

Realistic life on the beat in a small police department.

That Which We are

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*That
Which We
Are*

MARTIN MALLOY

Dedication

To Rosemary, my inspiration, my love, and my wife,
without whose encouragement and advice, this story never
would have been told. Thank you, sweetheart.

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Nicholas Caulfield and his partner were on a foot beat in the business district at 5th and W. York Streets in West Kensington. The sweltering summer heat welded his bulletproof vest to his body like a straitjacket. They frequently ducked into stores to chat with shopkeepers and take advantage of ceiling fans and shade. The lone bakery on the beat, “Panaderia de las Tias” was a favorite stop. As they walked through the doorway, Caulfield breathed deeply the sweet, sensuous aromas of freshly baked cookies and breads. The bell on the doorjamb jingled as they entered.

There was no one at the counter. Not unusual—the Rodriguez sisters were often busy in the kitchen. The officers waited a few moments, but no one came out. Caulfield’s partner, Steve Sciola, leaned over the counter and called out toward the kitchen.

“Hello? Elena? Angela?”

No answer. Normally, at least one of the ladies appeared pretty quickly when a customer tripped the bell. Steve looked at Caulfield, squinted his eyes, and furrowed his brow. He tilted his head toward the kitchen, a signal to Caulfield that he wanted to have a look, and went around the counter. Caulfield followed. His partner peered through

the small window on the swinging door. He then crouched down and slowly opened it inward. Caulfield ducked down behind him and was about to take the door from him.

Suddenly, he woke up. He often woke up at this point in the dream, perhaps because he knew all too well what waited on the other side of that door. It's been 12 years, but this event still comes back to haunt him a lot when he sleeps. It was one of those moments he'd rather forget, but can't. There was no point in trying to get back to sleep. It simply wasn't going to happen.

The rain was torrential. Caulfield sat in the living room of his cottage watching a news broadcast while occasionally staring outside at the deluge. The weather forecast called for heavy rain on and off throughout the Memorial Day weekend and he was glad. Rainy weekends were a sort of mixed blessing for cops; although the rain kept most people indoors and off the streets, it also caused a rise in the number of auto accidents and domestic disturbances. Still, Caulfield always felt his best during overcast days and he never minded a good, soaking downpour.

By 2:45 p.m. he was dressed and ready to go, but it was still a bit early to leave. He picked up the book he had been reading that day, Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, a novel he had read twice before but felt an affinity toward. He was just at the point when Catherine was going into labor, prior to a childbirth she would not survive. Twice before, this part of the story caused a single teardrop to run down the side of his face, and he knew it would probably happen again. He understood war, famine, crime and even love, but he couldn't understand the senseless fate that separated two

souls who were so perfectly united. He decided to finish *Farewell* later as he needed to mentally prepare himself for what promised to be a busy night shift. Caulfield placed the book atop the shelves that contained all his other favorite works by Dickens, Swift, Gogol, Kafka, Cervantes and so many others. Since childhood, he had a penchant for classic literature, making him something of an anomaly in the rough and tumble world of police work. Somehow, these authors and their works served a purpose in Caulfield's life, keeping him focused on higher ideals that transcend daily events and ever-shifting codes of morality; something of an eighteenth century man living in the twenty-first century.

It was time to go.

He locked up the cottage and dashed for the black Accord coupe sitting in the street out front. He made his way to Route 9 South and then onto Route 41 East, Yarmouth Boulevard. The Boulevard was a two-lane highway that ran about three miles to the Yarmouth Sound Bridge. For the most part, it was on a very narrow strip of land that was lined with produce stands, bait stands, and the occasional weather-beaten shack that probably belonged to some old-timer who had spent years on the backwaters of Yarmouth Beach resort, catching crabs in the marsh and living a thoroughly *Walden* life. He smelled the vegetation of the marsh combined with the salt air as it crept inside his car. He breathed deeply and felt the tingle of the salty air in his sinuses. The marshlands of the Yarmouth Sound crept right up to the highway. It wasn't unusual to see herons and egrets standing in the shallow waters nearby, waiting for

lunch to swim by. It was also common to see turtles cross the roadway, although they didn't always make it.

As he approached the base of the Yarmouth Sound Bridge, he could see red and blue police lights flashing on the right side shoulder. The strobes danced like fireflies across his rain-soaked windshield. This area was outside of the Yarmouth Beach borough limits, so it was probably a state police officer on a car stop, or maybe a crash. As Caulfield got closer, he saw that it was a state troop car. The way in which it was angled out to the left told Caulfield that this was a traffic stop, not a car crash. He slowed down and drifted into the center of the roadway to give plenty of clearance. Suddenly, he could see that the trooper was actually in a physical struggle with two men in between the troop car and the sport utility vehicle in front of it. The trooper was down on the ground, on his back. Two men stood over him, throwing punches at his head and face. Caulfield slammed on the brakes so hard that his car slid. He hit the hazard light button and slammed the gearshift into Park so quickly the car came to a rocking halt. Jumping out, he ran around to join the melee. It was all the trooper could do to deflect the blows with one hand while protecting his pistol. Caulfield leaped feet first and kicked one of the men in the ribs. He felt at least one of the ribs crack from the impact. The assailant tumbled down a hill into the marsh. Caulfield drew a collapsible baton from his duty belt and slashed it open. The metallic sound was not unlike the racking of a shotgun slide; it tended to get peoples' attention. The second attacker stopped and looked over at Caulfield.

"Okay, man, I'm done, it's over."

"On your knees!" Caulfield canted his body toward the suspect, taking an attack position. The suspect complied.

"Now down on your belly. Put your hands behind your head and lace your fingers."

Caulfield snapped a pair of handcuffs out of his duty belt. He could hear the first assailant struggling in the marsh trying to get back onto dry land. Caulfield hurried, he didn't have much time before the other guy would need to be arrested. He knelt with his right knee into the prone suspect's back and snapped one cuff onto the man's left wrist. He ratcheted both hands back and secured the second cuff on the right wrist. Caulfield stood up and rolled the man onto his side.

The trooper was bleeding profusely from his nose and mouth. He struggled to get up, obviously needing medical attention.

"Hang in there, kid, we'll get you some help," Caulfield told him.

Caulfield reached for his cell phone but at that moment sirens blared in the distance. The trooper must have gotten a distress call out before the beating. To the west, multiple police cars approached at high speed, headlamps and overhead emergency lights flashing like an Independence Day parade. He turned his attention back to the suspect in the marsh. That one was now moaning and holding his side with one hand while clinging to a large shaft of cattails with the other. Caulfield's kick evidently fractured some ribs. He couldn't help but to give a grin, "Damn, that was a good shot," he muttered.

The suspect had pretty much given up trying to get out of the marsh. The marsh bottom was very soft and acted

sort of like quicksand, especially in the rain. The more he struggled, the deeper he was sucked down.

“Just hang on to those reeds awhile, shithead. We’ll throw you a rope and pull you out in a few minutes.”

When the back-up troopers arrived, they dispatched an ambulance to take their buddy to the hospital and took the two suspects into custody. The injured trooper told his buddies there was a bag of pills in the back seat area that he had tried to seize when the suspects attacked him. The back-up troopers recovered a bag of ecstasy pills from inside the suspects’ vehicle and then ordered a tow truck to impound it, as well. Caulfield supplied a brief statement as to what he found and gave the troopers his business card in case they needed any more information later on. He then continued on his way into work over the Yarmouth Sound Bridge.

There were no boats underway in the sound. This was very unusual for a Friday, but the rain seemed to be keeping the boaters off the water. The rain was letting up a bit as he drove onto the island. The causeway from the bridge led right into the center of town, becoming Garfield Parkway, the main drag. Garfield Parkway was lined with the usual shops found in a beach resort: a surf shop, a bookstore, eateries, arcades, a newsstand and three ice cream shops, among others. All of the businesses were open and ready for the holiday crush. Caulfield could smell the symphony of aromas as he slowly drove through town: the sweet smell of funnel cakes, the hearty scent of barbecued chicken, and the tangy air of pizza, all of which lured visitors to their sources.

He drove two blocks to Landis Avenue and made a right turn. The houses in this part of town were rather eclectic. There were singles, twins, duplexes, and apartment

buildings of several different designs and motifs. It was evident that in Yarmouth’s early days, planning and code enforcement were not priorities. This was the oldest part of town; it stood in great contrast to the south end, where the newer properties were located.

The police station sat just two blocks south of Garfield Parkway, at the corner of Landis Avenue and Barnegat Street. It occupied part of a small municipal complex that also contained the fire company and the district court. Yarmouth Beach P.D. was a smaller agency; with just fifteen full-time officers and four seasonal officers. Of course, since it was a 24-hour operation, there was rarely a time when more than ten officers were in the building at the same time, which was a good thing considering the limited space.

At the back door, Caulfield used a swipe card to pass through the security system. As he started down the hallway toward the locker room, Chief Jim Boswell came toward him. The chief was on his way home for the weekend. Boswell was 65. Both his head and his mid-section had acquired quite a bit of real estate over the past 20 years or so that Caulfield had known him. Now balding and portly, he seemed very different from the man Caulfield met all those years ago. Boswell was a desk sergeant when Caulfield was an intern. He still recalled how Boswell used to take charge of the shift and took the time to mentor younger officers. But the years of rotating shifts and dealing with the seamy side of society had taken their toll on old Boswell.

“Hello, Nicholas, is it still raining outside?” he asked.

“Hi, Chief. It’s starting to let up,” replied Caulfield. There had always been an uneasy tension between Caulfield

and Boswell. Boswell is what Caulfield called, “old school”. He arrived for work every day wearing civilian clothes. He stopped at the same store on the way to pick up a newspaper, coffee and a bagel. He headed straight for his office, sometimes closing the door to enjoy his breakfast. Occasionally during the course of the morning, he would come out to use the men’s room or just to check on a strange voice he heard in the lobby or squad room, but for the most part, he rode a desk all day. To Boswell, the evolution of police work stopped about 20 years ago. There was nothing new to learn and no reason to change.

“What’s going on in here today?” Caulfield pressed.

“Oh, nothin’ much,” came the usual response. “Just wrappin’ up for the weekend. I wanna get off the island before the traffic gets too bad out there.”

With that, Boswell slipped past Caulfield and passed through the back door to the parking lot.

“He wouldn’t know it if the whole damn place was on fire,” Caulfield muttered.

Caulfield passed the locker room and stepped into to the squad room. No one was around, so he checked the radio room. Ray King sat in his usual spot, eyes shut, listening to a phone conversation between the dispatcher, Judy Jackson, and someone complaining about a car parked in their space in the south end of town.

“Hi, Ray, what’s going on?”

Ray’s eyes bolted open. “Good God, Nick! Are you trying to kill me?”

Ray was another old-timer in the Department. He started his career shortly after Boswell and for most of his thirty-eight years here, he has been the only African-

American officer on the force. Ray was always well known for his common-sense approach to problems. Caulfield often recalled the many pearls of wisdom Ray bestowed on younger officers over the years. For example, after losing a robbery suspect in a foot chase down Atlantic Avenue during his second summer on the job, the exhausted Caulfield was doubled-over and panting when Ray drove up beside him and told him to get into the car. As they sped off together, King told him, “Son, this is why the good Lord gave us Rugers and Chryslers; you don’t chase nobody.” With that said, they turned the corner at Fern Road and found the suspect on all fours behind a row of yews, vomiting from the exertion.

King calmly got out of the car, handcuffed the suspect, dragged him close and threw him into the back seat. That was classic Ray King—stirred, but never shaken.

Ray had been a sergeant for as long as Caulfield knew him. Caulfield had an abiding respect for him, but knew that, like Boswell, Ray was simply *doing time*, waiting for retirement and not interested in getting involved in anything dangerous or controversial. Ray spent most of his time on the desk, although he was still forced to work rotating shifts, just like Caulfield. He and Ray were peers now; they each supervised a patrol team.

Ray informed Caulfield of a “burglary discovered” this morning in the south end. “It looks like they used the garage door opener from the car parked in the driveway.” He explained how the burglary occurred while the occupants were still at home and that the only thing apparently missing was some liquor from the first floor area and a case of beer from the garage. “Just kids, thank God,” said King,

adding, “The whole family was home sleeping and nobody heard anything.”

Aside from the burglary, the dayshift had the usual calls; false burglar alarms, a few minor auto accidents and a domestic disturbance in a car parked in front of the Yarmouth Savings Bank on Garfield Parkway. The altercation was strictly verbal, so no arrests were made and the pair was sent on their way. Fortunately, they were staying in Oceanside Borough, about four miles north on Route 9, so if they decided to engage in round 2, it would probably be Oceanside PD’s problem. Caulfield spent a few more minutes going through the “blotter” nearby to check the locations and times of the incidents. As he was reading, the phone lines in the radio room lit up like a Christmas display. It was all Judy and Ray could do to answer the successive incoming calls. Caulfield listened to figure out what was happening.

Soon Judy sent out a preliminary dispatch.

“District 4 to all cars, we have a fight at the Shamrock Café, details to follow.”

Judy went back to the phones to gather more information while a chorus of patrol units answered up on the dispatch frequency en route to the Shamrock. Caulfield grabbed a portable radio and keys to a patrol car and ran out the back door. As he turned out of the parking lot, tires screeching from the acceleration, he heard Judy update the dispatch.

“District 4 to cars responding to the Shamrock, the fight is outside of the bar, on the Pacific Avenue side, two subjects involved, no weapons.”

Caulfield slowed down. Two subjects fighting outside the bar was a typical case of two idiots flexing their beer

muscles. The best way to handle that call was to let them punch themselves out; they’re less trouble for the responding cops that way. It would be just a matter of getting medical attention for the loser and locking up the winner for disturbing the peace.

Three of the dayshift officers arrived on location. They declared the situation under control and called for an ambulance to transport one of the combatants. Caulfield cruised by to see if anything else was needed. He grinned, seeing one guy sitting on a curb holding a bar towel to his bleeding head while the other one was in handcuffs being searched by a patrol officer. He had trained all three of these officers and knew they had the situation well under control. He turned off and headed back to the station.

He returned to the squad room to check his mailbox. Already there was one of the officers on Caulfield’s team, George Corbin.

George was an interesting guy. He was the third of the three senior officers in the department. In his 30 years, he had never competed for a promotion. George was never a big fan of responsibility and simply didn’t want the headaches associated with supervising other people. He had been a pretty good street cop over the years; he always exceeded the Department average for tickets issued and arrests made, and he could handle any call, from a parking ticket to a homicide, but he just didn’t aspire to be anything more than he already was, a patrol officer. Now as he was approaching retirement, like Ray King, George usually volunteered to work inside. On every shift Caulfield must assign an officer to work the desk in order to handle walk-in complaints and to watch over the civilian personnel and any prisoners

that may be housed during the tour of duty. Since he would rather work on the street himself, Caulfield usually gave the inside assignments to George.

“Hello, George. How were your days off?” he asked.

“Just fine, Sarge,” replied George.

Everyone called Caulfield “Sarge.”

It wasn't uncommon for patrol officers to use the term for anyone who held the rank of sergeant, but in Caulfield's case, it seemed to have replaced his real name to most officers. Boswell and King were the only members of the department who ever called him by his first name anymore. He still wasn't used to it.

“The wife and I took a ride to Tuckahoe to do some antiquing yesterday,” George continued.

“Really? See anything you liked?” replied Caulfield.

“No, just a lot of junk. I spend hours every year throwing junk away from the garage and basement, and then she goes shopping for more.”

George's kids were grown and out of the house now, so he and his wife, Jill, spent a lot of time doing things like antiquing, making-over rooms in their house and gardening. It seemed George was well on his way to retirement.

2

The dayshift officers brought in the winner of the bar fight at the Shamrock. He wasn't a big guy, but it was obvious he was pumped up on something besides alcohol. He sat in the chair in the booking room. Still handcuffed, he was in constant motion, tapping his foot, flapping his knees back and forth, and moving his head around to stretch his neck muscles. He didn't look too stable, so Caulfield stood by with a stun gun at the ready, while the arresting officers booked this guy.

The other two members of Caulfield's patrol team, Mike Hernandez and Beth Richter came through the security door from the rear parking lot and went directly into the locker rooms. Mike is a full-time officer and Beth is a seasonal officer. A student at West Chester University and working in Yarmouth for her second summer, she was the first female seasonal officer ever hired in Yarmouth, so she had a lot to prove. Hernandez was one of her toughest critics, but she won him over, as she did with just about everyone else in the Department. She turned out to be a real asset to Caulfield's team. Younger officers like Hernandez and Richter usually came to work in civilian clothing and changed in the locker room, whereas older officers came to

Caulfield checked his equipment back into the station for the next patrol team and prepared to leave for the day. Beth had completed all of her reports and was already in the locker room changing back into civilian clothes. Mike still had quite a bit of paperwork to do and elected to stay for a while on overtime. As Caulfield stepped in to the parking lot, he could see that the sun had already begun to rise over Yarmouth Beach. One of the things he loved about this time of year was the length of the days. By 6 a.m., the town was bathed in daylight. At other times of the year, it would still be pitch-black darkness at the end of the night shift.

He made the drive home, took off his uniform and got right into bed, all the while knowing that his rest would be anything but complete. On these night shifts he was lucky to get four hours of sleep. During his entire 20 years in police work, working rotating shifts all the way through, Caulfield had never been able to sleep more than four hours a night on the night shift. This is the part of shift work that kills you. He drifted off to sleep.

The only sound he could hear was the loud humming of the dough-kneading machine. As he took the swinging door

from his partner, the heat coming from the kitchen ovens took Caulfield's breath away. The combination of noise and heat seemed to push him back into the store area, but he pressed on to stay with his partner. They both scanned the kitchen as they passed through the doorway. Caulfield's eyes were still adjusting from the brilliant sunlight outside. The kitchen was dark by comparison and the noise and heat distracted his search.

Suddenly, the clamor of stainless steel vessels crashing onto, and dancing across, the concrete floor, startled them. Steve drew his weapon and yelled out, "Drop the gun, Police!" Caulfield drew his firearm and peered around the corner to see a lone gunman holding Angela with a hand over her mouth and a pistol to her head.

Caulfield bolted up in bed. He looked around the room for a second, then rubbed his eyes and let out a long breath through his mouth. He looked at the clock. It was only 11 a.m. and he was wide-awake. He knew there was no point in trying to get back to sleep.

He sat at the computer to read the daily newspapers while he ate a bowl of Total cereal. The local newspaper, *The Mariner*, was a smalltime rag published in Oceanside. *The Mariner* was a good source to keep abreast of events in the small towns in this area. Today's headlines included 'Deli Requests Zoning Variance in Tuckahoe', 'Two Hurt in Route 9 Crash', and 'Local Merchants Tally Holiday Weekend Receipts'. Typically, it only took a few minutes to read through the daily edition. He then gleaned through the Philadelphia Inquirer for any interesting national news.

After scanning the headlines and finding no stories of interest, Caulfield reached over to his stereo and loaded

one of his favorite compact discs, Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 1, which the composer affectionately called *Titan*. Caulfield sat back and closed his eyes to listen to the smooth rhythms and light orchestration of the first movement. Mahler's *Titan* had always been therapeutic when recovering from the night shift. It started slowly and its pleasant melodic tone began to lift his spirits as it moved from one movement to the next. By the fourth and final movement, *Titan* had Caulfield feeling better and energized. *Titan's* finale was still about the best ever written in classical music and he always looked forward to it.

As with last night, tonight promised to be a busy one, filled with parties, disturbances, auto accidents, and God knows what else. He arrived for work early as usual to get a briefing from Ray King. As he spoke with Ray, Beth had also come in early and was already in the locker room changing.

As Beth exited the locker room, Judy informed Ray that she had just taken a call of a completed burglary on Lotus Lane. Realizing the dayshift was preparing to leave for the day, Caulfield told Ray he and Beth would handle the call. Caulfield and Beth hurriedly put their equipment together, hustled out to their police cars, and headed down to Lotus Lane.

Lotus Lane was in the south end of Yarmouth Beach. Although all the properties in Yarmouth Beach were expensive, the south end contained the most expensive homes on the island. Lotus Lane was about the most expensive street in the south end. The house in question was number seventeen. According to Judy, the homeowner was away all day and returned home this afternoon to find

that somebody had forced open the rear door. The interior of the house had not yet been checked, so Caulfield and Beth would have to do that first when they arrived.

Caulfield wasn't sure which house was number seventeen, but once he pulled onto the street he realized he knew this house well. It was a structure he had admired many times while on patrol, a huge Spanish mission style home with terra-cotta roof, tan stucco walls, and it even had a mission bell on top. The only thing separating it from the beach was a small, short sand dune. As Caulfield and Beth arrived, a woman standing out front waved them down.

She walked over toward the police cars in a low-cut silky summer dress that seemed to flow with her as she moved. Caulfield stepped out to greet her and to tell her to go across the street to speak with them, away from the house—at least until it could be checked. She was in her mid 30s, with shoulder length brown hair and wearing a wide-brimmed straw beach hat with a pink ribbon tied around it, the ends dangling slightly at the back. She walked across the front lawn with the sun at her back. The graceful way she moved held Caulfield's attention for more than a moment.

"Hi," she said. "I was out all day and when I came home I found someone broke through the back door."

Beth asked the usual questions for the report while Caulfield tried not to gawk at the victim. *She's lovely*. She looked like Botticelli's subject in the painting *Birth of Venus*, divinely beautiful.

He broke his gaze long enough to step away and call Gary Miller on the radio to check on his response time. Miller had just cleared a theft report in the north end of

town. His estimated time of arrival was two minutes. Caulfield returned to his gawk while also trying to keep an eye on the residence.

Once Miller arrived on scene, it was time to check the interior. Beth and Caulfield went through the broken back door. The deadbolt was still extended out and the strike plate was ripped right out of the doorjamb. They observed what appeared to be a shoe print on the door near the knob, as if someone had kicked it open. The print resembled a sneaker tread. It was a big foot, maybe a men's size 12.

They slowly stepped inside, keeping vigilant for sounds and any more damage.

The first room appeared to be a sort of mudroom, off the kitchen. Caulfield entered first with Beth right behind him. They passed through a second door and entered the kitchen. From the kitchen, they could see most of the rest of the first floor. Nothing appeared disturbed. They slowly moved through each part of the first floor, opening closets and peering behind furniture. Caulfield took note of the furnishings and décor.

The hacienda motif, timbered ceilings, woven tapestries on the stucco walls, leather seating and dark woods were a perfect complement to the Spanish mission style exterior. They searched the remainder of the first floor until they came to the stairwell leading upstairs. Caulfield motioned to Beth to stay at the bottom while he checked upstairs. This would prevent anyone who might be hiding in the basement from making an escape while they checked the second floor.

Caulfield slowly ascended the staircase and stepped into the second-floor hallway. To the right were two bedrooms

and a hall bath. In the first bedroom, he checked the closet, looked under the bed and left. In the second bedroom, he saw some movement to his left! His heart skipped a beat as he stopped and craned his neck to see. Darting out from under the bed was a black-and-white cat. "Dammit!" he whispered with teeth clenched. He cleared the rest of the second bedroom and then checked the hall bath, making sure there was no one hiding in the shower.

He moved down the hallway toward the master bedroom. On the wall at the entrance to the master bedroom hung a large reprint of Pablo Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)*. *What an odd choice.* Although he was a fan of Picasso's work, *Les Femmes d'Alger* had always been something of a great mystery to Caulfield. Picasso's use of female nudes lured the viewer into an amorous gaze. However the sharp contours of the figures and the African death masks quickly made the viewer realize this was not a composition of beauty or lust; this was a portrait of darkness. This was not a place of pleasure; for Picasso this was a place of disease and death.

The door to the master bedroom was open. Caulfield stepped inside. The king size bed against the far wall was unmade. A couple of drawers stood open. Some dirty laundry was strewn about. There didn't appear to be any ransacking and all the high-end valuables appeared to be intact, like a flat screen TV, a jewelry chest...the usual burglary targets. He took the precaution of checking the closets and underneath the bed, as well as the master bathroom. No sign of intruders.

He returned to Beth's position at the bottom of the stairs. Now it was her turn. They crept over to the basement stairwell. This time Caulfield stayed behind

while Beth descended the stairs to search the basement. During searches like this, speaking was allowed only when absolutely necessary. Most communications were done through hand signals, so training was critical. Beth knew what was expected of her and returned to give Caulfield a thumbs up sign, indicating everything appeared normal.

Once they cleared each room and determined there was no one in the residence, they stepped back outside to bring in the homeowner. Beth continued taking basic information from her. Her name was Donna Sauver. She and her husband Richard Sauver were the owners. Donna told Beth she was the only one living here at that time. She and Richard were separated. Caulfield listened to the conversation between Beth and Sauver while at the same time placing a cell phone call to Detective Cheryl D'Agostino.

"Hello Cheryl, this is Nick. We just cleared the interior of the house at seventeen Lotus Lane. Someone kicked in the back door, but as of yet, nothing seems to be missing. Would you mind coming to take a look?"

"Is there much damage?" Cheryl replied.

"Nothing at all that we can find, besides the back door," replied Caulfield. He added, "We're not even sure anyone got in just yet, but if they did there might be something of forensic value." Cheryl indicated she would be out in 15 minutes.

Caulfield rejoined the conversation between Beth and Donna. They walked through each room of the house so Donna could look inside to determine if anything was missing or otherwise out of place. In the dining room on the first floor, she noticed that a cabinet door was ajar. She reached down for the small door to open it further, but Caulfield instinctively grabbed her arm.

“Hold on, Mrs. Sauver. We want to preserve the door for possible fingerprints.” Still holding her arm, he took a pen from his shirt pocket and used it to open the door wide. He slowly released her arm and realized she didn’t seem to be in any hurry to get it back. Donna peered inside the cabinet and saw that several bottles of liquor were missing. “Oh, it looks like somebody’s gonna have a party,” she said. Donna explained that there appeared to be a full bottle of rum, an open bottle of vodka, and an open bottle of whiskey missing from the cabinet.

“We better check the basement. I have quite a bit of wine down there,” she said.

“Okay, let’s finish up here first, then we’ll go down,” Caulfield replied.

After finding nothing amiss on the rest of the first floor, Donna, Beth, and Caulfield checked the basement. Once at the foot of the steps, Donna told the others, “This is my little bodega.” She led them over to a wall sized rack that was about half-full of wine bottles. There were approximately a dozen bottles in the rack. “Yeah, there are about five or six bottles missing; I can tell. Let’s see, three cabernets, a chardonnay, no two chardonnays.”

Everything else in the basement seemed untouched. The officers then took Donna to the second floor. After peering into each room, Donna was satisfied that everything appeared normal. They then sat down at the kitchen table to make a list of the missing items.

Cheryl D’Agostino appeared at the back door. She had a camera in one hand and a latent print recovery kit in the other. Cheryl was about the same age as Caulfield, but she had been on Yarmouth P.D. longer. She had over 20 years

with the department, and had spent the last 10 years as the sole detective. She was small in stature with an average build. She had a rather husky voice and usually dressed in khakis and a collared shirt. As a matter of fact, no one at Yarmouth P.D. had ever seen Cheryl in anything but khakis or, in her younger days, a uniform.

Caulfield went to the back door to let her in. “Hello Cheryl, how are you?”

“Hi Sarge, what do we have?”

Caulfield showed Cheryl the damage to the back door and explained about the missing booze. She went about her business, taking photographs of the back door as well as photographs of the liquor cabinet in the dining room and the wine rack in the basement. She attempted to lift some latent fingerprints at the most potentially fruitful points around the house to include the damaged door and on the liquor cabinet, however no classifiable prints were found. Cheryl decided to take the smudged and partial fingerprints anyway, carefully lifting them off the surfaces with tape, and mounting them onto index cards for examination later. Caulfield spent his time between Beth and Cheryl. He heard bits and pieces of Donna’s story to Beth regarding her failing marriage. It sounded like a story he had heard hundreds of times over the past 20 years on this job.

Once Cheryl was done collecting evidence, Caulfield examined the back door more closely to see if it could be secured. The thrust had caused too much damage to the lock receiver and to the doorjamb for the door to be properly locked. He suggested to Donna that she call a locksmith. Caulfield handed her his business card and asked her to call if she had any questions or if she discovered anything else

missing. He and Beth returned to the station and met with Cheryl in her second floor office to discuss the case. Beth briefed Cheryl on her conversation with Donna.

“Does she have any kids?” asked Cheryl.

“Yeah, she has a fourteen year old daughter,” replied Beth.

Cheryl looked at Caulfield. “I’m sure you saw the blotter from Friday; we had a similar break on Morning Glory Road. In that job, they climbed through an unlocked window, but they took the same things...just liquor and wine. It’s gotta be kids.”

“We’ll keep a watch on the Point tonight to see if anyone shows up,” replied Caulfield.

The Point was the southern tip of the island, formally known as Yarmouth Point. It was an undeveloped tract of land at the inlet between the ocean and Yarmouth Sound; a popular hangout for teens because of the lack of lighting and lack of adult supervision. Caulfield and Cheryl were of the same mind. If kids were breaking into houses for booze, it was a good bet they would turn up at the Point for a party sometime this weekend.

Caulfield instructed Beth to remain at the station and complete the burglary case file with Cheryl. He heard on the radio that Mike had been busy with fender-bender accidents and noise complaints, but he was just dispatched to what sounded like a serious crash on Ocean Avenue at Farragut Road. The caller stated that the driver was trapped in the vehicle, so Corbin also dispatched fire company personnel for a possible rescue. Caulfield left the station to assist Mike.

The intersection of Ocean Avenue and Farragut Road was an unusual one. Ocean Avenue ran parallel to the

beach through the motel district and came to an end at Farragut Road. It was a 3-way intersection, so drivers headed south along Ocean Avenue had to turn right or left. On the far side of the intersection was “The Shogun,” one of Yarmouth’s many theme motels, complete with a larger than life Japanese samurai warrior at every entrance and mock teahouse exteriors on all of the guest rooms. Caulfield approached the accident from the Farragut Road side. A crowd of people had gathered around the side of the intersection where the parking lot of “The Shogun” adjoined the hotel swimming pool. Mike was already on location and just notified Corbin that there was no entrapment. Caulfield continued into the scene where a white Mercedes straddled the concrete steps leading up to the pool. Mike stood alongside the driver’s door, knocking on the window and yelling at the driver to get out of the car. The Mercedes’ engine was accelerating, spewing a cloud of diesel smoke into the air and causing one of the rear tires to rub against the concrete steps with a whirring noise. Red brake lamps came on periodically, slowing the whirring noise of the errant tire.

Mike saw Caulfield walking toward him and yelled, “This guy’s still driving the car.”

“What?” Caulfield asked.

“He’s so drunk, he thinks he’s still driving the car.”

Sure enough, when Caulfield looked through the passenger side window, he saw a white male, about 35 years old with two hands on the steering wheel, staring straight ahead, with that blank gaze and open mouth that drunks display when they hit the upper limits of blood-alcohol content (BAC). At one point the driver lethargically

reached up and adjusted the rear view mirror—as if that would help.

The doors of the Mercedes were all locked. Caulfield went back to his car for a lockout kit. The fire rescue unit arrived, so he asked them to keep the crowd back from the scene while he and Mike extricated the drunk. The ambulance had been re-called when Mike advised there was no entrapment, but Caulfield asked Corbin to dispatch them again because this guy probably wouldn't be able to stand up when they got him out of the car.

Caulfield was able to open the passenger side door and unlocked all the doors from there. Mike opened the driver's door and received nothing but a blank stare from the driver. With the aid of two firefighters, Mike lifted the driver out of the vehicle. As expected, the driver was unable to stand, so Mike propped him against a wall to keep him upright. The driver made several attempts at speech but was unable to utter anything comprehensible. Mike took the information he needed for the crash report from the glove box and the operator's wallet and summoned a tow truck. When the ambulance arrived, Caulfield and the firefighters assisted in getting the man on his feet and onto a stretcher.

"Ask the ER staff to draw blood for BAC analysis," he requested of the medics, adding, "Mike Hernandez will be down shortly to pick it up."

Now both Mike and Beth were tied up, so Caulfield spent the next couple of hours fielding calls of noise complaints, erratic driving complaints, and a theft report. By 3 a.m., things were pretty quiet. Beth and Mike had completed their assignments and were back in service.

The following night, Sunday night, started off slowly, but at about midnight, Corbin received a call for assistance from Oceanside Borough PD for a large-scale fight in progress at a nightclub called "Cancun" on the bay. Apparently, two groups were fighting and had already torn the bar apart. Oceanside put out a regional request for assistance, which meant anywhere from 50-100 cops would be en route. Caulfield instructed Beth to stay in Yarmouth and for Corbin to come out onto the street with her. Meanwhile Caulfield and Mike headed for "Cancun". Cops called this type of dispatch an away game. Away games were usually interesting because there was almost always a major incident involved, and because it provided an opportunity to meet up with a lot of colleagues from across the region. More often than not, the incident was over, or at least downgraded, by the time the assisting officers arrived, so the whole event became a big "cop meeting". The same was true of this dispatch. When Caulfield and Mike arrived, there were already units on location from Dennis Township, Swainton Borough, the state police and several other agencies. Oceanside P.D. had four subjects in custody, plus three others en route to the hospital for injuries sustained in the melee. No officers were injured, but the club was a wreck. Outside, there was a lot of broken glass and several bar stools tossed around. Caulfield and Mike took a look inside. Entire shelves of liquor bottles had been smashed. One section of the bar had been pushed over, mirrors were shattered, and lighting from the small stage was pulled down to the floor.

"Holy shit, what a mess! That was some fight," exclaimed Mike.

They hung out for a while to chat with some of the other attendees, but kept a vigilant ear to the radio in case Beth and Corbin needed anything back home. Soon, Oceanside cancelled the assist request, leaving Mike and Caulfield no choice but to return to Yarmouth. The rest of the shift was relatively quiet.



After working the long holiday weekend on the night shift, Monday was a recovery day. For Caulfield, as with most cops, it was a day to stay close to home, relax and wait for the hangover of the night shift to pass. This was also the day that so many tourists would be leaving Yarmouth and headed for home, so it was a good idea to stay off the roadways. He spent the afternoon watching a Phillies game. Since childhood, he had been a diehard Phillies fan... through the good seasons and the bad.

Tuesday was a bright, glorious day. Caulfield decided to spend it on the beach. The crowds had gone and the town was peaceful once again. The drive was an easy one and there was plenty of parking. The actual beach in Yarmouth Beach was one of the best on the east coast, which explained why the town was so popular in the summer months. The beach area was wide enough so that even at high tide, there was plenty of room to accommodate the largest holiday weekend crowds, and the fine-grain, white sand was carefully groomed each day by the town's Public Works Department, giving it an added inviting appearance. On the north end of the island, the beach was lined with independent hotels and motels, large and small. In the town's early days, it was

Realistic life on the beat in a small police department.

That Which We are

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