provides overflow parking when Cabana Boulevard gets jammed.

I slid down comfortably on my spine, my sock feet on the coffee table, while I settled in to work. I went through the file quickly at first, just to get the lay of the land. A detective named Brad Crouse was lead investigator on the case. The other investigating officers, aside from Stacey Oliphant, were Detective Keith Baldwin, Sergeant Oscar Wallen, Sergeant Melvin Galloway, and Deputy Joe Mandel. A lot of manpower. Crouse had typed the bulk of the reports, using multiple carbons, which Stacey had apparently then photocopied from the old murder book. Judging from the number of strikeovers, I had to guess Detective Crouse had not been first in his class in secretarial school. I fancied if I put my ear to the page, I'd pick up the churlish echoes of his long-ago curses embedded in the lines of print.

It's odd going through an old file, like reading a mystery novel where you spoil the ending for yourself by peeking ahead to the very last page. The final document, a letter from a soils expert in San Pedro, California, was dated September 28, 1971, and indicated that the sample submitted by the San Teresa County Sheriff's Department would be impossible to distinguish from samples taken from similar deposits across the state. Sincerely. So sorry. End of the line for you, bub. I went back to the beginning and started reading again, this time taking notes.

According to the first officer at the scene, the girl's body had been rolled over the edge of an embankment, coming to rest about fifteen feet down, some fifty feet from the highway. Con Dolan and Stacey Oliphant had spotted her at approximately 5:00 P.M. on that Sunday—1700 hours if you're talking military time, as this report did. She was lying on her left side on a crumpled canvas tarp, her hands bound in front of her with a length of white plastic-coated wire. She was wearing a dark blue Dacron blouse, white cotton pants with a print of dark blue daisies with a dot of red in each center. There was a leather sandal on her right foot; the matching sandal was found in the brush a short distance away. Marks in the dirt suggested she'd been dragged across the grass near the road. Even from the top of the slope, Dolan and Oliphant could see numerous stab wounds in her chest. It was also apparent her throat had been slashed.

Oliphant had made immediate CB contact with the Lompoc PD. Because the location was in the county, two on-duty sheriff's deputies were dispatched to the scene. Deputy Joe Mandel and Sergeant Melvin Galloway arrived twenty minutes after the initial call. Photographs were taken of the decedent

and of the surrounding area. The body was then removed to a Lompoc mortuary, pending arrival of the coroner. Meanwhile, the deputies searched the vicinity, took soil samples, bagged the tarpaulin along with a nearby broken shrub and two pieces of shrub stem that appeared to be stained with blood.

On Tuesday, August 5, 1969, Mandel and Galloway returned to the crime scene to take measurements—the distance from the highway to the spot where the body had been found, the width of the blacktop, the location of the stray sandal. Sergeant Galloway took additional photos of the various areas, showing the embankment, damaged shrubs, and drag marks. There were no crime scene sketches, but perhaps they'd become separated from the rest of the file in the intervening years.

I took a minute to sort through the photographs, which were few in number and remarkably uninformative: eight black-and-white prints, including one of the roadway, one of an officer pointing at a broken shrub, one of the embankment where the body was found, and four of the body from a distance of fifteen feet. There were no close-ups of Jane Doe's face, no views of her wounds or the knotted wire with which her hands had been bound. The tarp was visible beneath her, but it was difficult to judge how much of the body, if any, had been covered. Times have changed. Current practice would have dictated fifty such photographs along with a video and a detailed crime-scene sketch. In the same envelope, I found an additional five photographs in faded color showing the girl's sandals, pants, shirt, bra, and panties laid out on what looked like a sheet of white paper.

The autopsy had been performed on August 4, 1969, at 10:30 A.M. I squinted, inferred, surmised, and otherwise faked my way through the report, deciphering enough of the technical talk to figure out what was being said. Because her body was in a state of advanced decomposition, the measurements were estimates. The girl's height was calculated at 63 to 65 inches, her weight at 120 to 125 pounds. Her eyes were blue, her hair dyed a reddish blond that showed dark roots. In the left earlobe she wore a thin gold-wire circle with a horseshoe configuration. In her right earlobe she wore a similar gold-wire loop with a bent clip in its lower end. Her facial characteristics were indistinguishable due to skin slippage, gas crepitation, and decomposition. Examination of the body showed eight deep stab wounds: one in the middle of the back below the shoulder blade area; two stab wounds at the base of the neck on either side; five stab wounds between her breasts; and a large stab wound under the left breast, which had penetrated the heart. There was considerable maggot activity. Because of decomposition, the pathologist was unable to ascertain the presence of any scars or identifying marks. There were no skeletal fractures or deformities, no visible injuries to the external genitalia. Her fallopian tubes and ovaries were unremarkable and her uterine cavity was empty. Cause of death was listed as multiple stab wounds of the neck, chest, heart, and lungs.

At the conclusion of his exam, the pathologist removed Jane Doe's fingers, the nails of which she had painted with silver polish. These were tagged by an officer and turned over for shipping to the FBI Identification Division in Washington, D.C. Films taken of her upper and lower jaws showed multiple metallic restorations. She also suffered from what is commonly referred to as buckteeth, with one crooked eyetooth on the left side. A dentist, consulted later, suggested that extensive dental work had probably been done in the two years before her death—that being 1967 through 1968. He judged her to be in her late teens to early twenties. A forensic odontologist, examining the maxilla and mandible at a later date, narrowed the girl's age to fifteen years, plus or minus thirty-six months, noting that she probably died before she reached the legal age of eighteen.

On Wednesday, August 6, Sergeant Galloway submitted the following clothing and evidence to the deputy in charge of the property room:

1. One navy blue, full-length, puffed-sleeve blouse of Dacron-voile material—make unknown—

blood-stained.

- ~~2. One pair home-sewn female white pants with blue flowers with red centers—size unknown.~~
3. One pair bikini panties, pink—size medium, Penney's label.
4. One black bra, size 38A, Lady Suzanne label.
5. One pair female brown leather sandals—buckle type, with four brass links on leather strap. Size 7½. With gold letters "MADE IN ITALY" on inner sole.
6. One soiled canvas tarpaulin with blood and miscellaneous stains.

The dead girl's earrings, a clipping of her hair, and the plastic-coated wire taken from her wrists were also booked into evidence.

The Sheriff's Department must have sent the essential information about the deceased to other law enforcement agencies, because a series of follow-up reports over the next several weeks covered a manner of missing persons believed to match the description of Jane Doe. Three stolen automobiles were recovered in the area, one containing assorted articles of women's clothing in the rear seat. They turned out to be unrelated, according to handwritten notes entered at a later date. The second vehicle, a 1966 red Mustang convertible with Arizona plates, reported stolen from an auto upholstery shop in Quorum, California, was subsequently returned to its rightful owner. The third stolen vehicle, a red 1967 Chevrolet, was tied to a homicide in Venice, California. The driver was subsequently arrested and later convicted of that crime.

A vagrant was picked up for questioning but released. There was also a report of a twenty-five-year-old employee who'd absconded with \$46.35 in currency and change stolen from a service station owner outside the town of Seagate. The caretaker at a nearby state beach park was contacted and questioned about any persons he might have seen in the area. He reported nothing unusual. In three separate incidents, hitchhikers were picked up for questioning, but none of them were held. This was the summer of 1969 and there was a steady stream of hippies migrating north along this route. Hippies were generally regarded with suspicion, assumed to be high on drugs, which was probably the case.

At 10:30 A.M. on August 6, 1969, Detective Crouse interviewed a clerk named Roxanne Faught who worked at a minimart on Highway 101. She'd contacted the Sheriff's Department after reading about the murder in the papers and reported that on Friday, August 1, she'd seen a young girl who matched the description of Jane Doe. Miss Faught stated that the girl had helped herself to coffee and a doughnut, which she was unable to pay for. Faught paid for them herself, which is why the incident stuck in her mind. Earlier she'd noticed this same girl hitchhiking north, however she was gone when Faught left work at 3:00 P.M. The girl in the minimart carried no luggage and had no wallet or purse. Several other people contacted the department with leads, but none of these panned out.

As the days went on, calls came in reporting vehicles of various makes, models, and descriptions that had been seen near the quarry both before and after the body was discovered. As with any investigation, delving into the one crime seemed to bring a number of peripheral crimes into focus: loitering, trespassing, public drunkenness, petty theft—all of which turned out to be immaterial to the case. It was clear that many local citizens were busy remembering odd and freakish incidents that had occurred in the weeks prior to the homicide. For all anyone knew, one of these reports might hold a vital clue about the girl who'd been murdered or the person, or persons, who'd killed her.

Every phone call, every out-of-state inquiry, and every rumor was dutifully tracked down. At the end of each report, there was a list appended, giving the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the

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