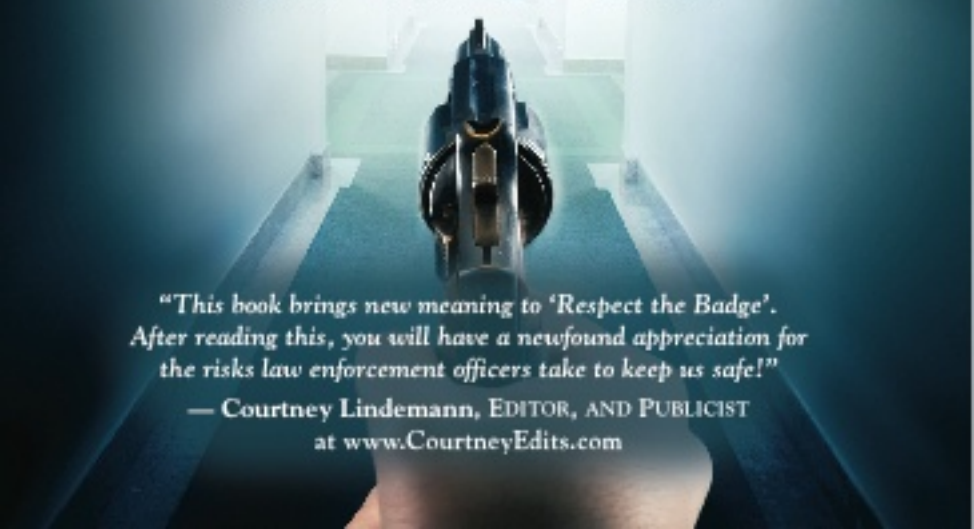


POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

From the Darkness of Evil

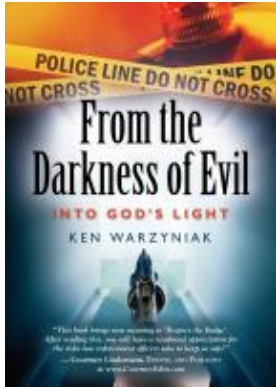
INTO GOD'S LIGHT

KEN WARZYNIAK



*"This book brings new meaning to 'Respect the Badge'.
After reading this, you will have a newfound appreciation for
the risks law enforcement officers take to keep us safe!"*

— Courtney Lindemann, EDITOR, AND PUBLICIST
at www.CourtneyEdits.com



As a rookie Baltimore City police officer, Ken Warzyniak never anticipated his first night on the job would come so close to being his last. In his memoir, he offers an inside look at the perils and policies of one of the most dangerous cities in the US. Between the hazards of working as a police officer and the suffering of great personal loss, his vast life experience offers unique insight and hope in a dark world...

From the Darkness of Evil Into God's Light

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**From the Darkness
of Evil
Into God's Light**

Ken Warzyniak

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CHAPTER TWO: THE DARKNESS OF EVIL

This was the night that would never be forgotten. What happened next, I was not prepared for and neither was Walker. I immediately felt very apprehensive.

We headed down Patapsco Avenue to Shell Road and made a right-hand turn as we approached the projects. There were 3 or 4 people standing in front of one of the units about 40 yards away. They were pointing across to us, near a school bus; it was an old school bus and it had been converted into a rolling produce and grocery store. I mentioned it to Officer Walker, he said ‘yeah’, and we continued to drive to where the bus was parked.

As I looked down at the bus, I thought it strange that there was no one around. If this was going to be a

report, there would have to be someone to get the report from. My training officer did not attempt to go where the people were standing to get a report. There was no one near the bus. They would be in front of the bus. The only people we saw were about 40 yards away, standing in front of the projects. It was at this point that I started to feel even more uneasy. Again, I thought to myself that the person making the report was not here. Something was wrong.

Walker pulled the car up behind the bus, 10 yards in back, and to the right of the dirt road, then stopped. The bus was parked on the left side. To the rear of the bus, on the left, was a telephone pole with a streetlight on it, about 10 yards back. As we exited the radio car, Walker stood by the door of the car. I decide to take my nightstick and exited to the rear of car.

At this point, I moved to the left side of the dirt road we were on, taking a couple of steps to the rear of the light pole. Now I knew there was something going on; I couldn't think of what it was because I couldn't

see anyone as I looked down the side of the bus. I was standing by the telephone pole with the light at the top. The light was very dim and I tried to see into the bus through the windows; I could only see the darkness. The dim light was shining down above the car, not getting any light to the other areas around the bus. It was a little darker down near the front of the bus, near the door. The scene began to look eerie.

My partner had exited the car and began to walk up to the front of the bus where the door was. I stood motionless as I called to Officer Walker, “What are you doing?”

He replied, “Just going to check this bus out.”

I said to him, “Wait Walker, you need to be careful. Whoever is in that bus may be armed. Shouldn't you have your gun out?” He was silent, and I said to him, “At least get your nightstick out.” Silence again—the bus was very dark inside. I was really sensing the danger of this situation. Walker walked toward the bus; I felt a wave of fear come over me as Officer Walker

continued to move toward the bus door. What was he thinking? He was walking into an unknown situation and not using caution. He was almost at the door. This was not a good way to approach a suspect.

Walker looked into the bus and yelled, "It looks like a kid in there. I'll just get him out." How could he tell it was just a kid? Being very dark inside the bus, he could not see if it was a kid (this was very reckless of Officer Walker. I would not make that kind of an assumption in this situation). I was not encouraged by this; the hair on the back of my neck stood up, and as I looked down at the side of the bus, Walker approached the door.

Suddenly, the door swung open and the suspect started down the steps with his head down. He looked up quickly with a gun in his hand and swung it up to point it right between the eyes of Walker, "I am going to blow your head off!" the suspect shouted, then began to curse at him. "I'll kill you..." and cursed again. I am sure Walker believed him! I thought I was going to die

that night. We should not have been in this situation; how foolish this action was. Officer Walker made a big mistake.

Training Officer Walker looked like he was frozen in fear where he stood. I could see his face in the dim light. My eyes were now accustomed to the dark and I could see the fear on my partner's face. Why would he take this action? Now, we were in real trouble. Walker was stunned with fear; his fear was warranted. I was trying to think of something I could do to keep Walker from getting killed. He just stood there looking down the barrel of the gun.

Now, at this point, I was feeling very uncomfortable; my fear was that I would make a mistake that would cause Officer Walker to be shot. What action could I take? The suspect had not seen me yet; I knew I may be able to catch him off guard at some point. I only needed an opportunity. Walker was about to be shot and I wasn't sure what I should do, when suddenly he screamed, "Don't do anything Ken!

He will shoot me." My partner couldn't see me. Well, needless to say, I didn't think that was the best thing for him to do (warn the perpetrator that he had a partner).

The suspect couldn't quite see me either, but he turned his head to the right and took a quick glance, then yelled, "I will blow your partner's head off!" I thought I could get a shot off; I also thought that I might be able to get a head shot, but even if I did, the reaction by the suspect might trigger a shot. If I missed, Walker might be killed either way. I decided against this action. I decided to wait and see what happened next.

My mind raced. I decided not to do anything just yet because I might have a better chance later. There may be an opportunity to catch him off guard. I could see his eyes, the light shining on them and on his face; he looked crazy. Would he start shooting? I looked at Walker's face. He looked very pale, like the blood had drained from his face; the fear was showing!

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The suspect positioned himself behind Officer Walker, pressed the gun behind his head, and yelled, "You better get over here beside your partner and don't try anything or I'll blow your head off too... start walking." I walked slowly towards the suspect. He told me to stand next to Walker and move slowly to the police car. We headed toward the car. Now, I sensed the threat was even stronger. He told us to get in the car and my partner got behind the wheel. The suspect got in behind Walker with the gun hard-pressed in Walker's neck. Then, he said to me, "You get in the other side."

I walked around to the passenger side and opened the door to get in. The suspect continued to press the gun behind Walker's head and told me, "I'm going to blow his head off when we get down to the end of this road, and you're next." He constantly kept saying, "I will blow his head off."

"Hold it," he said to me, "You go back on that bus, you get the cash register, and bring the cash register to

me. If you're not back in one minute, I will splatter your partner's blood and brains all over this car.”

I exited the radio car and started walking to the bus, contemplating what I could do. What were my options? Or were there any? I went up the steps of the bus, saw the cash register, but was unable to pick up the register because it was bolted down to the counter. So, I removed the drawer and saw that there were only coins—except for a one-dollar bill—in the drawer; no other money. This couldn't be good.

As I left the bus, I thought that I could hide my revolver underneath the drawer as I walked to the car. I could then open the door and take a shot, maybe not. My better judgment told me not to try it. I decided against it. The light was shining from the top of the light pole, directly against the passenger side of the car. If the suspect saw the gun, I was frightened that he would shoot Walker. I opened the back door of the car and laid the cash register drawer on the seat beside the

suspect who still had the revolver against the head of Walker.

The suspect cursed at me and told me to get in the car or he would kill my partner. I got into the car next to Walker. My partner said, "Ken give him your gun. I already gave him mine." I couldn't believe this! The only chance I had was to somehow be able to use my gun and get a shot in front of the suspect; now Walker, because he was so frightened, tells me to give up my gun! My guess was that Walker thought any action I took would be a disaster. He was really scared!

I didn't know if the suspect even realized that I still had my gun. Then, the subject says, "Yeah give me your gun." I slipped my holster from my belt and handed him the gun. He says, "Give me your belt too." I told him that I only had one belt and it held up my pants. He said (not so nicely), "I don't care just give me the belt."

The gunman told my partner to drive as we continued down Shell Road. At this point, my only

thought was, *if he stops and he shoots him, I am bailing out the door*. My hand was on the handle of the door, gripping it tightly; I was ready to bail! My thoughts began to race to what would happen next. Then, it raced back to earlier years in my life. It was passing fast; would this be my last day? I wanted to pray to God, but I couldn't. I hadn't been to church, or worshiped God, in years. I failed serving Him throughout the years, and I didn't feel like or believe I deserved His intervention. I just wanted to tell Him that I was undeserving and didn't expect too much. I didn't want to make promises to God that I couldn't keep. I did not want to fail Him again. All these years, I had never placed my complete trust in Him. Now, I needed his mercy. My life was in God's control at this point.

We were nearing the end of the road, maybe in two ways. I was looking down, waiting for the sound of the gun to go off. My grip on the handle of the car door was very tight. Then, I heard the suspect say, "Turn around and head for downtown." Was this the break we needed? Walker turned the car around and now we

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were on a new journey, a different journey. What would our destination be? What would happen next? What was this crazy, angry, person thinking about? The questions kept jumping into my mind and causing me to worry.

We started to head up Shell Road and turned onto Patapsco Avenue. From there, we made it to Potee Street, traveling at a speed of 25 miles per hour. Walker turned right at Potee, then headed toward Hanover Street. The suspect was leaning forward from the back seat with the gun still pushed into the back of Walker's neck. My hope was that someone would observe what was happening and see it for what it was.

We were getting close to Hanover Street; just two more blocks and we would be making the right turn. Soon, we would be heading over the Hanover Street Bridge. As we did, I saw a couple of Cherry Hill radio cars passing us. They looked over, but it didn't appear that they observed anything, so they kept traveling on. A glimpse of hope disappeared as the police cars passed

us. Couldn't they see the perpetrator leaning forward? We were crossing the bridge now. Two radio cars passed us on the right—again no observation, no hope. The suspect said, “Stay straight on Hanover Street and don't try anything.”

We crossed over Ostend Street and upon reaching West Street, the suspect tells us to pull over and stop. Walker pulled to the curb and stopped the car. I took a deep breath; my mouth was very dry. I was waiting for the gun to go off; was this it? I could sense the extreme hostility from this perpetrator.

The Southern District Police Station was just two blocks away. What would happen next? The guy with the gun was acting crazy, calling us names, and cursing at us. I thought he was going to shoot us in the car. He claimed that the police killed his brother up in the Western District two weeks before this incident, and it sounded like he wanted revenge; this was an opportunity to kill a couple of cops.

We just sat there; I looked at Walker, but he wasn't moving—sitting like a stone statue as the gunman continued to rant. It seemed like a long time just waiting for something to happen. I felt apprehension that he was going to shoot Walker, and then I would be out the door.

He still had the gun pressed against Walker's head. Then, finally, he tells me, "Get out and flag me a cab and be back here in one minute or I'll blow your partner's head off." Then another string of curses was thrown at us. *One minute... will that be enough time to find a cab?* I wondered. This appeared to me to be a great opportunity to get away—to just run to the station two blocks away, report what happened, and let them know how I left the scene with Walker and the wild-eyed suspect waiting for me to flag a cab.

What would Walker do? If he was in my shoes at this point, based on what happened tonight, would he just run to the station for help to save himself? Well, I guess I'll never know.

I exited the car and started walking south to Hanover St. As I looked down Hanover Street, about 20 seconds went by. It looked like a Sun cab was coming up Hanover Street (God must have sent this cab). I stepped down off the curb and waved to the driver to pull over. He stopped, I leaned into the window, and told him I had a job for him. "I'll be right back." I told the cab driver. He replied, "Okay."

I didn't want to do this to the cabbie. I was confident that the suspect would not hurt the driver. He wanted a way out without drawing too much attention. He just hated the police, and he was focused on what he would do to us. I walked back to the car, opened the back door, and informed the gunman that the cabbie was waiting for him. He told me to pick up the cash register drawer and stand by the door. He then ordered Walker to get out of the car, keeping the gun behind his head and reminding him that he would blow his head off.

The suspect walked in front as we came around the car and told me to get beside Walker. Carrying the cash

register drawer, we walked to the cab. As we got to the back door, he ordered me to place the cash drawer on the seat. He told us to turn around. At that point, I thought he was going to shoot us in the back; he still had the gun on Walker. He then told us to start walking. We took a few steps, and I told Walker that I was going! We both ran to the station house. It was one of the quickest runs either us had ever made. The distance was about two and half blocks.

As we entered the station house parking lot, officers were changing shifts and still standing around waiting for their cars to come in. We ran straight into the station. They turned to look at us, no doubt wondering what was going on. We entered the room and the officers looked at us strangely—some were writing reports from the previous shift. As we continued into the captain's office, we looked for the shift commander to report what had occurred. We began to explain our situation, talking about what had happened, and what the ramifications may be for the cab driver.

We knew the perpetrator wanted to head downtown. The shift commander at this time called communications. The information was reported over the citywide broadcast to make all cars aware of the incident and warning them to be careful—for the perpetrator was armed and very dangerous. After the broadcast, we were asked to write out our reports. I began writing my report until the sergeant walked over to me and informed me that I would be copying the narrative of Officer Walker’s report, and to make it almost word-for-word so that it would be correct in the events that had occurred up to this time. I did not understand. “Your report has to be in line with his,” he told me.

I really wanted to write the report about the incident in my own words, and to tell what had happened as I saw it. Officer Walker was so confident that nothing would happen because he thought it was just a young kid inside the bus. I had given him warnings about being careful. He may have thought because I was a rookie, and on my first night on the

street, that I was being too careful. My thought was that he was too confident.

Since being out of the Academy for just two days, I was well aware of these types of situations. These scenarios of different crimes and responses by officers were often discussed in the classroom with the instructors. Different situations were often talked about—the unknown, what could happen when involved in a dangerous situation that was unknown in the commission of a crime, etc.

My thought was that what happened this night should be reported stating the real danger we were in. There were reporters from the newspapers that wanted to get a story and the story they got would not have all the facts. I discovered later that Officer Walker was not a training officer; he was a 12-year veteran that just transferred to the Southern District two months before I had arrived. I did not see him anymore after that first week. I think he moved to another sector. After two weeks, I also went to another sector, on another shift.

CHAPTER SEVEN: RIOTING IN THE STREETS

It was on April 4, 1968 when the riots started in Baltimore City at the time Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated. There were roving bands of black teens and others rioting throughout the city. Alerted to the growing unrest, city police officers on and off duty surged to Baltimore's east side shopping district, Southside areas, and West areas where a command post was set up at near Belair market.

At 7 PM, the situation quickly turned malicious. The rioters broke into store after store in the vicinity—grocery stores, appliance shops, furniture outlets, dry cleaners, five and dimes, tailors, taverns, liquor stores, and pawnbrokers were broken into, items were stolen, stores ransacked, and set on fire. Throughout the area,

young men and adults were throwing rocks and bottles at policemen and firemen.

At 10 PM, city police did not have the ability to contain the chaos; there were not enough police and Governor Spiro Agnew, at the request of Baltimore Mayor, Thomas D'Alessandro III, called in the National Guard—simultaneously issuing an 11 PM to 6 AM curfew for the city.

By late evening on Saturday, April 6, 1968, the Baltimore riots were in full swing. When the sun rose the next day, 5500 national guardsmen, 400 state troopers, and 1200 city policeman occupied Baltimore. 6 people were dead, hundreds arrested, and 250 fire alarms had been reported. The east side, south side, and other parts of the city were still smoldering buildings, and the streets and sidewalks were lined with broken glass with other debris that had been distributed throughout the riots.

The crowds were going wild throughout the city. We had to make so many arrests, we used flex cuffs for

handcuffs. A special holding area was setup to hold the rioters when they were arrested and hand cuffed. Buses were operated and rioters loaded onto the buses, those arrested were taken to jail.

All policemen in the city were distributed riot gear, and we were required to work 12-hour shifts. In the Southern District, we encountered sniper fire; it was coming from a house or two houses—maybe three—where we knew the Black Panther party was definitely held up. They were shooting from the second stories of the houses.

The disturbance continued from April 6 to April 11, before everything was under control. The streets looked like a war zone and people rummaged around the streets to see what was left from the riots. Martin Luther King, Jr. never wanted this kind of lawless behavior in settling problems and our differences between the races. The riots cost millions of dollars. We finally got back to normal police duties.

Then, on October 8, 1968, George Wallace was campaigning in Baltimore at the Civic Center giving a speech. The police once again were called out to handle the rioters downtown, at Baltimore Street across from the Civic Center. All the streets had police lined up in front of the stores and shops, prepared to make arrests. Our area was directly across from the Civic Center. The demonstrators were standing in front us, 5 feet from the curb. Suddenly, the rioters were breaking windows and taking merchandise from the displays; gangs of people started breaking the windows. Police from the mounted division (on horses) were galloping up the sidewalks, moving people along at a fast pace; officers along the police lines made arrests of the rioters. Many arrests were made during this time.

Riots do not settle anything; they cause more problems in the cities. The police were back to handling their normal duties. Yes, there were some very interesting calls we handled as police officers in the Southern District.

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In July of 1974, I was getting ready to go on a family vacation to Disney World in Orlando Florida. I discovered that there was talk of a police strike by the police union, and they were preparing to strike within the next few days. After I went to work the next morning, I discovered that they were beginning their strike. There weren't any police lines at that time. I went up to the tactical unit office to start the day. We had roll call and after the roll call the lieutenant told us that they may have people walking off the job at some point during the day. There were two squads during that time that would be handling the day work—I had one squad and there was one other squad working.

I overheard one of the officers on the other squad talking about the strike and found out that he was one of the union members. His sergeant was in deep conversation with him about the strike. The sergeant motioned to me to come over. I went over to find out what was going on. The officer had only been in the tactical unit for about 8 months. He had transferred from another district. He was a good officer and was

really concerned about the strike. His sergeant advised him not to go on strike and that he was jeopardizing his job with the department. The officer wanted to talk to me and asked me what I thought. I told him that the strike was illegal and that there were no grounds that allowed the police union to call for a strike. Then I said to him, “If you want to work here and continue working here, you will not go on strike; that is my advice to you. If you do go on strike, the police commissioner will fire all of you after the first day. There is no way you want be on the picket line on the second day. You can expect a strong warning, and if you don't go back to work you will lose your job.” The officer said he would give it some serious thought. Our shift was out on the street. The officers in the tactical unit probably would not go on strike, but then again... you never knew.

I went out to pick up my car and start my day on the street. It was about 3:30 PM when I began to head back to the office. As I started up the garage ramp, I noticed there was an officer standing by, picketing the driveway. This officer was a friend of mine; so, after

parking my car in the garage, I walked back down the ramp and up to him. I asked him, “Charlie, do you know what you're doing? You are wrong and you walking a picket line is illegal. You're going to lose your job.”

He began to argue with me and I told him that the union had no legal right to call a strike. I told him, “You better reconsider. You have a family. You're going to be without a job.”

He replied, “Don't worry about me, I know what I'm doing.”

I answered, “No, I don't think you do. But, it's your job to lose.” Then, I continued on to the office to wait for my men to come in. The next day, I left for vacation and, since I had already made reservations for and paid the money, my captain said it would be okay for me to continue my plans. The news of the strike was on the news of the Florida news stations. They showed people

in the stores setting fires. It was even said that they had to get help from the Maryland state police.

When we got home from vacation, the police union workers had already ended the strike. That was July 15, 1974. Union officials negotiated an end to the strike and Baltimore City offered an increase in wages in 1975. Commissioner Pomerleau overrode the union's collective bargaining rights and fired the organizers. There were almost 500 officers on strike that were let go, leaving the city very short on police officers. Those police officers lost their jobs, and the commissioner refused amnesty for the strikers. It was a tough decision that had to be made in view of the losses to the city.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: TROUBLE IN TACTICAL

It was summertime and two squads of tactical were working that evening. We were working in the area of the Southern District from Russell Street to the area of Charles Street. Behind Russell Street there were various businesses, a motel, and small businesses such as bars and restaurants located. The neighborhood also had some high crime areas. It was where the Baltimore Ravens now have their stadium. A call came over our frequency of a hold-up in the area of Ostend Street and Cross Street.

It was reported that three black males were running south on Ostend Street. Three men from my squad and about four men from Sergeant Roxon's squad were in the area and began a chase of the three suspects. Two of them split off from the third one. This was an area

where there were manufacturing and warehouses. During the chase, one of the suspects of the two that we were chasing fired a couple shots at us. Frank and two of his men chased one man to a building that had a staircase to the roof. They caught up to the man on top of the roof where he could go no further. Frank began questioning him. Two of my men and I went up on the roof.

We lost pursuit of the two we were chasing. Frank and one of his men were questioning the suspect they had. Frank asked the suspect who the other two guys were. The suspect said to them, "I'm not telling you anything".

Frank said to his officer, "John if he don't start talking right now, take him over there to the back of the roof, and throw him off". John grabbed the man and rushed him over to the back of the roof.

"You have one more chance!" John yelled and he lifted the suspect off the ground. He got scared and said, "Okay, okay! I will tell you." He revealed the

names and addresses where the hold-up men lived. Later, a couple of the officers went to their house and made the arrest there.

Frank said to his officer, “John, were you really going to throw him off?”

John started laughing and said, “Well Sarge, I really just wanted to scare him, make him think, but you know... it did scare him enough”. Everybody laughed.

Not long after that, Frank moved on.

He was promoted to lieutenant, went to the traffic division, and a command position.

I also thought about moving out of tactical because there were certain difficult situations that I had to be concerned about.

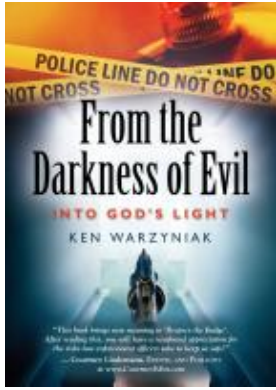
One of the incidents was when the chief of patrol of the uniform division called me into his office and began to make certain accusations about one of my dealings with an officer in my squad. He did not offer

the name of who this officer was, only that I was being unfair to him. I asked the chief, “What is it that I was being unfair about? What was it that I said about this officer?”

He would only reply, "He had information that you were saying certain things and that you were not treating him right.”

I told the chief, “You get that person, or persons, down here and have him stand in front of my face and accuse me of what is going on. Otherwise there isn’t anything.” I had a pretty good idea of what happened; I knew there could only be one officer in my squad that was a problem. The officer that he was referring to did not even belong in the tactical unit. He was ineligible to be in the tactical section and only got there because he knew somebody that could have influence on the captain of tactical. Or, he could have been placed there prior to coming from somebody higher up. Sometimes favors are done and there are consequences that result later.

This officer was a bit of a problem; his work ethic was not what it should be. He was late all the time and I would make him write out a report for why he was late, and for anything else that he did. I thought that he would get his act together, but he never did. I used discipline by telling him what he had to do, and until he did those things, he would continue writing reports as to why he was late and not showing any results in police duties. When I challenged the chief to bring the person in front of me that told him about the real situation. The chief just shrugged it off and said that he didn't want to hear about this incident anymore, "Watch yourself", he warned me. I left his office knowing that there would be a problem between me and him if I stayed in tactical. The chief of patrol should have looked into this problem. As a leader in a very important position of the police department, this made him look petty in this action. He should have looked into this a little deeper. Instead, he made the officer become a second rate policeman. Sometimes, discipline is necessary to make an officer better at their duties.



As a rookie Baltimore City police officer, Ken Warzyniak never anticipated his first night on the job would come so close to being his last. In his memoir, he offers an inside look at the perils and policies of one of the most dangerous cities in the US. Between the hazards of working as a police officer and the suffering of great personal loss, his vast life experience offers unique insight and hope in a dark world...

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