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# The Thin Blue Line

By Errol Morris

In October, my brother and I left Ohio.  
We were driving to California.  
We got into Dallas on a Thursday night.  
Friday morning, while I'm eating eggs  
and drinking coffee, I get a good job.  
All these people  
are supposedly out of work.  
I'm not in town a half a day,  
and I've got a job.  
Everything clicked.  
It's as if I was meant to be here.  
I'd run away from home a couple  
of times. Once or twice. I don't know.  
And this all started,  
David is running away from home.  
And he takes... I took  
a pistol of my dad's and a shotgun.  
Took a neighbor's car.  
I had broken into their house  
and got the keys to it.  
I forget exactly what it was.  
Ended up coming to Dallas.  
I went to work and no one showed up.  
Being a weekend, sometimes  
they worked, sometimes they didn't.  
On the way home, I ran out of gas.  
And as I was walking down the street  
with the gas can...  
a person, at that time, pulled over.  
I guess since I had the gas can...  
he figured I was out of gas.  
I wasn't 100 yards from the car.  
And being Thanksgiving weekend,  
there was no gas stations open.  
He stopped and asked me  
if I needed any help.  
I'm driving down some street  
somewhere in Dallas.  
I had just turned 16.  
And there was a guy over there,  
I think he'd run out of gas...  
I took him to get some gas.  
This was Randall Adams.  
Ended up following him where

him and his brother were staying.  
Eventually, that evening...  
we went out and got some beer.  
We smoked a little marijuana  
and what have you.  
Went to a movie that night.  
I get up, I go to work on Saturday.  
Why did I meet this kid? I don't know.  
Why did I run out of gas at that time?  
I don't know. But it happened.  
The day they picked me up, December 21.  
They took me upstairs.  
What floor, I don't know.  
But they put me in a little room.  
Gus Rose walked in.  
He had a confession there  
he wanted me to sign.  
He said that I would sign.  
He didn't give a damn what I said.  
I would sign this piece of paper.  
I told him I couldn't.  
"I don't know what the hell  
you people expect of me.  
"But there's no way I can sign that. "  
He left. He came back in 10 minutes.  
And threw a pistol on the table.  
Asked me to look at it. Which I did. I looked.  
He asked me to pick it up.  
I told him no, I wouldn't do that.  
He threatened me.  
Again, I told him no.  
He pulled his service revolver on me.  
We looked at each other for...  
To me, it seemed hours.  
I do not like looking down  
the barrel of a pistol.  
I do not like being threatened.  
When he finally saw  
that he would either have to kill me...  
or forget the signature...  
I guess he forgot the signature,  
because he put his pistol up.  
He took the pistol on the table,  
put it up and stormed out.

I had a casual, friendly conversation  
with him to start with...  
to try to size him up...  
to see what he liked and what he didn't like.  
I found almost immediately  
that he didn't have much conscience.  
Anything he had done,  
it never really bothered him.  
He had done other things  
that he told me about...  
that didn't seem to bother him in the least.  
He showed no expression whatsoever.  
It's just like he's sitting here  
talking about the color of this wall...  
or the shooting of the police officer.  
He showed no reaction  
to any of the questions.  
He almost overacted his innocence.  
He protested he hadn't done anything.  
Couldn't imagine  
why we were bringing him in.  
He didn't fight or he didn't resist.  
He just protested his innocence.  
I told them what happened that  
Saturday, that I had met this kid.  
I kept telling them the same thing.  
They didn't want to believe me.  
Never once was I allowed a phone call.  
Never once was an attorney there.  
I don't know how long this had been.  
I had smoked two packs of cigarettes  
and had been out for a long time.  
Wood didn't take his ticket book  
out of the car.  
He left it in the car on the front seat...  
which indicates  
that he was not going to write a ticket.  
What he was probably going to do  
was have them turn on the headlights.  
He didn't know that the car was stolen.  
I think that there's a very good chance...  
that he was going  
to check the driver's license...  
and tell him to turn on his headlights,

and let the guy be on his way.  
Officer Wood's wife had purchased him...  
a bulletproof vest  
and had it under the Christmas tree.  
Or had it stored away,  
to give to him at Christmastime.  
His partner was one of the first  
female police officers...  
that was assigned to patrol.  
They were from the Northwest Station.  
Just patrol officers following the clock.  
Working the graveyard shift and everything.  
They had been into a fast-food  
restaurant. And she had a malt.  
This car came by, these  
two dudes in it, with no lights on.  
It wasn't a serious problem...  
but he just pulled up,  
turned his lights on to stop him.  
Just to warn the man  
that his lights were off.  
Got out of the car and walked up.  
Before he got to the window,  
where the driver was...  
he was in the right position.  
This man just turned around and just...  
with a little small-caliber pistol.  
The first shot hit him in the arm.  
He had his flashlight. It hit  
the flashlight and went into his arm.  
The next one hit him right in the chest.  
The officer falls in the street  
and he was in the first traffic lane.  
He lay there and bled to death.  
So she's out of the car.  
She empties her pistol  
at the fleeing suspect...  
and she runs to his aid.  
Procedure says you grab the radio  
and call for an ambulance.  
Common sense would tell you that.  
But what do you do?  
And that time, she's so... just tore down.  
And the blood.

An enormous amount of blood.  
How do we hold her responsible  
for not following procedure?  
But the main thing was, she  
couldn't remember the license number.  
When we started putting facts together  
on how much information we had...  
from the leads we had,  
we found out we didn't have anything.  
The only thing that we knew  
we were looking for was a blue Vega.  
Probably every Vega that was  
registered in the state of Texas...  
was stopped and checked.  
We had people calling the office...  
saying, "I've got a Vega and it's not blue."  
"But would you come out  
and be sure to check it."  
"Be sure it's not mine, because  
I don't want to get stopped anymore."  
"I'm afraid. "  
If you're the investigator  
assigned to the murder...  
you get frustrated with other witnesses.  
But when you got a police officer  
that witnessed it...  
you expect that they would know  
a little more than she knew.  
Procedure.  
When there's a two-person unit,  
when either one approaches the car...  
the other positions himself  
to the right rear...  
where they can watch  
all the activity in the car.  
And if the man on the left of the driver  
gets in trouble...  
their partner is in a position to help.  
Speculation was, at the time...  
that his partner was sitting in the car.  
That's where the discrepancies were.  
Just a matter of time, and whether  
or not she was out of the car...  
completely out of the car,

or partially in the car...  
or just sitting in there with the door closed.  
And the thing I think we did then  
that really helped...  
It didn't really help anything at all.  
Let me back up.  
But it was interesting,  
and it cost a lot of money...  
but it was worthwhile.  
You got to cover every trail.  
A guy out of California...  
I don't recall his name,  
he was an expert in hypnosis.  
He came down,  
hypnotized her and questioned her.  
What was interesting was...  
she couldn't remember anything  
particularly about the car.  
She remembered getting a malt.  
They'd stopped in the fast-food.  
It was a Whataburger.  
They remembered all that,  
and stopping the car.  
Got back on the road.  
She didn't remember anything.  
But she remembered a license number  
off a hit-and-run vehicle...  
that they had worked earlier in the night.  
It was getting awfully close to Christmas.  
We'd never gone that long in Dallas  
without clearing a murder of an officer.  
We'd had several killed,  
but we'd cleared them pretty quick.  
And this case had gone a month,  
or nearly a month...  
and we still hadn't cleared it.  
We finally got the break that cleared it.  
It came out of Vidor, Texas.  
Mr. Calvin Cunningham, who lives  
in Vidor, had his home broken into...  
and his little Mercury Comet stolen.  
We felt as though  
David had committed that crime.  
For several days, though,

he was missing. We couldn't find him.  
It was one afternoon, one of our  
officers spotted Cunningham's car...  
on North Main Street, here in Vidor.  
David abandoned the vehicle  
and ran on foot.  
We started getting  
little bits of information, though...  
that David had been involved in a  
shooting in Dallas of a police officer.  
We would always get  
third-hand rumor, fourth-hand rumor.  
So we went back to a few of his other  
comrades in crime, we could call them.  
They said,  
"We thought he was just bragging.  
"We didn't really take him seriously. "  
Sitting down, watching the  
evening news, well, the night news.  
My father was asleep on the couch.  
Heard somebody knocking at the door.  
It was David Harris.  
I let him in. He came in.  
He was standing there beside my chair...  
and a news broadcast advertised  
about a police officer shot in Dallas.  
Right then and there he starts  
swearing up and down.  
He says, "I swear to God,  
I shot that fucking pig. "  
He says, "I'm the one that killed him. "  
Somewhere around Dallas,  
they got pulled over.  
I think he said because  
they were checking out a stolen car.  
He said that the cop had pulled him over...  
and walked up to the window.  
When the cop came,  
he rolled down the window...  
and just pulled the gun up and shot him.  
He swore up and down.  
He made a big scene about it.  
Jumped up and down...  
trying to get anybody and everybody...

to listen to him.  
"Yeah, I shot that son of a gun. "  
And everybody said,  
"Sure you did, David. Sure. "  
"I swear to God I killed that cop. "  
I asked him if he'd been to Dallas.  
He denied having been to Dallas.  
I asked him if he'd been involved  
in any shooting...  
or knew anything about a shooting,  
and he denied that to the end.  
Which is fairly consistent with David.  
Even if he had some involvement...  
his first way that he always treats you,  
he would deny.  
Then, if he felt as though  
you really knew he had done it...  
then he would be truthful with you.  
He give me a pistol, a . 22 caliber pistol.  
He showed it to me. He says,  
"That's the one I shot him with. "  
He gave me the pistol.  
I didn't really consider it that much.  
I don't guess I really realized  
he did shoot the cop.  
He led me to a swampy area...  
several hundred yards  
behind his residence in Rose City.  
There was a sock under water.  
He said, "There it is. "  
And he had sprayed this sock with boot oil.  
When we retrieved the gun...  
I said, "I better do something with it.  
It's going to rust up. "  
Even the time that I saw the gun  
at the trial in Dallas...  
it looked just as good  
as when I'd taken it out of the swamp.  
So he had taken pretty good care of it,  
even though he did put it under water.  
He got to thinking...  
"I didn't do that  
and I've been saying that I did...  
"and I'm in over my head now,

I better tell them what happened.  
"Because they are going to send me  
to the penitentiary for life...  
"if I don't tell them what really happened. "  
So he said, "I am just bragging about this.  
"I didn't do it, but I was there,  
and I know who did do it. "  
And, of course, he came clean then.  
He tried to hide no facts.  
He just seemed like a friendly kid.  
I may have talked to him  
just to keep him friendly.  
We didn't want to make him mad.  
But we didn't want him to tell us  
something that he thought.  
We wanted him to tell us what we knew.  
It wasn't very long until I realized  
that what he knew...  
was the facts of the case,  
and it matched with what we knew.  
And it had to be right.  
The story that I told was...

**It was like 12:**

So it was the next day...  
early in the morning. We were stopped.  
When we were stopped,  
the officer came up to the car...  
and asked to see the driver's license,  
and he just started shooting.  
I don't know why, but it's always  
seemed like time just stopped.  
It didn't seem like any time passed.  
It just seemed like it was, boom!  
Time stopped or something.  
I don't know what it is.  
It's like a flash.  
We went back to his room.  
He was supposed to ask his brother  
if I could stay there that night.  
But he said  
that his brother don't like to do that.  
Anyhow, he went in  
and never came back out. So I left.

Ended up pulling into a parking lot.  
I slept there I think, for a while.  
Then, finally, the next morning,  
early or something...  
I found my way to Freeway 45.  
And went back home.  
After riding around with him,  
I come to find out he's got an arsenal.  
He's got pistols. He's got rifles.  
He's got this pistol.  
He's waving it around. He's doing this.  
I told him, "Hey, why don't you put  
those in the trunk of the car?"  
We stopped at a restaurant...  
and ordered and ate sandwiches in the car.  
I bought a six-pack of beer.  
He pulled this pistol back out.  
And I ask him why he got the pistol out.  
And he kind of laughed...  
rolled the window down,  
and fired the pistol outside the car.  
And I asked him to please put it up.  
And I think he handed me the pistol,  
and I put it under the driver's seat.  
He wanted to go to the movies,  
so we went to the movies.  
We got there probably at about 7:00.  
He was the one  
that had picked the movie out.  
I call them drive-in movies,  
beer-drinking movies.  
\$0.50, put them together  
and make a bunch of money...  
with a bunch of people  
getting drunk at the drive-in.  
- Are you going to concede?  
- Please, sit down...  
What is this, Mr. Brooks?  
- Anybody can see it's an ashtray.  
- Wrong!  
Anybody can plainly see it's a wall-breaker!  
I'm trying to speak for you!  
I'm trying to speak for all of you!  
I am the student body!

The show that was on was half over.  
We watched half of the one show...  
we started watching  
the first part of the second show.  
We want a victory, and we're gonna get it.  
I didn't really care for the second feature...  
which is an R-rated, cheerleader-type thing.  
I don't know what it was.  
May I have some wine?  
It's good, Ross.  
I didn't know you could cook.  
It is good, isn't it?  
You got to try my celery rmoulade.  
No.  
I told him I wanted to leave.  
"I don't really care  
to sit here and watch this. Let's go. "  
He's acting strange, he wanted  
to watch the end. Anyway, we left.  
We drove back towards Dallas  
and we drove to the motel.  
There's a little store.  
I bought a pack of cigarettes...  
and a newspaper.  
And when I left,  
this kid was still sitting there.  
I leaned against the car and we  
talked to him for a few minutes...  
and I told him  
that since he was looking for a job...  
and there hadn't been anybody at work...  
that if he wanted to stop back  
Monday morning...  
that sure, he could ride out  
and follow me to work...  
and he could talk to the boss.  
And he would probably get a job.  
I told him that I would catch him  
Monday morning if he showed up.  
I told him what time I went to work.  
Why, I left.  
I walked around the store  
and went to the house.  
When I walked in, the television was

on and my brother was sleeping.  
He had been home this whole time  
that I had been gone.  
So I made me a sandwich...  
and sat there and watched the end of  
The Carol Burnett Show.  
When it went off, the news came on  
and I watched 15 minutes of it.  
And that was it.  
I turned the TV off and went to sleep.  
Finally, they bring in a stenographer.  
She sits down and I run the story.  
I tell them what happened this Saturday.  
She leaves. She types.  
She comes back in about 25 to 30 minutes...  
with a copy of this statement.  
I read through it...  
and when it was basically what I liked...  
yes, I signed it.  
He admits driving the car  
and taking a right on Inwood Road...  
off of Interstate 35...  
or Highway 183.  
He admits driving it.  
After he made his right turn  
on Inwood Road...  
this is where our statement ends.  
He says he does not  
remember anything after that.  
He didn't remember anything  
about a shooting.  
He didn't remember anything about  
a police officer stopping him.  
That part of his mind  
just conveniently went blank.  
He remembered driving the car...  
and he remembered approaching  
the scene of the shooting...  
and then, from that point, he blacks out...  
and can't remember  
until he gets to the motel room...  
which is some 10 minutes later.  
Everything else he remembers vividly.  
And that's just a convenient memory

lapse, is all that is.  
The Morning News in Dallas County...  
stated that I had signed a confession...  
that I had confessed  
to the killing of Robert Wood...  
and they had their killer  
and they were ready to go with it.  
The statement that I signed  
for Dallas County...  
was never...  
and never would have been anything  
as "a confession. "  
But yet, they labeled it as such.  
Of course, I couldn't dispute this  
because I didn't even know about it.  
I heard no news.  
I knew nothing for two weeks.  
They kept me completely away  
from everybody.  
Several times we talked to her,  
trying to get her to recall.  
"Do you recall the license number?  
Do you recall anything to help us?"  
And she gave us  
a pretty good description of the car.  
As it turned out, her description  
of the car was real close.  
It comes out that we weren't  
looking for a blue Vega.  
We were looking for a Comet.  
No telling the man-hours  
we literally wasted...  
looking for a blue Vega.  
There is a difference  
between a Vega and a Mercury Comet.  
So in reality, in regard to cars...  
every piece of information  
that was called in...  
they were calling in regard to a Comet,  
I mean, a Vega.  
The people that called in were truthful,  
trying to help.  
They really were trying to help.  
We just all had the wrong information.

There wasn't a mark on this car  
David Harris had stolen.  
Wasn't a mark.  
Do you think a car sitting still...  
starting from a stop, heading up a hill...  
with a woman standing right behind it...  
that is a very good shot with a pistol...  
She should have hit  
the damn thing one time. She didn't.  
I wish to God she had blown whoever  
was driving the car's head off...  
because I wouldn't have been here.  
I went back several times...  
and with Mr. Cunningham,  
he and I both searched...  
and could find no indications that  
that car had been hit by gunfire.  
Later on, he finally found one place...  
that he felt as though  
that a bullet had been creased on it.  
But before he could tell me about it,  
his daughter totaled the car out.  
Totally demolished it.  
I was doing burglaries and some robberies...  
and a few possession cases  
and stuff like that.  
I think he just came up to me and said:  
"Are you Edith James?  
I'd like to talk about my case. "  
That's the way I remember it, anyhow.  
And I said, "Sure. "  
And I said, "What sort of a case is it?"  
He said, "It's a capital murder. " And I said...  
Inside, I kind of thought:  
"I've never done one,  
but I can surely talk to him about it. "  
I hate to be considered...  
some kind of dummy that believes  
in the innocence of her clients.  
A lot of people think, "A woman lawyer...  
"she's bound to stupidly believe  
anything she's told. "  
I admit, I'm sort of a gullible person.  
But on the other hand,

I've seen an awful lot of people...  
who admitted guilt or were found guilty...  
and all but Randall turned out  
to be guilty, in my opinion.  
Douglas Mulder had a perfect win record.  
I believe he resigned from the  
D.A. 's office without any defeats.  
That's why he's legendary.  
Everything, as I recall,  
that Mulder ever said...  
was about what a great guy Mulder was...  
and how marvelous it was that  
he was getting all these convictions.  
I wanted somebody else in on it,  
so I got Dennis interested in it...  
because Dennis has a lot more  
trial experience...  
and Dennis wins  
practically all of his jury cases.  
And Dennis was very enthusiastic  
about the Randall Adams case...  
because he kept saying,  
"This is one we can win.  
"They don't have substantial evidence.  
All they've got is David Harris. "  
I prepared a motion for a continuance  
to get more time to try the case...  
and in doing that had to lay out  
my schedule for several weeks...  
as to exactly what time  
I'd be in Vidor, Texas.  
Vidor is the headquarters of the  
Ku Klux Klan for the state of Texas.  
It's a city where black people  
will not spend the night.  
Black people won't even stop there  
to get their car filled with gasoline.  
And furthermore, the people of Vidor  
were under the impression...  
that the policeman that was murdered  
was a black man.  
I had to stop at a motel on the way.  
My wife and I stayed in one room,  
the lady lawyer in another room.

We arranged to get up very early,  
go to Vidor and start our investigation.

**At about 6:**

Edith James, the lady lawyer, got up...  
and was looking for me.  
While she went out in the parking lot  
to find me, she went to one room...  
and someone in the parking lot said:  
"If you're looking  
for the lawyer from Dallas...  
"he's in room... "  
And he gave her the room number.  
I immediately began to suspect...  
from the time I was that close to Vidor,  
I was being followed and observed.  
Doug Mulder had been there  
the week before I had...  
and had told the people in Vidor that I was...  
an Eastern-educated  
civil liberties attorney...  
and that I was down there  
to discredit David Harris.  
And then I had been recommended  
to see one particular policeman...  
who had been led  
to the solution of this case.  
And I had the impression...  
that he was the one honest policeman  
I could trust in Vidor.  
He told me that  
after the policeman was killed...  
David Harris went back to Vidor.  
But before he was arrested,  
he committed a robbery down there...  
and had someone on the floor  
of a 7-Eleven type of store...  
with a shotgun at her throat.  
Got back there...  
robbed O'Bannion's 7-Eleven with a .22 rifle.  
Committed some other burglaries  
and what have you.  
All this time I was on probation.  
Juvenile probation.

Eventually I turned myself in  
for this stuff in Vidor.  
I think I made a confession.  
I can't even remember exactly.  
So I'm told I did.  
He had told us he had robbed stores,  
and we laughed.  
"Sure, we know you have. "  
I'd given him one of my hats.  
It's an old Bonnie-and-Clyde-looking  
hat, it's turned sideways.  
We said, "We'll draw you a little  
mustache, walk in with that gun.  
"Nobody'll know who you are. "

## **About 2:**

I was asleep and the phone rings.  
I said, "Hello?" He said, "This is  
David. " "This is David Harris?"  
"Yeah," he said, "I did it.  
Will you come and get me?"  
I said, "I'm not coming to get you.  
I'm asleep. "  
He didn't have a conscience.  
If I do something bad, it kind of gets to me.  
I feel, "Shucks, I shouldn't have done  
that. I feel bad about it. "  
But it didn't bother him.  
Didn't bother him at all.  
We asked the D.A. In Vidor, Texas...  
what they were going to do  
with little David. They said:  
"We'll send him  
to the Texas Youth Council. "  
And we sort of tried to inquire...  
didn't he think it was strange  
that there was a robbery committed...  
with that same pistol.  
And here it was David Harris' pistol...  
David Harris' automobile  
that picked up Randall Adams.  
Didn't he think it was a little odd...  
that all the utensils for committing  
this so-called murder...

were furnished by David Harris  
who got off scot-free...  
and was being a witness  
for the prosecution?  
And all he said was, "We don't  
feel that way in Vidor, Texas.  
"Our people just are not that...  
"We're not that keen  
on ruining a young man's life. "  
I tried to introduce the crime spree theory.  
The theory that David Harris  
was on this series of crimes...  
both before and after  
the killing of the policeman.  
That he would be the person who had...  
the heart filled with malice  
most apt to commit a murder.  
But the judge would not allow me  
to introduce any of those crimes.  
They'd had a 28-year-old man.  
The only alternative  
would be prosecuting a 16-year-old...  
that could not be given  
the death penalty under Texas law...  
where our 28-year-old man could.  
That's always been the predominant  
motive, in my opinion...  
for having a death penalty case  
against Randall Adams.  
Not that they had him so dead to rights.  
But just that he was a convenient age.  
The judge is supposed to have said...  
That Don Metcalfe  
is supposed to have said...  
to Jeanette White, Dennis White's wife...  
"What do you care? He's only a drifter. "  
I grew up in a family...  
where I was taught a great respect  
for law enforcement.  
I became acutely aware of the dangers...  
that police officers go through,  
law enforcement officials go through...  
that I think much of the public  
is not really sensitive to.

My father was an FBI man.  
Probably at the worst possible time  
to be in the FBI.  
It was from 1932 to 1935 in Chicago.  
He was at the Biograph Theater  
the night that Dillinger was killed.  
It was a hot summer evening.  
Little air conditioning in Chicago...  
and people were out for a walk.  
My father would tell me  
that when Dillinger was killed...  
within a matter of two minutes...  
people were dipping their  
handkerchiefs in the blood...  
to get souvenirs.  
And he vividly remembered one lady...  
who, all she had was a newspaper,  
held it up and said:  
"I bet I'm the only lady from Kansas  
City with John Dillinger's blood. "  
He told me, the "Woman in Red"...  
she had on an orange dress.  
This is trivia, okay?  
It looked red under the lights.  
He said it was really orange.  
So she got to be known as the  
"Lady in Red" that fingered Dillinger.  
He said, "It was really the Lady in Orange. "  
As her reward, she got a new fur coat...  
and a one-way ticket  
back to her native Romania.  
His whole story  
from the start was two hours late.  
I met this kid

**at around 10:**

He says we met at noon.  
I say we were at the Bronco Bowl

**at 2:**

He says it was 5:00 or 6:00.  
Everything that we did coincide with,  
he was two hours late.  
Two hours later. Two hours into the night.

His testimony is that...  
as we were getting off the freeway  
on Inwood Avenue...  
he stated that I'm driving the car...  
that we're pulled over.  
He gets scared and he slumps down  
in the seat of the car.  
That, as the officer walks up...  
and shines his flashlight,  
and I roll down my window...  
I pull the pistol out and blow this man away.  
His testimony is...  
when I finally do drive to the motel...  
I get out. I tell him, "Don't worry about it.  
"Forget this ever happened. "  
That's crazy.  
The police officer was killed at 12:30...  
which is about two and a half hours  
after he last saw me.  
Just before he went into the motel...  
he'd gone across the motel courtyard...  
to a little store over there  
and bought some cigarettes.  
And I was supposed to go and find out  
if the man remembered him...  
coming in there just before 10:00  
to buy the cigarettes.  
I didn't get over there  
to Fort Worth for a long time.  
We got some pictures from his family  
that didn't show him in jail clothes.  
I took the pictures in to show them  
to the man behind the counter.  
He was very cooperative  
and he wanted to help us.  
But he honestly... He said:  
"I don't remember anything  
about this guy coming in there...  
"I couldn't tell one night from another.  
Might have been that night or another.  
"Cause they were always coming  
for cigarettes. "  
His brother...  
at first...

was saying that at the time  
of the murder, that he was home...  
watching... I believe it was  
a wrestling match on TV.  
And he said, "Me and my brother likes  
wrestling matches. He was with me.  
"Randall, my brother,  
was with me all night long.  
"He couldn't have done it. "  
He was trying to cover for his brother.  
Later, as I recall, he changed...

**because he said:**

"If I get down there and perjure myself...  
"there's nothing that they can do  
because they've got the case. "  
This is the way I think that he thought.  
"They know that my brother did it.  
"If I get up there and lie,  
they are going to have me for perjury.  
"I'll be in the penitentiary with him,  
and it ain't going to do any good...  
"so I just ain't going to testify.  
I ain't gonna say nothing. "  
So he backed off of his story completely...  
and Adams was left without any witnesses.  
Her in-court testimony  
and her original statement...  
which should be the best.  
You're talking 15 to 20 minutes  
after the killing.  
Should be the best eyewitness  
testimony she's got.  
It doesn't match. Doesn't match at all.  
In court, she testified...  
he got out of the car, she got out of the car.  
She positioned herself  
at the back of the automobile.  
Her original statement,  
"a fur-lined collar on the killer. "  
In court, "It might have been bushy hair. "  
The kid testified that I had a Levi jacket on...  
which is the same type collar,  
basically the same as this.

He testified at pretrial  
that he had a fur-lined parka.  
She's telling you who killed the man.  
One person in the car  
with the fur-lined collar.  
Very convenient that the driver  
happened to have bushy hair.  
All she's got to do  
is look at a picture they took of me.  
But that is not her original statement.  
It's a hell of a big difference  
from "fur-lined collar" to "bushy hair. "  
It's crazy.  
She went through  
two weeks Internal Affairs...  
when she comes out,  
her testimony changes.  
She goes in saying one thing,  
she comes out saying another.  
Something happened. What?  
"We refreshed her memory. "  
Friday afternoon,  
I think it was Good Friday...  
we came back in the courtroom  
that afternoon...  
and we were sort of elated  
because we thought...  
"He's gonna walk. "  
And there's nothing really in that evidence.  
There's just little David Harris,  
and nobody believes him.  
And so we were very optimistic  
about his chances...  
until we walked into the courtroom...  
and here were all these people  
standing in front of the bench.  
Three of them, anyway.  
They were taking the oath  
to be sworn as witnesses.  
Mrs. Miller got on the stand  
that last afternoon.  
And she said,  
"That's the man, I saw that man!  
"I saw Randall Adams' face

just right after... "

She said, "I saw the gun sticking out of the car... "when he shot that police officer. And that's the man. "

And she waved her finger right toward Randall Adams. She's the one that got him convicted. When I was a kid, I used to want to be a detective... because I used to watch all the detective shows on TV. When I was a kid they used to show these movies with Boston Blackie... and he always had a woman with him. I wanted to be a wife of a detective or be a detective... so I always watched detective stories. I'm always looking because I never know what might come up. Or how I could help. I like to help in situations like that. I really do. It's always happening to me, everywhere I go... lots of times there's killings or anything. Even around my house. Wherever. I'm always looking or getting involved, to find out who did it, what's going on. I listen to people. And I'm always trying to decide who's lying, or who killed who... before the police do. See if I can beat them. Yeah.

I was working at a gas station. My husband and I both. We weren't getting along well at all. We were arguing back and forth. We didn't wanna go home, because we'd rather talk it out in the car... than go home with the kids and fight. Had to listen to them, too. So we were really arguing, and decided to get something to eat.

About that time,  
a police came out of a restaurant...  
on the right hand side of the road...  
and he went to pull the man over.  
She turned around.  
She was looking hard. She looked.  
I didn't think she seen the guy, but she did.  
Because I said, "What you looking at?"  
I knew something had went wrong.  
She said, "You just shut up and drive. "  
And I kept telling my husband:  
"Slow down so I can see. "  
He said, "Come on,  
we're getting out of here.  
"You're too nosy.  
You don't even know what's going on. "  
I had no idea that somebody  
was gonna get killed or shot.  
So I just drove on.  
He was one of these kind  
that didn't like getting involved.  
He wanted to go on. He told me  
to shut up and turn around. Don't look.  
I turned around and looked anyway.  
So we heard something,  
like backfire or firecrackers.  
And so we drove over the bridge,  
and I got to thinking.

**I said:**

this time of the year. "  
I was thinking to myself:  
"That couldn't be somebody shooting. "  
It was real dark, and it was cold.  
It was hard to see in that car.  
But his window was down.  
The driver's window was down.  
This is how I got such a good look.  
I really couldn't see anything inside.  
It was kind of... shadows on the window  
and stuff.  
But when he rolled down the window,  
what made his face stand out so.  
The car was dark blue.

He had a beard, mustache...  
kind of dishwater-blond hair.  
But, like I said, when he was in court,  
he sure looked a lot different.  
All I could just tell by this and this,  
that it was him.  
I knew that there was some shots over there.  
But I didn't want to be involved in it...  
because West Dallas  
is a high-crime neighborhood.  
One of the biggest.  
He was more scared of it than I was.  
But when you have black people like that...  
they don't like getting involved in nothing.  
That's just common.  
Like here, nobody wants  
to see nothing or hear nothing.  
And they'll stay completely  
in the background.  
That's why they were having  
such a hard time there...  
finding anybody that would come forward.  
Because it was in  
a totally black neighborhood.  
She believe in, see somebody done  
something wrong she should tell it.  
'Cause she told on me...  
a couple of times...  
that I was hauling drugs out of El Paso.  
Called the sheriff down there,  
going to make me open my trunk.  
So I ended up opening it,  
but there was nothing in it.  
Good grief.  
She's a ho, but she find out  
you done something, she turn you in.  
Mrs. Miller had testified at the trial...  
that she had gotten off early from her  
gas station job...  
and gone down to pick up her husband  
to help him with the bookwork.  
We found out that she was not doing  
any bookkeeping for that station...  
because she had been fired

from her job two weeks earlier...  
for till-tapping, for stealing.  
The reason that they were  
talking to the police at all...  
was that there'd been a three-day  
running knife fight in their apartment.  
And they were all booked...  
for disorderly and drunk behavior in there...  
including assault with knives,  
and all kinds of stuff.  
When they were at the police station,  
they suddenly decided to volunteer...  
all this information  
about what they had seen...  
about the police officer's killing.  
A woman called me at my home...  
and said that she knew this woman...  
who had testified and identified  
Randall Adams from a passing vehicle.  
This woman had never told the truth  
in her life.  
She also told me that she had tried  
to call the D.A. During the trial...  
and give this evidence  
that this woman was not believable.  
If their case hinged on this testimony,  
this was not believable testimony.  
They were scum. They were just...  
actually scum.  
He was a black man  
and she was a white woman.  
He came to work the day after.  
He told me about the policeman  
that had gotten shot the night before.  
And I hadn't heard anything about it.  
And I thought  
it was another one of these stories.  
And he brings in these newspapers...  
and he says he didn't see a thing.  
He couldn't see nothing, it was dark.  
Wheels started rolling  
in his head about money.  
That's when he got the idea.  
Let me put it in his words.

For enough money, he would testify...  
to what they wanted him to say.  
He would say anything  
they wanted him to say.  
Or he would see anything  
that they wanted him to see.  
Those were his words.  
I was shocked that he did go ahead...  
and get up and tell  
that he saw the actual shooting...  
and recognized the boy. Identified him.  
That's when I called Dennis White.  
I told him, "That man's lying. "  
Nobody has that good of an eyesight.  
From where the policeman was shot  
and from where they were at...  
I doubt if you could have  
even seen them with binoculars.  
I'm a salesman.  
And you develop something like total recall.  
I don't forget places, things...  
or streets.  
Because it's a habit,  
something I just picked up.  
I just stare intensely at people  
and try to figure them out.  
Being nosy, I just stare.  
I was leaving the Plush Pub one night...  
driving a 1977 Cadillac...  
heading west on Hampton.  
I noticed an officer had  
two individuals pulled over...  
to the curb in a blue...  
some type of vehicle.  
It was a blue...  
It was a blue Ford. It was a blue something.  
The driver, I think, had long blond hair  
and a moustache.  
And the other one  
didn't have no hairs on his face.  
A person that is white  
going through that area at night...  
he's a sore thumb,  
he stick out for the first reason.

And if they don't look right,  
they're gonna stop you.  
The officer, he walked up to the vehicle.  
His car was behind...  
I don't know if it was behind or in front...  
but I know he had him pulled over,  
and he was up to the car.  
I think he was up to the car. Let me think.  
Yeah, he was up to the car.  
As we was coming by  
he had to have been up to the car.  
I didn't see no bullet. I didn't see no gunfire.  
Because I went on.  
We have three people  
that testified and identified him...  
positively as being the driver  
at the time that Wood was walking...  
right beside the car.  
So we know that he was the driver  
from the witnesses...  
and we also know...  
that it was the driver  
that shot Officer Wood...  
coming from his partner.  
We couldn't have made a case...  
with the voluntary statement  
that we got from Adams.  
We had to rely on witnesses.  
And this is what we did.  
I always tried very hard,  
every judge I know of does...  
to not show emotion on the bench.  
The reason, if you do show emotion...  
the jury might take it that  
you're favoring one side or another.  
So you try to remain passive,  
emotionless, objective.  
I do have to admit that in the Adams case...  
and I've never really said this...  
Doug Mulder's final argument  
was one I'd never heard before.  
About the "thin blue line" of police...  
that separated the public from anarchy.  
I have to concede that there

my eyes kind of welled up...  
when I heard that.  
It did get to me emotionally,  
but I don't think I showed it.  
In death penalty cases...  
we have a question, or we did at the time...  
of whether or not that person  
is of a dangerous mentality...  
and might be expected  
to commit other crimes.  
To answer that question...  
the Dallas District Attorney sends  
psychiatrists to the defendant's cell...  
to discover whether he is without remorse...  
and therefore is a dangerous  
and psychopathic personality.  
Of course, in the instance of a person...  
who did not commit the crime,  
they're not going to show remorse.  
There were two psychiatrists  
that appeared again and again.  
Holbrook and Grigson, the "Killer Shrinks. "  
There was certain criticism  
directed against these two people...  
because, in effect, whenever they  
showed up, the purpose of their visit...  
was to kill the defendant.  
It was April 15th, tax day.  
I think I was filling out my taxes at the time.  
Afraid I might be late.  
A guard walks up to the door...  
tells me, "There's someone out here  
who wants to talk to you. "  
I ask him who it was.  
He said he didn't know...  
but the court ordered me to talk  
to him. I said, "All right. "  
And here come this real tall,  
ostrich-looking dude.  
He introduced himself as Dr. Grigson.  
He pulled a pad out of his coat pocket...  
that had a line drawn across it.  
On this pad, on the upper half...  
he had six images.

I will say a box, a square,  
a circle with a diamond in it.  
I don't... It's been awhile.  
He slides this piece of paper across  
to me and he hands me a pencil.  
He says, "I'm going to get a cup of coffee.  
"Please copy what's on this piece of paper. "  
I'm looking at this man.  
I said, "What? You want it copied  
just the same way you did?  
"Or you want me to change them  
around? What do you want me to do?"  
He said, "Just do  
whatever you think you want to do. "  
And he left.  
So on the bottom half  
of this piece of paper...  
I made my boxes and X's...  
and zeros with diamonds in it.  
Exactly like his.  
He asked me...  
"What's the meaning of  
'A rolling stone gathers no moss?'"  
I'm looking at this man.  
I said, "Are you kidding? Is this  
a joke? What are you doing?"  
He said, "No, I really want to know  
your answer to that question. "  
I said, well,  
"A rolling stone gathers no moss. "  
I said, "To me...  
"it would represent that a person  
that doesn't stand still long enough...  
"it's kind of hard for people to cling to him.  
"If he keeps moving around,  
it's hard to get close to him. "  
He shook his head.  
He said, "What about 'A bird in  
the hand is worth two in the bush'"?  
I said, "If you have a hold of  
something, why give it up...  
"for a chance of getting something  
that might be a little better?  
"It doesn't make sense. You've got

something good, why let go of it?  
"If you can get the other one,  
get it if you can...  
"but don't let go of what you got  
to try to get something else. "  
He asked about my family.  
He asked about my background.  
And he left.  
Total time we had talked,  
maybe 15, 20 minutes.  
Dr. Grigson was up there testifying  
he would commit violent crimes...  
in the future if he was released.  
Grigson is known as "Dr. Death"  
because he always testifies that way.  
In about 99% of the trials...  
that he's been a witness for the  
prosecution, he always testifies...  
that they will commit  
violent crimes in the future.  
You can't tell what  
somebody's gonna do years from now.  
Not really.  
Except based on your past record,  
which anybody can do.  
Randall never had any prior record.  
And as far as we know, he never had  
any history of violence whatever.  
Grigson testified for...  
two and a half hours  
about all these degrees he's got.  
He's been here, and he's been there,  
and he's studied here.  
He called me Charlie Manson.  
He called me Adolf Hitler.  
He said I'm the type of personality...  
that can work all day and creep all night.  
He testified, Grigson...  
that the future seriousness...  
of my mental state...  
would be such that if they released me...  
I would go crazy and  
probably butcher half of Dallas County.  
Even though he talked to me 15 minutes...

I have no prior convictions,  
no prior arrests...  
I was nonviolent for 28 years.  
On one instance...  
and that's saying if I did this,  
which I didn't...  
he's stating that, that's enough...  
For the rest of my life, watch me.  
Don't ever turn your back on me.  
And he talked to me 15 minutes.  
He's crazy.  
You can understand why a man  
might steal if he needs money...  
to put food on the table.  
I can understand why a 17-year-old  
boy who doesn't have a car...  
would steal one to ride around in.  
I can understand  
why the heroin addict needs heroin.  
But it's very hard to understand  
why anybody has to kill a police officer.  
It just doesn't have to be.  
When I'm asleep  
and I close my eyes and think...  
"Why would he do it?  
"He had no background  
that would lead to murder...  
"no reason to commit a murder. "  
And I look at the facts of the case and say...  
David Harris knew the car was stolen,  
knew the guns were there...  
knew the guns were stolen...  
was on a crime spree...  
had had a criminal record prior to  
stealing this car and these guns.  
He was the one  
that wanted to commit the murder...  
and get away from the scene.  
He was the one that,  
after the murder was committed...  
went right back home  
and bragged about it to his friends.  
I looked at all the evidence...  
and I found that I believed

that David Harris committed murder.  
The jury looked at the same evidence...  
and found they believed that  
Randall Adams committed murder.  
And it was their verdict that counted.  
You have a D. A...  
he doesn't talk about...  
when they convict you  
or how they convict you...  
he's talking about  
how he's going to kill you.  
He don't give a damn if you're innocent.  
He don't give a damn if you're guilty.  
He's talking about killing you.  
You get numb. You get...  
It's like a bad dream. You want  
to wake up, but you can't do it.  
Fifteen times, 20 times a day,  
I hear this same story...  
about what happens  
when a man is electrocuted.  
His eyeballs pop out.  
His fingernails pop out.  
His toenails pop out.  
He bleeds out of every orifice he's got.  
They don't care...  
They don't care.  
All they want to do is talk about  
how they're going to kill you.  
That's the only thing that they cared  
about and talked about.  
At that point, that's all they're wanting.  
I didn't have any idea  
what happened to him.  
After I testified, I was gone.  
I never really concerned myself with it.  
Maybe I didn't want to know. I don't know.  
I didn't have any interest in knowing...  
otherwise I might have tried to find out.  
Dennis filed the motion for a new trial...  
then we filed an amended motion  
for a new trial.  
About 20 days later,  
we were to have a hearing on it.

Both Robert Miller and his wife testified there.

But we could not bring out the fact... that they had said that they were gonna get that reward money... and that they didn't care whether they saw anything or not... but their car was too steamed up. We were not allowed to get any of that in... because it was held that it was impeaching testimony... and therefore it came too late. We kept running into blank walls. A reporter from the Dallas Morning News... discovered that one week after the trial was over with... the daughter of this woman had a robbery case in this court. She offered her testimony... at a time when her daughter was in danger of going to jail for life... and got her daughter out of jail. How can you believe her... when the very next week the same judge dismisses that case? The Millers are the kind of people that would do anything... if there was something to be gained... such as her daughter not being sent to the penitentiary for armed robbery... or for money.

When we went to court that day, the District Attorney was hard-nosed. Wouldn't let me answer any questions. He'd ask me questions, but then he'd cut me off real short. And that's when he said something about my big fat nose. If I'd kept my big fat nose out of their business... the Millers would be better off. When I started to leave out of the courtroom... he started laughing, like:

"Didn't do you any good to get up here. "  
It really didn't. Didn't help the guy at all.  
To the best of my recollection...  
the brief conversations  
I have had with Mr. Adams...  
and they have been brief...  
I don't even recall ever asking him,  
or my having told me...  
that he did not do it.  
Because, for my purposes,  
representing him on appeal...  
it's totally irrelevant.  
When the Court of Criminal Appeals  
of Texas...  
voted 9-0 against us,  
I was a little upset about that.

**I felt we, A:**

**B:**

slapped so hard...  
with the unanimous decision against us.  
I was with my family in an ice-cream parlor...  
and the judge and his family  
happened to come at the same time.  
And he came over to me  
and made the comment...  
"I see where the Court of Criminal  
Appeals gave me an 'A'...  
"in the Adams case. "  
Our highest state appellate court...  
the Court of Criminal Appeals  
in Austin affirmed the case, 9-0.  
Then it was reversed by the  
United States Supreme Court, 8-1...  
When the Appellate Court reverses a case...  
they are never saying  
the trial judge was right or wrong.  
They are saying  
they disagree with the judge.  
You can't, for instance,  
in the Adams appeals...  
say the appellate courts  
were saying I was right or I was wrong.

After all, if in Austin...  
in our state appeals court,  
I was 9-0 correct...  
and in Washington, I was 1-8 incorrect.  
If you tally all those votes, I come out 10-8.  
Yet the case was reversed.  
Eight justices of the Supreme Court  
were the first people to agree with me.  
They're the only people anywhere  
that ever agreed about that statute...  
were eight justices of the Supreme Court.  
The Dallas Morning News  
had a very nice front-page story...  
either the same day...  
or the day after the reversal was  
announced by the Supreme Court...  
in which Henry Wade, the District Attorney...  
vowed a retrial of Randall Dale Adams...  
because there was no room  
in his book for a cop-killer...  
getting off with anything less  
than the death penalty.  
I took that to heart. I thought  
I was going to get my chance.  
For reasons  
that were never really made public...  
Mr. Wade requested  
the governor to commute...  
Mr. Adams' death penalty to life...  
and that eliminated  
the possibility of a retrial...  
based on the reversal.  
I was absolutely shocked.  
I can't help but believe...  
that some of the motivation  
behind that decision...  
was a fear that...  
Adams may be vindicated at a retrial.  
I just felt they prosecuted  
the wrong person. I don't know why.  
I felt that some policeman,  
whether in Vidor or in Dallas...  
made a decision to prosecute and set  
the wheels of justice in motion...

in the wrong direction and they got going so fast no one could stop them. So I felt it was up to me to stop them and I didn't. I felt it was up to the Supreme Court and they did what they could, but... it's all gotten messed up and derailed again. Since his trial, I have given up my practice of criminal law. I have not had a jury trial... since I heard the verdict of this jury in this case... and don't intend to. I just feel like... I'll let other people handle these problems for a while. Because if justice can miscarry so badly... I'd rather do something else. Prosecutors in Dallas have said for years... "Any prosecutor can convict a guilty man. "It takes a great prosecutor to convict an innocent man. " To this day, I think Mr. Mulder... believes that the Adams conviction was one of his great victories... probably because of some reservations he has about Adams' guilt. I got a call one morning, a lady here in Vidor... had been hit over the head with a rolling pin... and the attacker thought she'd been knocked unconscious... when, in reality, she wasn't. And she recognized the attacker to be David Harris. He voluntarily came to the police station. I told him, "David, this girl knows who you are. "I don't even have to tell you I know the truth. "You know I know the truth this time. " He said, "I was wrong. I smoked marijuana, I was drinking.

"I don't know what got over me  
but something just came over me. "  
But he forgot to mention one thing,  
that he was only wearing underwear.  
I felt as though  
the attack was sexually oriented.  
He never wanted to admit that...  
and, as I recall,  
he never really finally admitted it.  
He'd just get to where he wouldn't deny it.  
He posted his bond and went to Germany.  
We had a crime  
with basically the same M.O. As his...  
and so it led me to want to check  
and see if he was in town.  
I contacted the Worldwide Military Locator...  
to see if, through the military,  
I could locate him.  
I did, and found out  
that he was in prison at the time.  
He really didn't remember what happened.  
He said he woke up in the stockade...  
and he'd been told that he beat up  
one of his ranking officers.  
We had another occasion  
to have a crime that fit his M.O. A lot...  
so I started looking for him again,  
and this time...  
I found him in prison in California.  
So I realized again that unfortunately,  
he hadn't straightened up.  
He was still having a lot of problems.  
I was 16 years old.  
I really didn't have no real dealings  
with the court systems, etc.  
Didn't know how they worked, really.  
Didn't know much about the law.  
Just a young, dumb kid.  
Police give you the time of this  
and the time this happened...  
and you just correlate from those events.  
You just estimate from that event  
what time it was.  
You don't know.

You're taking a guess.  
Police tell you, "It was 12:30  
when this crime happened.  
"What time did you leave the movie?"  
"I know it was somewhere around midnight.  
"It might have been before then.  
I don't know.  
"I didn't have a watch on. "  
He went over my testimony with me  
pretty extensively.  
How I should answer certain questions...  
things of this nature.  
That's what you call "coaching the witness. "  
Let's get this evidence in a spectrum  
where it's going to be most effective.  
At the time, I didn't really ponder on it...  
but he was deceiving the jury.  
He wanted to deceive justice.  
That's why I think  
that statue with the scales...  
Justice? What is she called?  
I don't know what she's called.  
She's got that blindfold on.  
We don't see what goes on  
behind the closed doors.  
I had another woman in the car.  
I didn't tell them about that.  
My wife'd kill me.  
She would've tore my head off if she  
knew I was out with another woman.  
Would you tell?  
That's what happened.  
I was trying to get her home.  
The driver's side was down because...  
the lady was a little sick.  
She needed some air.  
Because she was pretty drunk.  
See, the Millers,  
one is black and one is white.  
They said I was going with...  
The reason I was over that night...  
I was over there  
messing with this man's wife.  
And I ain't never gone with her in

my life. She was too old and ugly.  
Like I said, the D.A. Will  
put something into their mouth.  
They could have  
prefabricated the whole story.  
They sure could have.  
But what I saw is just what I saw.  
That was it.  
So if they got paid, they got paid for lying.  
They already decided  
what to do with you in the hall.  
That's why they call it the Hall of  
Justice, the scales are not balanced.  
The scales are in the hall,  
and they go up and down.  
They might go up for you, favor one  
way, they might go down against you.  
So if the D.A. Wants you to hang  
I had all these charges  
still pending in Orange County.  
I could have been certified as an adult...  
maybe given a life sentence. I don't know.  
I'm 16 years old. I know I don't want that.  
That District Attorney told me,  
"Don't worry about them charges. "  
"I'm gonna ask your...  
Defense Attorney is gonna ask you...  
"if you had any kind of deal...  
"or anything of that nature...  
"in exchange for your testimony  
in this case...  
"as relating to those charges.  
"Don't answer that 'Yes. ' Answer it 'No. "'  
My husband,  
he didn't get that good a look at him.  
He wasn't sure, because they put  
a bunch of them that looked alike.  
They had about three or four  
in the lineup that had bushy hair...  
but he had his combed down,  
different to what it was in the killing.  
I didn't pick him out right then...  
because I picked out this bushy-haired man.  
I understand one other witness

did pick out the man at the lineup.  
I'm not sure, but I think he did.  
Of course I picked out  
Randall Adams just like that.  
I don't know about the others.  
Evidently they did at that time.  
I just took off.  
It's like, kids run away...  
they don't think about  
where they're going to stay...  
how they're going to eat, all these things.  
They had that roof over their head  
all their lives.  
They don't really think about those things...  
till you get out there and you say,  
"My stomach's growling now. "  
Or, "It's getting cold out here. It's raining. "  
There was ice on the road.  
I remember there was a car coming  
pretty fast up the road behind me...  
and didn't see me or something...  
or was in one lane and came into  
the other lane and I was in that lane...  
and tried to stop me.  
He went off the side of the road.  
I remember this car  
went off the side of the road.  
I'm just looking back.  
I remember that.  
I got a call at my house

**about 3:**

One of the patrolmen  
in my department called...  
and said, "We just arrested  
this boy named David Harris...  
"and he won't even tell us his name.  
He said he wants to talk to you. "  
They told me something that really  
made me interested. He'd been shot.  
David had initially told me  
that he had gone to a bar in Houston...  
and was flirting with a young lady  
and her boyfriend became upset...

and chased him out with a pistol,  
shooting at him.

We knew that wasn't true.

I said, "David, I know you're lying to me.

"We go through this all the time,  
all my dealings with you in the past.

"I don't know what you've done just yet.

"I know you were shot.

"I know you were shot doing something  
that you shouldn't have been...

"we know you burglarized a gun shop.

We know you were driving drunk.

"Got witnesses who can identify you,  
who can identify your truck. "

I said, "You're caught. So tell the truth. "

And David said, "Okay, I killed him. "

Their home was entered while he  
and his girlfriend were there alone.

The man was sent into the bathroom  
at gunpoint and told to stay there.

David took the girl

and was starting to leave.

The man exited the apartment with a gun.

The man fell to the ground,  
or near the ground...

holding onto a pole there in the  
parking lot of the apartment complex...

and these last, whether it be two,  
three, or how many shots...

I don't know, were fired at point-blank  
or near point-blank range.

David thought that the one  
that was really at fault that night...

was the guy that got killed.

He said, "That guy's crazy.

"He came after me with a gun. "

I told him,

"David, you'd broken into his house...

"you abducted his girlfriend,  
what was he supposed to do?"

He said,

"Man shouldn't come out with a gun.

"That dude's crazy.

He should have been killed. "

When we went to retrieve the pistol...  
I had to go into the water to get it.  
It was a bayou and it was grassy,  
snaky-looking area.  
I was not real pleased  
about being there myself...  
but David enjoyed watching me have to  
go down there and look for the gun.  
I'd been searching several minutes,  
he was up on the bridge...  
and probably 25 feet from me...  
directing me to where he thought  
that the gun had landed in the water.  
He was handcuffed.  
Traffic would come by,  
and he would turn around...  
and show them his handcuffs  
and holler at them, "Help me!  
"The officials will throw me  
in this water and drown me. "  
Just anything he could do  
to make a joke and cut up out there.  
He was just really having a good time.  
The kid scares me.  
To think that he could actually be  
out there, walking the streets...  
and Dallas County let him go.  
The kid had seven crimes  
coming down on him.  
He had armed robberies.  
He had firing on a peace officer.  
He had breaking and enterings,  
aggravated assaults.  
God knows what all this kid had.  
And Dallas County gives him  
complete immunity for his testimony.  
Just lets him walk.  
My mom had a good phrase.  
She said the first night  
she pulled into Dallas, it was raining...  
and that it was lightning.  
And they're coming into Dallas...  
and she said if there was ever  
a hell on earth, it's Dallas County.

She's right.  
You deal with people who you sense  
bad vibrations, more or less.  
You feel, this guy doesn't like me  
anyway because I'm a policeman.  
You can just kind of sense something.  
Maybe I shouldn't even be saying it...  
because police shouldn't  
take these things to the bank.  
When you deal with people over  
and over, you sense a lot of things.  
Talking to David, you don't ever  
feel hostile feelings coming from him.  
I have never seen David any way...  
other than cordial,  
friendly to me as he could be:  
"Yes, sir. " "No, sir. " Never disrespectful.  
I've never seen the bad side.  
I've seen the results...  
and I've talked to him about it,  
and he's aware of it.  
He remembers the bad side.  
But I've never seen him  
committing a crime...  
or in a violent or volatile state.  
When his crimes were confessed to...  
he seemed to feel better and do better  
during those times.  
His parents would tell me  
he would do better at home...  
he seemed to get along better  
with the people in town...  
his neighbors and friends.  
But something happens to David...  
I don't know what it is. I don't know  
if anybody can put their finger on it.  
But there's no other indication  
of anything in the family...  
that would lead you to believe  
he had exposure to these activities.  
David's got at least one other brother  
and sister that I know of.  
And he had one brother that drowned  
numerous years ago.

I was 3 years old...  
I had a 4-year-old brother...  
and he drowned in 1963...  
right after President Kennedy  
was assassinated, I believe.  
Sometime right after that,  
during the summer.  
We was living in Beaumont  
on Harrison Street...  
and my dad was working on his truck  
out in the yard...  
and mom was in the house  
doing her housework or fixing dinner.  
Me and my brother, we had  
one of these little blow-up pools...  
and we were playing in that.  
My dad was supposed to be watching  
or keeping an eye on us or something.  
My brother wandered off down the street...  
and these people had a  
swimming pool in their backyard...  
and they were elderly people.  
They never used the pool.  
I guess it had a bunch of leaves  
and stuff in it.  
And he, evidently, fell in there and drowned.  
I used to sit up in my room at night  
and talk to him and he wasn't there.  
So that might have been some kind of  
a traumatic experience for me.  
I guess my dad...  
I don't know, maybe he couldn't  
get rid of the responsibility...  
or the guilt or something.  
I don't know what it was.  
I was there and I guess maybe  
I reminded him of that...  
all the time, growing up.  
It was hard for me  
to get any acceptance from him.  
When my younger brother was born...  
it was kind of like he was Daddy's  
favorite or something, I don't know.  
Everybody's life is going to take

some kind of path...  
regardless of what happens.  
I think maybe that a lot of the things  
I did when I was younger...  
was an attempt to get back at him  
or something...  
for the way he treated me.  
But I wasn't doing nothing  
but hurting myself.