

A cold case double-homicide leads to a haunting tale of intrigue that includes biker gangs, organized crime and antique gold. The search for justice unveils a surprise conclusion while captivating a small Appalachian mountain community.

If Trees Could Testify...
A novel based on the true story of Madison
County's infamous Gahagan murder

By William D. Auman

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*"A case that represents stranger than life events that
should be told on the silver screen."*

— Fred Hughes, former Publisher/Editor of the *Madison News-Record and Sentinel*

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Prologue

On Friday, July 29, 1983, Grady Gahagan, age 83, and his sister Bonnie Gahagan, age 79, were brutally shot and killed in their Georgian-style home across from Laurel Creek in Madison County, North Carolina. Known for their collection of antiques, gold, and silver coins, it was naturally assumed that robbery was the principal motive for the double homicide. The murders of the siblings captivated a close-knit rural community for nearly two decades, as the local family roots of the victims dated all the way back to the early 1800s.

George Robert Washington Gahagan established his family's position in Madison County after purchasing over 8,000 acres of land, beginning in 1835. After acquiring his huge tracts of land, George entered the timber industry. By 1901, his son William Wade Gahagan and wife Mellie had constructed the home which would ultimately prove to be the site where two of their children would meet with disaster some 82 years hence. Every room in the elegant house was once filled with furniture made from the same virgin timber used in its construction, including a massive roll-top desk that was stolen along with other items by the perpetrators.

The bodies were discovered by Grady's son, Jeter Gahagan, who came by to visit his father and aunt during the early afternoon hours of July 30, 1983. Jeter found both victims lying on the kitchen floor of the residence, each having been shot twice with .38 caliber entry wounds to the chest and head. There were no signs of a struggle. Among other items missing were several thousand dollars in cash and a collection of gold and silver coins that were stored in a footlocker in Grady's bedroom.

During the years that followed the murders, a period that saw the home having been boarded up and abandoned, local folks rumored that they had occasionally seen the house lit up like a Christmas tree on the inside after dark. There were also stories where the ghost of an elderly woman, walking and swinging a lantern, would often appear on Highway 208, which runs alongside the property. Some locals have also reported seeing this apparition standing in a window on the second floor of the home during the time that it was vacant.

Suspects came and went as the case investigation spanned three different sheriff administrations. "Who done it" rumors abounded, with theories of involvement ranging from organized crime to outlaw biker gangs to even local family members. Many in the

community felt that legendary Sheriff E.Y. Ponder, who was in office at the time of the incident, was the only one who knew for certain the true identities of the actual culprits. If local legend holds true, Ponder took that secret to the grave with him. Sheriff Ponder was a distinguished and intelligent gentleman who actually testified, along with his brother Zeno, as a witness for my former client Mamie Bishop during her 1992 capital murder trial in Buncombe County.

Almost eighteen years after the Gahagans were murdered, on April 30, 2001, warrants were finally issued charging Conley Cutshall, age 65, and his sons Harold, 43, and Randy, 42, of Greeneville, Tennessee, with two counts each of first-degree murder. They were arrested the following day and spent roughly a year in custody awaiting trial.

This book should be categorized as a fictional mystery novel which is based on the true story of the killings and subsequent prosecution of the Cutshalls. I, the author, was the attorney for Conley Cutshall, who was ultimately perceived by law enforcement to be the leader and organizer behind the alleged events. Of the more than sixty murder cases that I have handled during my career as a defense attorney, this one continues to haunt me in a unique, most troubling way. Perhaps it is because the facts represent one of those,

as Fred Hughes, then the publisher and editor of the *Madison News-Record and Sentinel*, commented, “stranger than life events.” Then again, maybe it is due to the fact that justice was arguably never served for anyone involved in the process.

In this fictional account, names have been changed to protect the innocent (as well as the potentially guilty), together with those directly connected to the actual case. I plead guilty to taking an author’s liberty to sensationalize some characters in varying degrees, and also to creating others predicated upon a basis of interaction and imagination through the years. Although similarities to lives in being may at times parallel by coincidence, any negative corollary that may be inferred is unintentional. Keep in mind as well that the development of the mystery is being relayed through the perspective of a defense attorney. Although we try to learn all we can about the cases that we take on, we are certainly not privy to all events that transpire, thus some degree of conjecture is inevitable.

On a final note, I will cite the iconic Mark Twain as part of my disclaimer, who famously quoted “Truth is stranger than Fiction, but it is because Fiction is obligated to stick to possibilities, and Truth is not.” In the case at bar, those remarks resonate within a background of truth.

Chapter One – *A phone call rocks Mayberry*

IT WAS a typical morning on April 23, 2001, in the rural mountain refuge of Madison County in western North Carolina. The beauty of spring in the southern Appalachians was showing its true colors, as the hills were turning green with the scent of life awakening from snowfall and a long winter's nap. The song of the river swallows echoed loudly as young Sheriff Jesse Payne arrived at his office next to the Norfolk-Southern railroad tracks and the magnificent French Broad River. Known by the Cherokee as the "Long Man," the French Broad is thought to be the third oldest river in the world and runs right through the middle of Marshall, the county seat and a town known for being "a mile long, a street wide, and hell deep."

Marshall, originally called Lapland but later named for U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall, is a historic small town nestled between rock outcroppings and the river. It is home not only to the 1907 Courthouse but also to the Allen House, constructed in 1849 and the location where Union sympathizer Elisha Tweed shot and killed Sheriff Ransom Merrill, a Confederate supporter, on May 13, 1861. Jesse, a native son, was not thought to be related

to either Tweed or Merrill, but his family ties were tethered within the heart of the county which, although home to the Cherokee for centuries, was settled in large part by Scottish and Irish immigrants during the colonial era. At 35 years of age, he was the youngest Sheriff ever to be elected in this politically divided section of Appalachia. Consequently, he strived to prove himself worthy of the public confidence, not any easy task by any means. Going back to the days of the Civil War, when it was literally brother against brother in some families, political allegiances still ran deep from the hollows to the small towns. Little did Jesse know how this particular day would come to change the life of so many for so long, some of whom would never recover from what was yet to come.

“Mornin’ Sheriff. Nice day ain’t it?” said Deputy Otis Moore, a long-time stalwart of the Madison community of law enforcement who had always seemed to get by without any formal training in the field. In fact, Otis had managed to survive two previous sheriff administrations with his job intact. He was a likeable fellow who never seemed to be a political victim on election day, perhaps due to his jovial and easy-going nature. About as big around as he was tall, he always wore a smile and never met a stranger during his 60+ years in his native county.

“Howdy Otis. I just had my sausage biscuit up on the by-pass. Man, was it good! Any news for me?”

“Susie was askin’ about whether or not you was here, said you got some long distance collect call or something from somewheres up north,” replied Otis in his signature southern drawl.

“Hmmm, that could be important. Where’d she get to? I didn’t see her out front at the reception desk?”

“I think she ran out for some coffee, but I ‘spect she’ll be back in a jiffy.”

Sheriff Payne walked back to his office, picking up a copy of the local paper along the way, and kicked back to read the news of the day. He was quite the surprise politician, having worked his way up through the ranks of law enforcement in “big city” Asheville, then returning to his hometown where he successfully unseated a long-term predecessor. Not a large man in stature, Payne made up for his lack of size with a high degree of athleticism and mental toughness. He was a bright young man, hell bent on bringing Madison County’s finest up to par and on equal professional footing with their brothers-in-arms throughout the state.

Jesse came by his “sheriffing” naturally, since word has it he was named in part for the infamous Jesse James Bailey, a county legend due to his war on moonshiners back in the days of prohibition. This Jesse, however, was prone to throw a few back from time to time. He would never do so on Sunday, however, where you could always find him at the 11:00 service sitting alongside his fellow Southern Baptist parishioners with nary a scent of alcohol upon his breath.

As he began to doze off from reading the uneventful news of the day, he was all of a sudden startled by a screeching voice.

“Sheriff! Come quick! That guy is a callin’ again, says he is in Ohio and needs to talk with you about something very important!” yelled out Susie Burrows, having just returned from getting her requisite daily dose of caffeine. Jesse awoke from his newspaper daydream to see the frantic face of his middle-aged secretary all wrinkled up with a combination of fear and excitement. “He says he’s in jail!”

“Susie, how ‘bout transfer the call back to my office so I won’t have to talk in front of you and the rest of my eavesdropping staff? Would that be okay?”

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The secretary muttered a disappointed “yes sir” and retreated back to her perch at the reception desk. Jesse picked up the phone and the voice on the other end was none other than Snake Hagen, calling collect from Ohio.

Chapter Two – *Flashback:* ***A trip to East Tennessee***

SNAKE HAGEN was not exactly the type of guy that you would want to take your daughter to the prom, much less bring home to dinner. He probably could have taken over the local chapter of the Hell's Angels or Outlaws if there had been such, but since there wasn't he chose to create his own local brand of biker gang. Standing well over 6 feet tall and the size of a professional football linebacker, he was an imposing figure even with his protruding beer gut that he nourished daily. He claimed to be related to Blackbeard the pirate, and his long bushy hair and beard of the same hue caused one to seriously consider the assertion.

Another unique feature that added to the mystique of Snake was his hands... he had none. Some say that he lost them in a bar fight; others claim it was the result of an accidental fire. Nevertheless, his prosthetic hooks were quite intimidating unto themselves, particularly since they formed both the beginning and end of the cobra tattoos that were embedded on each forearm. For a man in his early 30s, he was not someone that you wanted to reckon with.

“Hey Damian, go get Bubba in the truck and call over to Owen and Denise’s bar to see if any of the girls there want to join us on our camping trip to the river tonight! I don’t want any Girl Scouts, just hotties who like to have a good time. You’ve got that delivery to make, so might as well have some fun while you’re at it.” Snake and his buddies were always ready for a party, and this Saturday night was no exception to the rule. “If they want to join us on the creek, you’ll need to pick up some extra brew and grab another jug of white lightning when you get over there,” he added.

Damian Crow was another local hoodlum, for lack of a better word, who had spent at least half of his adult life in either state prison or county lockup. At the ripe old age of 25, he still had many years ahead of him to wreak havoc on those who got in the way of his good times. He was the perfect sidekick for Snake. “Okay, but if I go over to Tennessee and find me some wild women, you know that I might not make it back.”

“If you don’t make it back before six I will personally come a hunting you and you’ans will so wish that you never made that decision. I want my money TODAY, dammit!” Snake meant that, and Damian knew it. One thing that he had learned through the years was not to cross his buddy, the last time

having resulted in a broken rib from the butt end of a pool cue.

“Alright Bubba, get your head out of your ass and let’s get on the road.” Bubba Junior was the younger sibling of an elder Bubba, who it was said to have been related to both his mother and father’s first-cousin once-removed. No one seemed to know or remember his surname, but local folks say that the Harley Davidson Fatboy was designed with all 275 pounds of Bubba in mind. Cross-eyed since birth, he could easily have been part of the *Deliverance* cast if Burt Reynolds had only made his acquaintance prior to filming. Too bad he had never learned how to play the banjo.

Damian and Bubba cranked up the former’s 1972 F-150, a reliable old truck that was well-suited to housing Harleys (or drunken bikers in the bed if the need were to arise) and took off for the thirty-minute ride to the Tennessee state line. This part of the Volunteer State, en route to Newport (a strange name for a town that has no port), was well off the beaten path and consequently a popular destination for drug-runners, moonshine smugglers, and other upstanding ne’re-do-wells that the local biker crowd ran with. This was the same stretch of highway where the legendary

Hollywood moonshiner known as Robert Mitchum had filmed parts of *Thunderoad* back in 1958.

“Helloooo, Gorgeous!” Damian had spotted Denise Shelton coming out of the tavern wearing her typical summer attire—Daisy Duke shorts and a tube top. She waved a greeting of welcome. With her long dark hair and tanned, toned legs, she could have been on the cover of *Playboy* or the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit edition. Denise, a former exotic dancer, had married into the Shelton clan of the Laurel area in Madison County, one of the oldest original families to have settled in these mountains after the Trail of Tears roundup in 1838. Her husband Owen had set up the family bar just across the state line so that he would be just out of the reach of Sheriff Payne’s long arm of the law.

Folks in Madison frowned on drinking back then, with Hot Springs being the only place you could buy it legally other than “The Store” near Marshall. The latter was run by distant relatives of Snake, who claimed that the site was just over the Buncombe County line when in fact it was probably not. Google maps did not exist back when it was built, and law enforcement didn’t seem to care too much about it. Nevertheless, the bars in Tennessee offered some degree of isolation for the biker crowd.

For a fleeting moment, Damian toyed with the idea of inviting Denise to join them for a camping adventure, but about that time a backwoods hippie, athletic and 6'2" with hair longer than his wife's, emerged from the bar with a cold beer in his hand. After all, it was already noon in Tennessee and five o'clock somewhere. "Damian, I warned you about flirting with my sweet thang. One of these days I'm going to have to jack you up and hang you next to my dart board so my customers can throw at the apple that will be on your head." Owen was just kidding, but Damian wasn't so sure.

"So what brings you and Bubba out to these parts today?"

"Didn't Snake tell you that we was a coming? We got a delivery to make and figured we might as well try to score us some party chicks to bring back to camp while we're at it!"

"Last time I saw Snake I was falling down drunk to the point I couldn't tell you what day it was. Let's go inside and grab a brew, but it's too early for the working girls to be gittin out of bed. It was a wild time in here last night and we didn't close up until 3 a.m."

"Okay," the somewhat dejected Damian replied. "I'll be right behind you. Hey, Bubba, go git those 12-

packs of Coke out of the truck box and bring them inside,” Damian called out. Bubba went to retrieve the boxes, which did not contain any soft drinks but were packed full of what was commonly known as “dirt weed,” native-grown marijuana that Snake’s boys would harvest in support of the local economy. After all, it was Madison County’s largest cash crop and many poor farmers would grow it to supplement their meager incomes. He then followed Damian into the bar.

Shelton’s Tavern was much nicer on the inside than it appeared from the road. The rectangular bar shined with a high gloss finish over what appeared to be mahogany, and the stools were leather backed complete with arm rests. A few tables and chairs were scattered around a Zenith television in the main room , and two pool tables separated that part of the bar from the rear area. The back room was where the bar girls sometimes made some extra money doing things that local law enforcement didn’t care too much about back then. Owen’s office was just down a small hall that connected to the rear of the bar. That way he could, as he put it, “ski-daddle out the back door if the law were to come a callin’.”

“Alright, Gentlemen, time for business. Denise, grab us each a cold one and come join us in the office.”

Owen led the way down the hall with Damian and Bubba in tow.

Once the crew was inside the office with beer in hand and the door locked, it was time to break out the scale. The pot weighed in just shy of two pounds. With prices running approximately \$100 an ounce back in those days, the soft drinks had an approximate street value of over \$3000.00.

“Well boys, that means I give you a 40% cut based on my longstanding relationship with Snake.” Owen opened the locked drawer in his desk and began to count out twelve Ben Franklins. “This ain’t nothing but a drop in the bucket for me, but I’ll keep doing it since it helps Snake out. Ya’ll know I have a few other ways to turn out cash, but when the hell are ya’ll gonna start making some real money?”

“If you are talking about coke, I’m not getting into that. Too dangerous,” Damian replied.

Denise was the first to laugh at that one. “I’ve seen you both in here shit-faced and bragging about how you rolled some tourists, took their money, and spent it all on beer, liquor and cheeseburgers. What are you scared of? You have plenty of guns and you’ve never been accused of having too much common sense!”

“I’m not talking about coke anyway, dumbass. I can’t move that in without gettin’ too much attention.” Owen was well known to wear a variety of hats, and his links to organized crime ranged all the way up through the Ohio Valley. Over the years he had garnered some unwanted publicity from law enforcement, which was why he tended to stick to marijuana and his fencing operation, the latter being what he was referring to as a money maker. Outside of the feds, he wasn’t too concerned about interference from the local powers-that-be unless he were to expand his business interests into other areas.

“I got some information the other day from a customer up your way that you might find to be very interesting.” Owen now had their undivided attention.

“Do tell.” Damian and Bubba leaned forward in their chairs with their ears perked with curiosity.

“You know that crazy drunkard, Festus Ball, from out in Big Laurel?”

“Sure do,” Damian replied, with Bubba nodding in the affirmative.

Even Bubba knew Festus, for just about everyone in the northern part of Madison County had crossed paths with the Ball clan from time to time. After all,

they were another of the original founding families that had helped settle the area way-back-when in the pioneer era. The family had made their fortune in the lumber industry, selling off old-growth portions of timber from the huge tracts of land that were purchased by the timber barons in the early 1800s. Festus, however, had never been able to hold down a job and spent most of his time bumming money from his family and friends to support his drinking habit. He had plenty of neglected land that surrounded his old single-wide trailer.

Owen continued. “Well, he was up here last week trying to get me to extend his bar tab. He said he would bring me a gold coin to pay up what he owed and then some. I didn’t believe him at first, but then he started telling me about how these old, distant relatives of his, a brother and sister, had a bunch of money and antiques hidden in their house. He claimed he had been over there to help them out with odd jobs from time to time and on one occasion they paid him with a golden eagle from the late 1800s.”

“So what did you do?” Bubba, who could hardly contain himself, was sitting on the edge of his seat and had to know.

“I told him that I didn’t believe him and to get the hell out of here, but there may be something to it. If there is, I sure didn’t want to let on that I thought so.”

“Knowing Festus like I have over the years, I wouldn’t believe him. He would try to sell a Bible to a preacher if he thought he could get a drink out of it.” Damian interjected, while demonstrating his ability to tell a straight-faced lie as well as anyone in the county. He really couldn’t wait to tell Snake about Festus, but sure as hell didn’t want Owen meddling in their business. Not just yet, anyway.

“Thanks for the brew my friend. Me and Bubba gotta hit the road. Happy trails until the next harvest gets picked in a couple of weeks. We’ll come by later in the day next time. Mind if take a piss and make a quick call before we head out?”

“Sure, go ahead. You can use the phone behind the bar.”

Damian left the others in the back room while he hit the trough-style urinal, then went around to the bar which was still deserted at this hour. He quickly dialed Snake’s number and spoke quietly. “We picked up \$1200.00, but no women in sight except for Denise,” he reported.

“Not a problem, I just bailed out the Allen sisters and they are ready to rumble.” Snake replied. Damian could hear loud laughter and music in the background. “They got into it last night outside of the Depot and starting clawing at each other. Otis had to break it up and take them to the tank for the night. All appears to be forgiven today.”

“I do have some interesting news but can’t talk now. See if the girls know anything about Festus Ball and his relatives that live up on Laurel Creek. I’ll explain later. We’re heading out.”

“Don’t forget to bring me some of Owen’s firewater. These girls are ready to party!”

“Will do.” Damian hung up and turned around to see that the lovely Denise had entered the bar area. He wasn’t sure what she might have heard but played it cool.

“Always good to see you, Darlin’; don’t be a stranger!” Denise smiled as Damian made his way around the bar towards the door. Bubba was already in the truck and had gotten the moonshine. Damian grinned and waved goodbye, but he remained in a daydream with thoughts full of treasure chests and long legs as the old truck sprang to life for the trip

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back over the mountain. He had some news to discuss with Snake.

Chapter Three – *A quiet summer night from 1983*

THE LAST RAYS of sun were painting a cloud-lined rainbow of orange and violet hue over the western ridge of the Walnut Mountains. Even though their white columned, colonial-style home sat deep in the valley next to Big Laurel Creek, Jed and Rebecca Barkley still enjoyed a pastoral view from their rocking chairs on the wooden porch. The July dog days of summer were in full force, but the mountain air was refreshing and cool every day about this time as the sun disappeared behind the westerly mountains. With the onset of firefly light and a hint of honeysuckle in the air, it was the perfect time of the evening for relaxing and chit-chat. Rebecca had just returned from visiting her niece, Mary Ramsey, who lived just a short walk down the road.

“Did you bring in those tomatoes from the greenhouse like I asked you to?” Rebecca inquired of her older brother as she walked up the front stairway. Jed was gifted with a green thumb for gardening, and relished his “better boy” tomatoes perhaps most of all. Accordingly, the siblings raised all kinds of vegetables as well, from snap beans and corn to potatoes, squash, and onions. As summer approached, they would move

the plants out from the greenhouse and into their freshly tilled garden plot.

“When have I not always done what you tell me as soon as you have told me to do it?” Jed chuckled in response. He did like to tease his younger sister from time to time. “I brought ‘em in a few hours ago, but I hid them from you so that you wouldn’t eat ‘em all before I got my fair share!”

“Well, if that’s the idea, then you can forget having my curried tomatoes for supper tomorrow night,” Rebecca shot back at her brother in a joking manner.

“In that case, you might want to look in the wicker bucket next to the pantry.” Jed did have a taste for those luscious, curried tomatoes.

Rebecca was quite the cook but was also adept at making soap, knitting, canning produce, and doing just about anything else a typical mountain woman born around the turn of the 20th century could do. As a child she would help her mother with all kinds of tasks, including churning butter. Small in stature, she made up for her lack of size with her spunk and stubborn nature. She could be quite a handful when riled, but was a sweet and caring woman for the most part. Such was one of the reasons that Jed had moved back in

with her after his wife passed and he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer.

The Barkley home, built between 1901 and 1904, was about as elegant as houses got in the coves and hollers of Madison County. Antique furniture, including a spinning wheel that Rebecca still used from time to time, was found in virtually every room. Paintings that had been handed down for generations hung from many walls, and Tiffany lamps adorned several accent tables. The hardwood flooring throughout the ground floor was of the finest virgin Chestnut, old-growth timber that was harvested well before the blight of the early 1900s wiped out those monolithic giants of the Appalachian forests. The kitchen and formal dining areas may not have rivaled those of George Vanderbilt's nearby "Biltmore" mansion, but they were certainly not lacking in either china or silver.

The biggest treasure within the home, however, was arguably the collection of golden eagles and silver certificates, not to mention significant quantities of both Morgan and Peace silver dollars. It would be hard to place a definitive value on what would eventually become someone else's plunder, but suffice it to say that a small fortune was hidden away within the homestead. The whereabouts of the booty, however,

were presumably known only to Jed and Rebecca, or so it seemed.

The Barkley family, although patriotic where it counted, had a typical mountain clan distrust of government in general. Consequently, they never did turn in their gold or silver during the 1933 recall and had ignored the federal executive order. Jed also had an aversion to banks and would always cash out his social security checks. He would often go to the store with a few thousand dollars in cash in his wallets, both of which he kept in the front pockets of his overalls. Some say that he hid large amounts of greenbacks that featured Ben Franklin's photograph under his mattress as well.

About the time that his sister went inside to check on the fruits from their garden, the roaring sound of motorcycle engines took over the peaceful serenade that the siblings had been enjoying, courtesy of a vocal choir represented largely by bullfrogs and cicadas. Upon hearing the noise, Rebecca ran back out to the porch just in time to see three Harleys with two scantily clad women hanging on to their respective bikers zoom by on highway 208.

“What in the blazes do those characters think they are doing? It’s getting late and I don’t care to hear all that raucous!” Rebecca was slightly agitated.

Jed thought for a minute and a twinkle came to his eye. “Too bad they were going so fast that I didn’t get a good look at the women. I might be an old man but I can still walk the talk, and I could sure do the talking back in the day.” Jed had been just a wee bit on the rowdy side, to put it politely, when he was a young man. He still enjoyed the outdoors but had given up hunting in favor of fishing. Rainbow, brown and the native brook trout were always plentiful in the streams of Madison, with Shelton Laurel, Spring Creek and the Ivy River being a few of Jed’s favorite haunts. The cancer had slowed him some, but he was still cantankerous and fairly active for a man his age.

“Oh, you, you...,” Rebecca couldn’t finish the thought. Being the life-long Baptist that she was, she had to stifle herself sometimes when she didn’t share her brother’s sense of humor. The Lord might forgive her for cursing at him, but she didn’t want to take the chance.

“Don’t worry, Becca. They are probably camping up on the creek and I doubt we’ll be hearing much

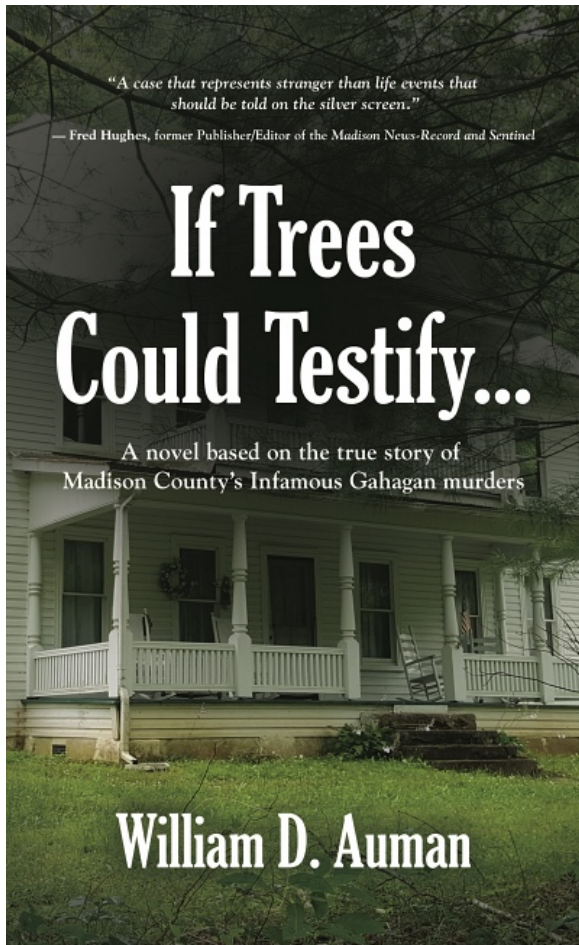
more from them once it gets dark. You go take your bath and get ready for bed.”

“I’ll take my bath when I so choose, thank you very much.”

Jed had never been one to stay up much past 8 or 9 at night, unless it was a “firewater” laden fishing or hunting trip. It was already 9:00, which seemed somewhat late to his 83-year-old frame. The tall and slender man was still quite spry in spite of his health issues, but when a man gets up at the crack of dawn every day he needs his shut-eye. He gathered himself to his feet and went inside.

Hearing the sound of bath water running, Jed smiled to himself. It was the perfect time and opportunity for his nightly bedtime ritual—a couple of swigs from the jug of hooch that he kept in the closet next to his bed. His sister may think that alcohol was a tool of the devil, but Jed was true to his hillbilly roots and saw the natural tonic as a sleeping aid.

He turned up the jug a couple of times and then turned in himself. Little did he know that those final sips would be his last taste of the local recipe.



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