

MISSY TAKES A WALK



Obed Dagget Road is a steep, stony trail that leads downhill to the parking lot at the Cedar Tree Neck Sanctuary. Officer Nancy Mayhew happened to be in the lot when she was notified of a body apparently strangled and lying on the far side of the small creek that runs parallel to the Yellow Trail, one of the four marked in color for hikers in the preserve. She immediately blocked off the road with her car and called Sam. Then, with nine-year-old Timmy Rattigan, who had discovered the body, she proceeded to the scene, which is shown.

On the way, Timmy told her how he'd left his parents behind and climbed up the embankment. At first, all he'd seen were two feet sticking out from a pile of branches, which he pushed aside.

"And then," he said, "you know what?"

Nancy knew. Standing on the Yellow Trail and surveying the glade on the left side of the creek, she noted the poison ivy and decided to tell Timmy's mother to get him home fast and wash him with hot water and brown soap, and do it good.

Sam arrived promptly, checked the cars, and was able to identify the victim as Missy Moreno, a devout bird-watcher from Oklahoma. She'd apparently been strangled with a scarf, presumably her own.

Sam returned to the parking lot and was waiting for the ambulance when three hikers showed up. They identified themselves as the Apollo brothers—Tony, a mason; Joe, a truck driver; and Ricco, an out-of-work fireman. All three denied any knowledge of the homicide and claimed they'd been together on the Blue Trail, every single instant that afternoon. Questioned in detail as to precisely where they'd been, they were vague and gave conflicting accounts.

"Trees," Joe said. "Nothing but trees around. What's different about a tree?"

On the basis of the above facts, plus an examination of the scene, Sam made an arrest. Whom did he arrest, and why?

Questions

1. How did the camera reach its present position?
2. How did the tripod and Missy's other possessions reach their present position?
3. On which side of the stream had Missy been photographing?
4. On which side of the stream had Missy been killed?
5. How did the makeshift bridge break?
6. How had Missy reached the glade where her body was found?
7. Who killed Missy?

Solution on page 57.