

RANDOM HOUSE  BOOKS



Helter Skelter

Vincent Bugliosi & Curt Gentry

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About the Author

VINCENT T. BUGLIOSI received his law degree in 1964 from UCLA law school, where he was president of his graduating class. In his eight-year career as a prosecutor for the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office, he tried close to 1,000 felony and misdemeanor court and jury trials. Of 106 felony jury trials, he lost but one case. His most famous trial was, of course, the Manson case, which became the basis of his best-selling book *Helter Skelter*. But even before the Manson case, in the television series "The D.A.," actor Robert Conrad patterned his starring role after Bugliosi. His most recent nonfiction book, *Till Death Us Do Part*, was also a bestseller and he has recently had his first novel (co-written with Ken Hurwitz) *Shadow of Cain*, published in hardcover. He lives with his wife, Gail, and children, Wendy and Vince, Jr., in Los Angeles, where he is in private practice.

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**HELTER
SKELTER**
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**THE TRUE STORY OF
THE MANSON MURDERS**

VINCENT BUGLIOSI
PROSECUTOR OF THE TATE-LA BIANCA TRIALS
WITH CURT GENTRY



To Gail and Blanche

Cast of Characters

Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD)

TATE CASE DETECTIVES:

Helder, Robert J., Lieutenant, Supervisor of Investigations. Headed Tate investigation.
Buckles, Jess, Sergeant.
Calkins, Robert, Sergeant.
McGann, Michael J., Sergeant.

ASSISTED IN TATE INVESTIGATION:

Boen, Jerrome, Latent Prints Section, SID.
Burbridge, Robert, Officer.
Burdick, A. H., Lieutenant. Polygraph examiner, SID.
Clements, Wendell. Civilian fingerprint expert.
Deemer, Earl, Lieutenant.
DeRosa, Jerry Joe, Officer.
Dorman, D. E., Officer.
Galindo, Danny, Sergeant. Also assisted in LaBianca investigation.
Girt, D. L. Latent Prints Section, SID.
Granado, Joe. Forensic chemist, SID. Also assisted in LaBianca investigation.
Henderson, Ed, Sergeant.
Kamadoi, Gene, Sergeant.
Lee, William, Sergeant. Ballistics expert, SID.
Madlock, Robert C., Lieutenant.
Varney, Dudley, Sergeant.
Whisenhunt, William T., Officer.

Wolfer, DeWayne. Criminalist, SID.

LABIANCA CASE DETECTIVES:

LePage, Paul, Lieutenant. Headed LaBianca investigation.

Broda, Gary, Sergeant.

Gutierrez, Manuel "Chick," Sergeant.

Nielsen, Michael, Sergeant.

Patchett, Frank, Sergeant.

Sartuchi, Philip, Sergeant.

ASSISTED IN LABIANCA INVESTIGATION:

Claborn, J., Sergeant. Latent Prints Section, SID.

Cline, Edward L., Sergeant.

Dolan, Harold, Sergeant. Latent Prints Section, SID.

Rodriguez, W. C., Officer.

Toney, J. C., Officer.

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office (LASO)

ASSIGNED TO THE HINMAN INVESTIGATION:

Guenther, Charles, Sergeant.

Whiteley, Paul, Sergeant.

Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Bugliosi, Vincent T., Deputy District Attorney. Prosecuted the Tate-LaBianca killers.

Kay, Steven, and Musich, Donald, Deputy District Attorneys. Brought in to assist Bugliosi after Stovitz was taken off the case.

Stovitz, Aaron, head of the Trials Division. Co-prosecutor of Manson and the three female defendants until taken off the case shortly after the start of the trial.

Inyo County District Attorney's Office

Fowles, Frank, Inyo County District Attorney.

Gardiner, Jack, Investigator.

Gibbens, Buck, Deputy District Attorney.

Defense Attorneys

- Ball, Joseph. Interviewed Charles Manson and found him competent to represent himself.
- Barnett, Donald. Leslie Van Houten's first attorney was replaced by Marvin Part.
- Boyd, Bill. Charles Watson's Texas attorney.
- Bubrick, Sam. With Maxwell Keith, defended Charles "Tex" Watson.
- Caballero, Richard. Susan Atkins' attorney from November 1969 to March 1970.
- Fitzgerald, Paul. First Charles Manson's lawyer, he later quit the Public Defender's Office to represent Patricia Krenwinkel.
- Fleischman, Gary. Linda Kasabian's attorney.
- Hollopeter, Charles. Charles Manson's attorney for a very brief period.
- Hughes, Ronald. Once Charles Manson's "hippie lawyer," he later defended Leslie Van Houten, up until the time he was murdered by the Family.
- Kanarek, Irving. Replaced Ronald Hughes as Charles Manson's lawyer.
- Keith, Maxwell. Assigned by the Court to represent Leslie Van Houten after the disappearance of Ronald Hughes; also, with Sam Bubrick, defended Charles "Tex" Watson.
- Part, Marvin. Leslie Van Houten's attorney for a brief period; was replaced by Ira Reiner.
- Reiner, Ira. Replaced Marvin Part as Leslie Van Houten's attorney; was replaced by Ronald Hughes.
- Salter, Leon. Robert "Bobby" Beausoleil's attorney.
- Shinn, Daye. Replaced Richard Caballero as Susan Atkins' attorney.

Manson Family Members and Associates

Manson, Charles Milles, aka Jesus Christ, God, Soul, the Devil, Charles Willis Manson. Leader of the Family and mass murderer.

Alonzo, Maria, aka Crystal. Released after the murder of Lauren Willett, she was later arrested in connection with an alleged plot to kidnap a foreign diplomat.

Atkins, Susan Denise, aka Sadie Mae Glutz, Sexy Sadie, Sharon King, Donna Kay Powell. Involved in the Hinman, Tate, and LaBianca murders.

Bailey, Edward Arthur. Associated with the Family. May have seen Manson kill a man in Death Valley.

Bailey, Ella Jo, aka Yellerstone. Left Family after learning of the Hinman murder.

Bailey, Lawrence Edward, aka Larry Jones. Present when Tate killers left Spahn Ranch; involved in the Hawthorne shootout.

Baldwin, Linda. Alias used by Family member Madaline Joan Cottage.

Bartell, Susan Phyllis, aka Country Sue. Present when Zero allegedly "committed suicide while playing Russian roulette."

Beausoleil, Robert Kenneth "Bobby," aka Cupid, Jasper, Cherub, Robert Lee Hardy, Jason Lee Daniels. Involved in the Hinman murder.

Big Patty. Alias used by Family member Patricia Krenwinkel.

Brown, Kenneth Richard, aka Scott Bell Davis. Associated with the Family; friend of Zero.

Brunner, Mary Theresa, aka Marioche, Och, Mother Mary, Mary Manson, Linda Dee Moser, Christine Marie Euchts. First girl to join the Manson Family; had a son by Manson; involved in the Hinman murder and the Hawthorne shootout.

Capistrano. Alias used by Family member Catherine Gillies.

Clem. Alias used by Family member Steve Grogan.

Como, Kenneth, aka Jesse James. Escaped convict; associated with Manson Family; involved in Hawthorne shootout.

Cooper, Priscilla. Pleaded guilty to being an accessory after the fact in the murder of Lauren Willett.

Cooper, Sherry Ann, aka Simi Valley Sherri. Fled Barker Ranch with Barbara Hoyt.

Cottage, Madaline Joan, aka Little Patty, Linda Baldwin. Present when Zero died.

Country Sue. Alias used by Family member Susan Bartell.

Craig, James. State prison escapee; associated with Manson Family; pleaded guilty to being an accessory after the fact in the murders of both James and Lauren Willett.

Cravens, Larry. Family member.

Crystal. Alias used by Family member Maria Alonzo.

Cupid. Alias used by Family member Robert "Bobby" Beausoleil.

Davis, Bruce McGregor, aka Bruce McMillan. Involved in the Hinman and Shea murders; present when Zero died; suspect in three other deaths.

DeCarlo, Daniel Thomas, aka Donkey Dan, Daniel Romeo, Richard Allen Smith. Straight Satan motorcycle gang member; associated with the Family; later became a reluctant, but important, prosecution witness.

Donkey Dan. Name given to Daniel DeCarlo by Manson Family girls.

Flynn, John Leo "Juan." Spahn ranch hand; associated with the Family; testified to an extremely incriminating admission by Manson.

Fromme, Lynette Alice, aka Squeaky, Elizabeth Elaine Williamson. One of the earliest Manson Family members; became the Family's ex-officio leader after Manson was arrested.

Gillies, Catherine Irene, aka Capistrano, Cappy, Catherine Myers, Patricia Anne Burke, Patti Sue Jardin. Family

member; granddaughter of the owner of Myers Ranch; wanted to go along the night of the LaBianca murders but wasn't needed; present when Zero died.

Glutz, Sadie Mae. Alias used by Family member Susan Atkins.

Good, Sandra Collins, aka Sandy. Married name Mrs. Joel Pugh. Family member.

Goucher, William. Associated with the Manson Family; involved in the murder of James Willett.

Grogan, Steven Dennis, aka Clem Tufts. Involved in the Hinman and Shea murders; was with the killers the night the LaBiancas were killed; involved in the attempted murder of prosecution witness Barbara Hoyt.

Gypsy. Alias used by Family member Catherine Share.

Haught, John Philip, aka Zero, Christopher Jesus. Officially "committed suicide while playing Russian roulette"; was probably murdered.

Hinman, Gary. Befriended the Manson Family; was murdered by them.

Hoyt, Barbara, aka Barbara Rosenberg. Fled the Family before the Barker Ranch raid; became prosecution witness; Family attempted to murder her with an LSD-laden hamburger.

Jones, Larry. Alias used by Family member Lawrence Bailey.

Kasabian, Linda Drouin. Accompanied the killers on the nights of the Tate and LaBianca murders; star witness for the prosecution.

Katie. Alias used by Family member Patricia Krenwinkel.

Knoll, George, aka 86 George. President Straight Satans motorcycle gang. Gave Manson the club sword which was later used in the Hinman slaying and taken along the night the LaBiancas were killed.

Krenwinkel, Patricia Dianne, aka Katie, Marnie Reeves, Big Patty, Mary Ann Scott Involved in the Tate and

LaBianca murders.

Lake, Dianne Elizabeth, aka Snake, Dianne Bluestein. Joined Manson at age 13; became a witness for the prosecution.

Lane, Robert, aka Soupspoon. Arrested in Barker Ranch raid.

Little Patty. Alias used by Family member Madaline Joan Cottage.

Lovett, Charles Allen. Family member involved in the Hawthorne shootout.

Lutesinger, Kitty. Robert "Bobby" Beausoleil's girl friend; fled the Family, then returned to it.

McCann, Brenda. Alias used by Family member Nancy Laura Pitman.

Marioche. Alias used by Family member Mary Brunner.

Minette, Manon. Alias used by Family member Catherine Share.

Monfort, Michael. State prison escapee; associated with the Manson Family; involved in the murders of both James and Lauren Willett.

Montgomery, Charles. Alias used by Family member Charles "Tex" Watson.

Moorehouse, Dean. Father of Family member Ruth Ann Moorehouse; sometime Manson follower.

Moorehouse, Ruth Ann, aka Ouisch, Rachel Susan Morse. Involved in the attempted murder of prosecution witness Barbara Hoyt.

Ouisch. Alias used by Family member Ruth Ann Moorehouse.

Pitman, Nancy Laura, aka Brenda McCann, Brindle, Cydette Perell. Pleaded guilty to being an accessory after the fact in the murder of Lauren Willett.

Poston, Brooks. Former Family member; supplied the prosecution with important evidence regarding Manson's bizarre motive for the murders.

Pugh, Joel. Husband of Family member Sandra Good. Though officially listed as a suicide, he is among the "possible" Manson Family murder victims.

Rice, Dennis. Involved in the attempted murder of prosecution witness Barbara Hoyt; also involved in the Hawthorne shootout.

Ross, Mark. Associated with the Family; Zero's death occurred in his apartment while he was away.

Sadie. Alias used by Family member Susan Atkins.

Sankston, Leslie. Alias used by Family member Leslie Van Houten.

Schram, Stephanie. Fled Barker Ranch with Kitty Lutesinger; testified for the prosecution that Manson was not with her on the nights of the Tate and LaBianca murders.

Scott, Suzanne, aka Stephanie Rowe. Family member.

Share, Catherine, aka Gypsy, Manon Minette. Participated in the "cleanup" following the Shea murder; involved in the Hawthorne shootout.

Simi Valley Sherri. Alias used by Family member Sherry Ann Cooper.

Sinclair, Collie, aka Beth Tracy. Family member arrested in Barker raid.

Smith, Claudia Leigh, aka Sherry Andrews. Family member arrested in Barker raid.

Snake. Alias used by Family member Dianne Lake.

Springer, Alan LeRoy. Member Straight Satans motorcycle gang. Manson admitted the Tate murders to him but his statement could not be used as evidence.

Squeaky. Alias used by Family member Lynette Fromme.

T. J. the Terrible. Alias used by sometime Family member Thomas Walkman.

Todd, Hugh Rocky, aka Randy Morglea. Family member arrested in Barker raid.

True, Harold. Lived at 3267 Waverly Drive, the house next to the LaBianca residence; Manson and other Family members visited him there four or five times.

Tufts, Clem. Alias used by Family member Steve Grogan.

Vance, William Joseph "Bill." Alias of ex-convict David Lee Hamic; associated with the Manson Family.

Van, Houten, Leslie Sue, aka LuLu, Leslie Marie Sankston, Louella Alexandria, Leslie Owens. Involved in the LaBianca murders.

Walleman, Thomas, aka T. J. the Terrible. Sometime Family member; was present when Manson shot Bernard Crowe.

Walts, Mark. Hung out at Spahn Ranch; his brother accused Manson of his murder.

Watkins, Paul Alan. Manson's second in command and his chief procurer of young girls; provided Bugliosi with the missing link in Manson's bizarre motive for the murders.

Watson, Charles Denton, aka Tex, Charles Montgomery, Texas Charlie. Involved in the Tate and LaBianca murders.

Wildebush, Joan, aka Juanita. Was with Manson advance group at Barker Ranch; left Family and eloped with Bob Berry, Paul Crockett's partner.

Willett, Lauren. Associated with the Family; murdered on November 10 or 11, 1972, a few days after the body of her husband was discovered; several Manson Family members were linked to her death.

Willett, James. Murdered sometime prior to November 8, 1972; three associates of the Manson Family were charged with the slaying.

Zero. Alias used by Family member John Philip Haught.

Part 1

THE MURDERS

“How does it feel
To be
One of the
Beautiful People?”

The Beatles,
“Baby You’re a Rich Man,”
Magical Mystery Tour album

Saturday, August 9, 1969

IT WAS SO quiet, one of the killers would later say, you could almost hear the sound of ice rattling in cocktail shakers in the homes way down the canyon.

The canyons above Hollywood and Beverly Hills play tricks with sounds. A noise clearly audible a mile away may be indistinguishable at a few hundred feet.

It was hot that night, but not as hot as the night before, when the temperature hadn't dropped below 92 degrees. The three-day heat wave had begun to break a couple of hours before, about 10 P.M. on Friday—to the psychological as well as the physical relief of those Angelenos who recalled that on such a night, just four years ago, Watts had exploded in violence. Though the coastal fog was now rolling in from the Pacific Ocean, Los Angeles itself remained hot and muggy, sweltering in its own emissions, but here, high above most of the city, and usually even above the smog, it was at least 10 degrees cooler. Still, it remained warm enough so that many residents of the area slept with their windows open, in hopes of catching a vagrant breeze.

All things considered, it's surprising that more people didn't hear something.

But then it was late, just after midnight, and 10050 Cielo Drive was secluded.

Being secluded, it was also vulnerable.

Cielo Drive is a narrow street that abruptly winds upward from Benedict Canyon Road. One of its cul-de-sacs, easily

missed though directly opposite Bella Drive, comes to a dead end at the high gate of 10050. Looking through the gate, you could see neither the main residence nor the guest house some distance beyond it, but you could see, toward the end of the paved parking area, a corner of the garage and, a little farther on, a split-rail fence which, though it was only August, was strung with Christmas-tree lights.

The lights, which could be seen most of the way from the Sunset Strip, had been put up by actress Candice Bergen when she was living with the previous tenant of 10050 Cielo Drive, TV and record producer Terry Melcher. When Melcher, the son of Doris Day, moved to his mother's beach house in Malibu, the new tenants left the lights up. They were on this night, as they were every night, adding a year-round holiday touch to Benedict Canyon.

From the front door of the main house to the gate was over a hundred feet. From the gate to the nearest neighbor on Cielo, 10070, was almost a hundred yards.

At 10070 Cielo, Mr. and Mrs. Seymour Kott had already gone to bed, their dinner guests having left about midnight, when Mrs. Kott heard, in close sequence, what sounded like three or four gunshots. They seemed to have come from the direction of the gate of 10050. She did not check the time but later guessed it to be between 12:30 and 1 A.M. Hearing nothing further, Mrs. Kott went to sleep.

About three-quarters of a mile directly south and downhill from 10050 Cielo Drive, Tim Ireland was one of five counselors supervising an overnight camp-out for some thirty-five children at the Westlake School for Girls. The other counselors had gone to sleep, but Ireland had volunteered to stay up through the night. At approximately 12:40 A.M. he heard from what seemed a long distance away, to the north or northeast, a solitary male voice. The man was screaming, "*Oh, God, no, please don't! Oh, God, no, don't, don't, don't ...*"

The scream lasted ten to fifteen seconds, then stopped, the abrupt silence almost as chilling as the cry itself. Ireland quickly checked the camp, but all the children were asleep. He awoke his supervisor, Rich Sparks, who had bedded down inside the school, and, telling him what he had heard, got his permission to drive around the area to see if anyone needed help. Ireland took a circuitous route from North Faring Road, where the school was located, south on Benedict Canyon Road to Sunset Boulevard, west to Beverly Glen, and northward back to the school. He observed nothing unusual, though he did hear a number of dogs barking.

There were other sounds in the hours before dawn that Saturday.

Emmett Steele, 9951 Beverly Grove Drive, was awakened by the barking of his two hunting dogs. The pair usually ignored ordinary sounds but went wild when they heard gunshots. Steele went out to look around but, finding nothing out of place, returned to bed. He estimated the time as between 2 and 3 A.M.

Robert Bullington, an employee of the Bel Air Patrol, a private security force used by many of the homeowners in the affluent area, was parked in front of 2175 Summit Ridge Drive, with his window down, when he heard what sounded like three shots, spaced a few seconds apart. Bullington called in; Eric Karlson, who was working the desk at patrol headquarters, logged the call at 4:11 A.M. Karlson in turn called the West Los Angeles Division of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), and passed on the report. The officer who took the call remarked, "I hope we don't have a murder; we just had a woman-screaming call in that area."

Los Angeles *Times* delivery boy Steve Shannon heard nothing unusual when he pedaled his bike up Cielo Drive between 4:30 and 4:45 A.M. But as he put the paper in the mailbox of 10050, he did notice what looked like a

telephone wire hanging over the gate. He also observed, through the gate and some distance away, that the yellow bug light on the side of the garage was still on.

Seymour Kott also noticed the light and the fallen wire when he went out to get his paper about 7:30 A.M.

About 8 A.M., Winifred Chapman got off the bus at the intersection of Santa Monica and Canyon Drive. A light-skinned black in her mid-fifties, Mrs. Chapman was the housekeeper at 10050 Cielo, and she was upset because, thanks to L.A.'s terrible bus service, she was going to be late to work. Luck seemed with her, however; just as she was about to look for a taxi, she saw a man she had once worked with, and he gave her a ride almost to the gate.

She noticed the wire immediately, and it worried her.

In front and to the left of the gate, not hidden but not conspicuous either, was a metal pole on the top of which was the gate-control mechanism. When the button was pushed, the gate swung open. There was a similar mechanism inside the grounds, both being positioned so a driver could reach the button without having to get out of the car.

Because of the wire, Mrs. Chapman thought the electricity might be off, but when she pushed the button, the gate swung open. Taking the *Times* out of the mailbox, she walked hurriedly onto the property, noticing an unfamiliar automobile in the driveway, a white Rambler, parked at an odd angle. But she passed it, and several other cars nearer the garage, without much thought. Overnight guests weren't that uncommon. Someone had left the outside light on all night, and she went to the switch at the corner of the garage and turned it off.

At the end of the paved parking area was a flagstone walkway that made a half circle to the front door of the main house. She turned right before coming to the walk, however, going to the service porch entrance at the back of

the residence. The key was secreted on a rafter above the door. Taking it down, she unlocked the door and went inside, walking directly to the kitchen, where she picked up the extension phone. It was dead.

Thinking that she should alert someone that the line was down, she proceeded through the dining room toward the living room. Then she stopped suddenly, her progress impeded by two large blue steamer trunks, which hadn't been there when she had left the previous afternoon—and by what she saw.

There appeared to be blood on the trunks, on the floor next to them, and on two towels in the entryway. She couldn't see the entire living room—a long couch cut off the area in front of the fireplace—but everywhere she could see she saw the red splashes. The front door was ajar. Looking out, she saw several pools of blood on the flagstone porch. And, farther on, on the lawn, she saw a body.

Screaming, she turned and ran back through the house, leaving the same way she had come in but, on running down the driveway, changing her course so as to reach the gate-control button. In so doing, she passed on the opposite side of the white Rambler, seeing for the first time that there was a body inside the car too.

Once outside the gate, she ran down the hill to the first house, 10070, ringing the bell and pounding on the door. When the Kotts didn't answer, she ran to the next house, 10090, banging on that door and screaming, "*Murder, death, bodies, blood!*"

Fifteen-year-old Jim Asin was outside, warming up the family car. It was Saturday and, a member of Law Enforcement Unit 800 of the Boy Scouts of America, he was waiting for his father, Ray Asin, to drive him to the West Los Angeles Division of LAPD, where he was scheduled to work on the desk. By the time he got to the porch, his parents had opened the door. While they were trying to calm the hysterical Mrs. Chapman, Jim dialed the police

emergency number. Trained by the Scouts to be exact, he noted the time: 8:33.

While waiting for the police, the father and son walked as far as the gate. The white Rambler was some thirty feet inside the property, too far away to make out anything inside it, but they did see that not one but several wires were down. They appeared to have been cut.

Returning home, Jim called the police a second time and, some minutes later, a third.

There is some confusion as to exactly what happened to the calls. The official police report only states, "At 0914 hours, West Los Angeles Units 8L5 and 8L62 were given a radio call, 'Code 2, possible homicide, 10050 Cielo Drive.'"

The units were one-man patrol cars. Officer Jerry Joe DeRosa, driving 8L5, arrived first, light flashing and siren blaring.¹ DeRosa began interviewing Mrs. Chapman, but had a difficult time of it. Not only was she still hysterical, she was vague as to what she had seen—"blood, bodies everyplace"—and it was hard to get the names and relationships straight. Polanski. Altobelli. Frykowski.

Ray Asin, who knew the residents of 10050 Cielo, stepped in. The house was owned by Rudi Altobelli. He was in Europe, but had hired a caretaker, a young man named William Garretson, to look after the place. Garretson lived in the guest house to the back of the property. Altobelli had rented the main residence to Roman Polanski, the movie director, and his wife. The Polanskis had gone to Europe, however, in March, and while they were away, two of their friends, Abigail Folger and Voytek Frykowski, had moved in. Mrs. Polanski had returned less than a month ago, and Frykowski and Folger were staying on with her until her husband returned. Mrs. Polanski was a movie actress. Her name was Sharon Tate.

Questioned by DeRosa, Mrs. Chapman was unable to say which, if any, of these people were the two bodies she had

seen. To the names she added still another, that of Jay Sebring, a noted men's hair stylist and a friend of Mrs. Polanski's. She mentioned him because she remembered seeing his black Porsche with the other automobiles parked next to the garage.

Getting a rifle from his squad car, DeRosa had Mrs. Chapman show him how to open the gate. Walking cautiously up the driveway to the Rambler, he looked in the open window. There was a body inside, in the driver's seat but slumped toward the passenger side. Male, Caucasian, reddish hair, plaid shirt, blue denim pants, both shirt and pants drenched with blood. He appeared to be young, probably in his teens.

About this time Unit 8L62, driven by Officer William T. Whisenhunt, pulled up outside the gate. DeRosa walked back and told him he had a possible homicide. DeRosa also showed him how to open the gate, and the two officers proceeded up the driveway, DeRosa still carrying his rifle, Whisenhunt a shotgun. As Whisenhunt passed the Rambler, he looked in, noting that the window on the driver's side was down and both lights and ignition were off. The pair then checked out the other automobiles and, finding them empty, searched both the garage and the room above it. Still no one.

A third officer, Robert Burbridge, caught up with them. As the three men reached the end of the parking area, they saw not one but two inert forms on the lawn. From a distance they looked like mannequins that had been dipped in red paint, then tossed haphazardly on the grass.

They seemed grotesquely out of place on the well-cared-for lawn, with its landscaped shrubbery, flowers, and trees. To the right was the residence itself, long, rambling, looking more comfortable than ostentatious, the carriage light outside the main door shining brightly. Farther on, past the south end of the house, they could see a corner of the swimming pool, shimmering blue green in the morning

light. Off to the side was a rustic wishing well. To the left was a split-rail fence, intertwined with Christmas-tree lights, still on. And beyond the fence was a sweeping, panoramic view that stretched all the way from downtown Los Angeles to the beach. Out there life was still going on. Here it had stopped.

The first body was eighteen to twenty feet past the front door of the residence. The closer they came, the worse it looked. Male, Caucasian, probably in his thirties, about five feet ten, wearing short boots, multicolored bell bottoms, purple shirt, casual vest. He was lying on his side, his head resting on his right arm, his left hand clutching the grass. His head and face were horribly battered, his torso and limbs punctured by literally dozens of wounds. It seemed inconceivable that so much savagery could be inflicted on one human being.

The second body was about twenty-five feet beyond the first. Female, Caucasian, long dark hair, probably in her late twenties. She was lying supine, her arms thrown out. Barefoot, she was wearing a full-length nightgown, which, before the many stab wounds, had probably been white.

The stillness now got to the officers. Everything was quiet, too quiet. The serenity itself became menacing. Those windows along the front of the house: behind any a killer could be waiting, watching.

Leaving DeRosa on the lawn, Whisenhunt and Burbridge went back toward the north end of the residence, looking for another way to get in. They'd be open targets if they entered the front door. They noticed that a screen had been removed from one of the front windows and was leaning up against the side of the building. Whisenhunt also observed a horizontal slit along the bottom of the screen. Suspecting this might have been where the killer or killers entered, they looked for another means of entry. They found a window open on the side. Looking in, they saw what

appeared to be a newly painted room, devoid of furniture. They climbed in.

DeRosa waited until he saw them inside the house, then approached the front door. There was a patch of blood on the walk, between the hedges; several more on the right-hand corner of the porch; with still others just outside and to the left of the door and on the doorjamb itself. He didn't see, or later didn't recall, any footprints, though there were a number. The door being open, inward, DeRosa was on the porch before he noticed that something had been scrawled on its lower half.

Printed in what appeared to be blood were three letters: FIG.

Whisenhunt and Burbridge had finished checking out the kitchen and dining room when DeRosa entered the hallway. Turning left into the living room, he found his way partly blocked by the two blue steamer trunks. It appeared that they had been standing on end, then knocked over, as one was leaning against the other. DeRosa also observed, next to the trunks and on the floor, a pair of horn-rimmed glasses. Burbridge, who followed him into the room, noticed something else: on the carpet, to the left of the entrance, were two small pieces of wood. They looked like pieces of a broken gun grip.

They had arrived expecting two bodies, but had found three. They were now looking not for more death, but some explanation. A suspect. Clues.

The room was light and airy. Desk, chair, piano. Then something odd. In the center of the room, facing the fireplace, was a long couch. Draped over the back was a huge American flag.

Not until they were almost to the couch did they see what was on the other side.

She was young, blond, very pregnant. She lay on her left side, directly in front of the couch, her legs tucked up

toward her stomach in a fetal position. She wore a flowered bra and matching bikini panties, but the pattern was almost indistinguishable because of the blood, which looked as if it had been smeared over her entire body. A white nylon rope was looped around her neck twice, one end extending over a rafter in the ceiling, the other leading across the floor to still another body, that of a man, which was about four feet away.

The rope was also looped twice around the man's neck, the loose end going under his body, then extending several feet beyond. A bloody towel covered his face, hiding his features. He was short, about five feet six, and was lying on his right side, his hands bunched up near his head as if still warding off blows. His clothing—blue shirt, white pants with black vertical stripes, wide modish belt, black boots—was blood-drenched.

None of the officers thought about checking either body for pulse. As with the body in the car and the pair on the lawn, it was so obviously unnecessary.

Although DeRosa, Whisenhunt, and Burbridge were patrolmen, not homicide detectives, each, at some time in the course of his duties, had seen death. But nothing like this. 10050 Cielo Drive was a human slaughterhouse.

Shaken, the officers fanned out to search the rest of the house. There was a loft above the living room. DeRosa climbed up the wooden ladder and nervously peeked over the top, but saw no one. A hallway connected the living room with the south end of the residence. There was blood in the hall in two places. To the left, just past one of the spots, was a bedroom, the door of which was open. The blankets and pillows were rumped and clothing strewn about, as if someone—possibly the nightgown-clad woman on the lawn—had already undressed and gone to bed before the killer or killers appeared. Sitting atop the headboard of the bed, his legs hanging down, was a toy rabbit, ears cocked as if quizzically surveying the scene.

There was no blood in this room, nor any evidence of a struggle.

Across the hall was the master bedroom. Its door was also open, as were the louvered doors at the far end of the room, beyond which could be seen the swimming pool.

This bed was larger and neater, the white spread turned back to reveal a gaily flowered top sheet and a white bottom sheet with a gold geometric pattern. In the center of the bed, rather than across the top, were two pillows, dividing the side that had been slept on from the side that hadn't. Across the room, facing the bed, was a TV set, on each side of which was a handsome armoire. On top of one was a white bassinet.

Cautiously, adjoining doors were opened: dressing room, closet, bath, closet. Again no signs of a struggle. The telephone on the nightstand next to the bed was on the hook. Nothing overturned or upset.

However, there was blood on the inside left side of the louvered French door, suggesting that someone, again possibly the woman on the lawn, had run out this way, attempting to escape.

Stepping outside, the officers were momentarily blinded by the glare from the pool. Asin had mentioned a guest house behind the main residence. They spotted it now, or rather the corner of it, some sixty feet to the southeast, through the shrubbery.

Approaching it quietly, they heard the first sounds they had heard since coming onto the premises: the barking of a dog, and a male voice saying, "Shhh, be quiet."

Whisenhunt went to the right, around the back of the house. DeRosa turned left, proceeding around the front, Burbridge following as backup. Stepping onto the screened-in porch, DeRosa could see, in the living room, on a couch facing the front door, a youth of about eighteen. He was wearing pants but no shirt, and though he did not

appear to be armed, this did not mean, DeRosa would later explain, that he didn't have a weapon nearby.

Yelling "*Freeze!*," DeRosa kicked in the front door.

Startled, the boy looked up to see one, then, moments later, three guns pointing directly at him. Christopher, Altobelli's large Weimaraner, charged Whisenhunt, chomping the end of his shotgun. Whisenhunt slammed the porch door on his head, then held him trapped there until the youth called him off.

As to what then happened, there are contrary versions.

The youth, who identified himself as William Garretson, the caretaker, would later state that the officers knocked him down, handcuffed him, yanked him to his feet, dragged him outside onto the lawn, then knocked him down again.

DeRosa would later be asked, re Garretson:

Q. "Did he fall or stumble to the floor at any time?"

A. "He may have; I don't recall whether he did or not."

Q. "Did you direct him to lay on the ground outside?"

A. "I directed him, yes, to lay on the ground, yes."

Q. "Did you help him to the ground?"

A. "No, he went down on his own."

Garretson kept asking, "What's the matter? What's the matter?" One of the officers replied, "We'll show you!" and, pulling him to his feet, DeRosa and Burbridge escorted him back along the path toward the main house.

Whisenhunt remained behind, looking for weapons and blood-stained clothing. Though he found neither, he did notice many small details of the scene. One at the time seemed so insignificant that he forgot it until later questioning brought it back to mind. There was a stereo next to the couch. It had been off when they entered the room. Looking at the controls, Whisenhunt noticed that the volume setting was between 4 and 5.

Garretson, meantime, had been led past the two bodies on the lawn. It was indicative of the condition of the first, the young woman, that he mistakenly identified her as Mrs.

Chapman, the Negro maid. As for the man, he identified him as “the young Polanski.” If, as Chapman and Asin had said, Polanski was in Europe, this made no sense. What the officers couldn’t know was that Garretson believed Voytek Frykowski to be Roman Polanski’s younger brother. Garretson failed completely when it came to identifying the young man in the Rambler.²

At some point, no one recalls exactly when, Garretson was informed of his rights and told that he was under arrest for murder. Asked about his activities the previous night, he said that although he had remained up all night, writing letters and listening to records, he had neither heard nor seen anything. His highly unlikely alibi, his “vague, unrealistic” replies, and his confused identification of the bodies led the arresting officers to conclude that the suspect was lying.

Five murders—four of them probably occurring less than a hundred feet away—and he had heard nothing?

Escorting Garretson down the driveway, DeRosa located the gate-control mechanism on the pole inside the gate. He noticed that there was blood on the button.

The logical inference was that someone, quite possibly the killer, had pressed the button to get out, in so doing very likely leaving a fingerprint.

Officer DeRosa, who was charged with securing and protecting the scene until investigating officers arrived, now pressed the button himself, successfully opening the gate but also creating a superimposure that obliterated any print that may have been there.

Later DeRosa would be questioned regarding this:

Q. “Was there some reason why you placed your finger on the bloody button that operated the gate?”

A. “So that I could go through the gate.”

Q. “And that was intentionally done?”

A. “I had to get out of there.”