The case arises from the brutal killing of a twenty-three-year-old woman, acquaintance of the defendant.

On the morning of Monday, January 17, 1983, a worried next-door neighbor in the victim’s two-family duplex house in Buena, New Jersey, entered victim’s apartment via the common cellar access. She found victim’s body lying across her bed on her stomach, nude from the waist down. Her body was mutilated and bloodied. Around her neck, was an electrical cord. Strewn on the floor was a blue pouch containing a certificate of title to a Vineland house trailer that she had sold to the defendant, Stephen Davis.

A tip led police to arrest the defendant on Wednesday, January 19, 1983. He was arrested with a .357 Magnum revolver, a shotgun, and fifty-six shells of ammunition in his possession. The police confronted him with information they had received that he had killed the victim. Within hours he confessed to the murder. His confession and later testimony at the sentencing phase recount the events.