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# DEAD IN THE WATER

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A Sunset Years Book-Play-Game Murder Mystery



FRANK A. LANCIONE

Dead in the Water

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Frank A. Lancione

## FOREWARD

**The ladies of the *Big Beautiful Babes Water Aerobics and Social Club* swooned when young, handsome Robin Logan showed up to 'service their pools.'**

**Someone's killed him. Inspector Lance has to find out who.**

*Is This a Book? A Play? A Game? Or All Three?*

What if your favorite murder mystery book was also a play you could stage at home to entertain your friends? What if you could take that idea even further and turn it into a game where participants competed to discover who the murderer was and how the crime was committed? Now you can!

*"Dead in the Water" is a murder mystery play approach that we have used to entertain hundreds of residents in the real-life senior retirement community that our fictional Sunset Years retirement community is modeled after.*

There's a surprising amount of hanky-panky, rivalries, personality quirks, and interpersonal conflicts that make role-playing these characters challenging and fun, whether you're 16, 60, or beyond.

**If you'd like to experience this story conventionally as a book,** turn to the Introduction. Start there and read to the end.

**If you'd like to experience this story as a play or game,** start by reading Appendix 1. This guide will explain how to utilize the tools in this package to advance the story and engage your actors and audience in a compelling four-act play format, competing to discover the killer.

So, what are you waiting for? Robin Logan has been murdered. One of these characters is the killer. It's up to you – or maybe you and your friends - to find out who!

## DEDICATION

This book/play/game is dedicated to all of the wonderful friends who have helped my wife, Diane, and I put on large-scale immersive murder mystery play events for hundreds of participants in our real-life senior retirement community in Florida.

Our typical audience is 80-100+ participants. Since we've introduced AI-generated avatars to represent the characters, our approach has evolved and become similar to an old-time radio show.

When you walk into the ballrooms where we host these events, you see a large screen up front, a podium, and 8-10 pre-selected voice actors who act out the roles. I play Senior Inspector Lance, a homicide detective with the Wildwood, Florida, Police Department.

The action advances by having each of the volunteer voice actors read the written Witness Statements aloud as their character's turn to speak comes up. As they voice their role, their character's AI avatar is shown on the front screen.

The voice actors gain information about their characters at the same time as everyone else does. They don't know whether their character is the murderer or not. Everyone in the audience is also actively engaged.

At the end of Acts 1, 2, and 3, the voice actors and audience members vote for who they think is guilty and discuss their reasons. In Act 4, as Inspector Lance, I unmask and arrest the murderer.

We've been looking for a way to enable others to host murder mystery events for their friends at home. We believe this new format is the best way to achieve that. So, whether you are reading this story on your own or acting it out as a play or game, have some fun and see if you – or maybe you and your friends - can discover who killed Robin Logan!

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Dead in the Water

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**Introduction**



Robin (Fish) Logan as an Adult

## Dead in the Water



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Fish was innocent, but it would make no difference. An armed thug was about to break into the motel room where he and Tommy Fong were hiding. Koa, the heartless drug lord who'd sent this henchman, had told him to bring back Tommy's backpack full of cash and leave no loose ends.

Fish waited in silence as Koa's henchman stealthily tried the hotel room's door. It was locked. Fish braced himself for what he knew would come next. The killer's kick sent the door exploding into the room. He burst into the room with it. Tommy came out of the bathroom shooting. His shots missed. The henchman's did not. Tommy Fong was dead.

The killer turned and tried to aim his gun at Fish. Fish rushing and overwhelming him was the last thing the goon would ever see. Fish deftly twisted his opponent's arm in a direction it could not move until he heard the sickeningly satisfying crack of breaking bone. The man screamed in agony.

Fish then quickly grabbed his assailant by the throat and squeezed until his victim's eyes bugged out like a clown's. With his other hand, Fish grabbed him by the belt. Then, using both hands, Fish lifted the man up and flung him over the balcony railing.

It took a long time for the man to hit the ground from the third floor. When he did, Fish heard the man's final yell of horrifying pain. The falling body slammed into the concrete of the parking lot below. It instantly became a liquified mass of blood, flesh, and bone.

Fish fully understood the severity of his predicament. The money in Tommy's backpack belonged to Koa. The deaths of this henchman and Tommy Fong would mean nothing to Koa. But thinking someone had tried to steal his money would send Koa on a vengeful rampage. No one could steal from the most vicious drug lord in the Hawaiian islands and live. It would be bad for business.



## Dead in the Water

Unfortunately, stealing Koa's money was exactly what Koa's rival Mona and his gang were trying to do. This second set of killers was after the same backpack full of cash that Koa was chasing.

Nothing Fish could say, no explanation of his innocence would matter. Whichever gang arrived first would kill Fish for the sin of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

In an instant, Fish knew everything in his life had suddenly changed. He knew what he needed to do. Fish was not a robber or a killer. He had not asked for any of this.

As a martial arts trainer and coach, Fish had fought and won thousands of fights. This was the first time, though, he'd had to fight for his life literally. This was the first time he'd had to end a life. This was the first time he'd had to run away to save his life. Fish didn't want to live this way.

Tommy Fong had begged Fish for help. Trying to help Tommy had drawn Fish into this mess. Fish's reward for doing the right thing was having two rival gangs dispatch thugs to kill him.

Koa and Mona would decide his future and fate if he stayed in Honolulu. The only way he could be in charge of his destiny was to walk away from everything and everyone he'd known for the first thirty years of his life.

Fish needed to get to someplace where the gangsters couldn't reach him and do it quickly. If he was going to be accused of trying to steal this drug money, he might as well do so. He was a dead man if he stayed in Honolulu. He needed to get off the island. The money was his way out.

Twenty minutes later, Fish was at his tiny studio apartment. He stuffed a few clothes into a carry-on and retrieved his passport. Then he scooped up the backpack full of money the man who'd tried to kill him had died trying to steal.

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Fish had figured out how to take the money with him on his way back to his apartment. He couldn't walk onto a plane with \$300,000 in large bills in a backpack. But he could wear that money onto the plane.

Fish drove his beat-up old truck into the high-end portion of Honolulu's shopping district. His destination was the Cartier store. He parked a block away so they would not see his low-class mode of transportation.

He walked into the Cartier shop and made the saleslady's day. He pointed. She retrieved. He checked the fit and then moved on to the next item. In fifteen minutes, he was done.

"That'll be a gold and diamond watch, four golden chains, a gold ring with sapphire accents, and a matching gold and sapphire bracelet," she said as she rang up his purchases. "You certainly knew what you wanted, sir," she added as she bagged it.

The sales lady momentarily hesitated when Fish said he was paying cash. The store manager came over to supervise the transaction. He looked over some bills Fish had pulled from his backpack. He satisfied himself that they weren't counterfeit. Then he said, "You're welcome back anytime, sir." We appreciate your business.

The total for the jewelry, including tax, was \$290,000. Real estate moguls, entertainers, and surgeons' wives regularly dropped much more than that at this Cartier store. Fish would be forgotten moments after he left the store.

The manager had offered to enroll Fish in their preferred customer program. Fish declined. He explained his haste by saying he had a plane to catch. He said this stop at the Cartier store was just a last-minute impulse to take home mementos from his Honolulu vacation on his way to the airport.

The manager's last attempt to serve this high-spending customer was to offer a security guard to accompany him to his car. "Do I look like I need a security

guard?" Fish asked. The manager relented, and Fish walked the block back to his truck. The *Daniel K. Inouye International Airport* was only five miles from downtown Honolulu. Fifteen minutes later, he pulled into that airport's long-term parking.

He quickly switched the plates on his truck with those from another vehicle in the lot. "That ought to delay anyone finding out it's mine for a month or so," he said to himself.

Forty minutes after cashing out at the Cartier store, Fish stood in line at the airport counter. "One-way ticket to L.A.," he said.

The stop at the jewelry store had left Fish with ten thousand dollars for his plane ticket and walking around money. Everything was going according to plan. Getting through security was as easy as he had expected.

When he got to the X-ray machine, Fish made a big show of taking off his jewelry one piece at a time and putting it in his backpack. The security guard hand-inspected the goods after the backpack went through the machine.

"Man, are you a rock star or something," the guard asked. "You got more bling on you than Mr. T."

"No," Fish replied. "This stuff is all knockoffs. I sell them, and I'm my own walking billboard."

The guard laughed and said: "Man, I got to get me one of them jobs!"

The laughing guard waived him along, and that was the end of it. Fish knew a fence from Hawaii who had moved to LA. He was assured of getting at least eighty cents on the dollar for his newly acquired bling—maybe higher since he had documentation of its authenticity. That meant he'd net at least \$240,000 in untraceable cash out of this caper.

The money from the fence, plus what he could access electronically from his bank account after landing in LA, would give him a considerable nest egg. Despite the jewelry he was currently sporting, Fish actually had very modest needs and a frugal lifestyle.

Fish was sure he'd have plenty of cash to live comfortably off until he could figure out what to do next. He knew it would be a momentous decision.

The plane reached cruising altitude. Fish leaned back in his first-class seat and drank some of the cognac the stewardess had just served him in a little bottle.

"Goodbye Hawaii," he said to himself. I loved living here, but I have no intention of dying here. It's time to see what life on the mainland and my life's next chapter are all about."

\* \* \* \* \*

Robin (Fish) Logan never met his mother or father. From birth to age fifteen, he lived in a Catholic orphanage run by Carmelite nuns. He'd been left by a teenage mother who came to the orphanage the day before he was born and ran away the first night after she'd given birth.

She never returned, and no one ever learned her story. The nuns gave her baby the name she'd picked out for him when she came in—Robin Logan. That name was the only thing he ever got from her for the rest of his life.

The Carmelite nuns who ran the orphanage were part of a long lineage of holy women stretching back to the early 1900s. These dear souls came to Hawaii to "educate and save" the primitive inhabitants of these islands.

By the twenty-first century, the Hawaiian islands were no longer as primitive as when the order first arrived. The nuns readjusted to the times. They redefined their mission as: "Taking in the abandoned children of the island, introducing them to Christ, and finding them good homes."

Their new goal was to provide temporary shelter for abandoned children until they could link them up with families who wanted to and were able to give them permanent homes. Robin Logan was either one of their successes or one of their failures. It all depended on how you defined success.

The wealthy people who contributed the most to the orphanage's financial survival defined success as providing an endless supply of desirable light-skinned babies to be adopted by well-to-do families from the mainland. These were couples who had money but couldn't have children.

People from the mainland monitored the babies available for adoption via the old-fashioned snail mail monthly newsletters the nuns mailed out. Occasionally, someone locally would contact the orphanage. However, the vast majority of individuals who adopted children from the orphanage lived in Los Angeles and its surrounding areas.

When a promising prospect came into the orphanage's inventory, potential parents would fly in to spend a few days in Hawaii's paradise. While there, they would visit the orphanage and decide if the available child was a good fit for them. If so, they and their new child would fly away to start a new life together.

Major donors touted the ratio of babies received to babies placed as evidence that the kids' and the community's interests were being well served at a reasonable price. What this metric failed to account for was the experience of kids like Robin Logan. Through no fault of their own, the Robin Logans of the world never seemed to be picked by any families looking for children.

From an objective standpoint, it was easy to understand. From babyhood to his early teens, Robin Logan wasn't much to look at. He was short and fat and wheezed a lot. The wheezing was from allergies. His girth was from loneliness.

From his earliest days, Logan was picked on, bullied, and ostracized by nearly everyone in the orphanage. Eating was the only thing in his world that gave him even momentary pleasure, so he ate and ate.

His classmates teased him. The nuns yelled at him, threatened him, and told him to stop eating. They even tried to cut back on the food he was given. Somehow, though, none of it reduced his expanding waistline a bit.

In addition to being fat and sounding asthmatic, Robin was also somewhat dark-skinned. He had all the characteristics of having come from parents of Samoan descent. Unfortunately, no one went to the orphanage looking for a fat, dark-skinned, wheezing, downtrodden teenager to adopt. After a while, the nuns gave up entirely on Robin. They and he both knew he was never going to be adopted.

Mother Superior decided that Logan's future was to grow up and become a full-time janitor/handyman for the orphanage for the rest of his life. After all, the nuns who served there had made a lifetime commitment. Why shouldn't Robin?

She discussed this with her outside Board members. They loved the idea. They pointed out that if they formally removed Robin from the pool of adoptable children, his failure to be adopted would no longer hurt their overall adoption ratios. Dropping Robin out would improve their placement statistics and give them a better story to present to potential sponsors and families looking to adopt.

When they broke the news to Robin, he just sighed and said nothing. He knew he was never going to be adopted. He also knew not a single person in his world, child or adult, would come to his aid and rescue him.

He said OK because he had no choice. The orphanage was the only home he had ever known. He had no idea how he would survive if he ran away. If being a janitor or handyman was what he had to do to stay here, then that was what he would do.

Mother Superior formally removed Robin's name from the pool of adoptable children. At fourteen, he was now an official member of the orphanage staff. They put him to work immediately. Robin was still allowed to attend classes at the local Catholic school that sponsored the orphanage. But now, he was a worker first and a student only secondarily.

Robin's job was to clean the orphanage cafeteria and restrooms while other children in the school were outside playing during recess. At night, he was responsible for helping to prepare food for the orphanage the next day. He barely had time to study enough to keep up with his classes.

On the day of Robin's fifteenth birthday, a miracle happened. Someone was interested in adopting him. The couple that had shown interest was in their early 50s and retired.

The Carmelite orphanage was their last hope. Their age had disqualified them from adopting from all the regular agencies and homes for children on the islands. The wife was also not in the best of health. She desperately wanted to adopt a child while she still had the strength to care for one.

Mother Superior did her best to explain why they did not qualify for any of the children on their regular roster of available children. The wife started to cry. Her husband looked directly into Mother Superior's eyes.

He said, "Sister, I grew up in one of these places myself." I know there are always kids who don't seem to be chosen by anyone. If you have a child like that, we'd like to see them. We have no more places to look. You are our last hope. Let us be the last hope for some deserving kid who thinks no one will ever want them."

Sister Beatrice went to the cafeteria where Robin was cleaning. She told him Sister Superior wanted to see him in her office immediately. "What now," Robin thought to himself.

God must have sent an angel to accompany Robin that day. He entered Sister Superior's office expecting the worst. Instead, he was introduced to two somewhat older people who smiled when he entered the room.

Sister Superior said she would step out for a moment so that the couple could get to know Robin better. Robin had never gotten this far in the adoption process. They talked for ten minutes before he realized they were trying to decide whether or not to take him home with them!

Robin's heart swelled in his chest, and he teared up slightly. He liked these people. "Oh God," he thought, "please let them like me." His prayers were answered. They did like him.

A few days later, they returned and took him out to lunch and then to the park. Their names were Jim and Janie. He loved talking with them. A week later, they came back. They drove Robin back to their modest but spotless tiny home in a tidy middle-class suburb within walking distance from the orphanage.

After Janie had made and served lunch at their home, Robin automatically started cleaning up just as he did every day at the cafeteria. Jim and Janie were so pleased with his fantastic attitude and strong instinct to pitch in and help that they said they really appreciated having him there.

Jim said he'd also started his life in an orphanage. He said he never forgot how lonely that experience could be. They encouraged him to tell them about his life and what it had been like for him growing up in an orphanage.

Robin poured his heart out to Jim and Janie. For the first time, there was someone who wanted to hear about his life and could understand first-hand what he had been through. That night back in the orphanage, Robin prayed and prayed that Jim and Janie would adopt him.

Two weeks to the day after they had first met Robin, he was called to Sister Superior's office. Jim and Janie were there, and they were smiling.



"Robin," Sister Superior said proudly and happily, "go and collect your things. It's time for you to go home with your permanent new mother and father!"

Tears began to stream down Robin's face. He was overwhelmed and trying to take it all in. One crucial thing Sister Superior had said stood out above all others.

"Sister, you said you are my permanent new mother and father. Jim and Janie, does that mean you are adopting me instead of just fostering me for a period of time?"

"Yes, Robin," Jim said. We want you to be our real son. We've finalized all of the papers. From now on, you, me, and Janie are a family."

Robin thought about the joy of that moment repeatedly throughout his life. Jim and Janie's adoption changed things for him dramatically and wonderfully. None of them could know at that moment, though, that their forever and ever wasn't going to last that long.

\* \* \* \* \*

Robin always remembered his years with Jim and Janie as the best time of his life. Who doesn't want to be supported, loved, and helped to grow? Robin rapidly bloomed and transformed under their tutelage.

First, there was his diet. Jim and Janie were vegetarians. Robin wasn't even sure what that word meant when they first said it. Quickly, though, he came to understand. The meals Janie cooked for them were delicious. He didn't even notice that there was no meat in them. By the time he did, it didn't matter to him. Robin thrived on his new plant-based diet. The rolls of fat he had been carrying around rapidly melted away.

Second, they took him to an allergist. He started getting shots to reduce his reaction to the many things that he was allergic to. Janie remarked that just getting him out of the orphanage dormitory was beneficial. "That place always seemed just a little musty," she said. Within weeks, Robin's wheezing started to subside. Within months, it was gone altogether.

The final step in the process was what Jim called Robin's "man training." Jim had been a military policeman in the Army. When he got out, he became a policeman in the Honolulu Police Force.

Jim excelled in both the military and civilian police forces. In both, he was selected to train the next generation of officers who would follow him. Jim loved training new recruits and watching them develop and grow.

Twenty years of military police service, followed by fifteen years of civilian law enforcement experience, ingrained in Jim a mastery of hand-to-hand combat, weapons handling, situational awareness, and a commitment to self-discipline and physical achievement.

After decades of unsuccessfully trying to have kids, Jim one day realized that he would most likely never have a child of his own to pass his skills down to. This saddened him greatly.

Then, Robin came into his life. Jim's heart almost burst with pride when he gave Robin his first boxing lesson. It was Robin's introduction to Jim's "man cave" in the freestanding garage behind their house.

Robin had just come to live with Jim and Janie. He was fat, wheezy, and uncoordinated. The first few times he tried to throw a punch, he was so far off balance that the punch was a glancing blow that barely moved the bag.

Looking at Robin, you would have been sure that he would give up and walk away. Instead, Jim saw his adopted son narrow his vision and reach inside himself. Robin was not going to let the bag defeat him. It didn't.

Drenched in sweat, exhausted yet elated, Robin pounded and pounded and pounded away at the bag until his jabs were crisp, accurate, and brutally effective.

In just this one lesson, Robin had mastered shifting his feet to put his entire body weight behind his punch and then shifting gears to deliver rapid "distance sensing" jabs designed to keep an opponent off balance and feeling overwhelmed by the attack.

Seeing his son so spent that he was having trouble catching his breath, Jim said: "Great job, Robin. I'm proud of you. Let's go in. You've earned it." What Jim heard next thrilled him to his core. Robin said: "Please, Dad! Can we do just ten more minutes? I think I'm really getting this!"

And that's the way it went from that first day forward. Outside, Robin looked hopeless, hapless, uncoordinated, and anything but formidable. But inside, Robin was determined, focused, and a force to be reckoned with.

Decades of being an underdog had not broken Robin; they had hardened him. Robin endured everything his tormentors subjected him to and still kept going.

Jim realized that this adopted son he and Janie had brought into their home would soak up everything Jim could teach him and beg for more. Jim's dream was fulfilled. Robin would carry into the world all Jim had learned, valued, and wanted to pass on.

The father and adopted son spent many nights in their man cave practicing martial arts, reviewing police strategies for self-defense, and studying the psychology of physical combat.

Perhaps Jim's proudest day was when Robin came home and said he wanted to follow in Jim's footsteps and become a policeman when he finished school.

Jim got Robin into a police auxiliary cadet program sponsored by the Honolulu Police Force. Like a scouting program, it provided activities that enabled high school-age young men and women interested in law enforcement to learn more about the profession. It was an effective recruiting tool the department used to get young people to consider law enforcement careers.

Police cadets interacted with officers who worked in the field, rode along in patrol cars, attended court, and saw how the technicians in the crime lab did their work. Robin loved the program and eagerly mastered everything it offered.

When he first went to live with Jim and Janie, Robin was fifteen and a freshman in high school. His life with Jim and Janie continued happily for the next four years. They were great times.

Jim, Janie, and Robin bonded as a real family. Robin continued to grow in strength, competence, and confidence every day. In addition to martial arts training, Jim introduced Robin to weightlifting. It was like introducing a fish to water.

Jim loved watching Robin progress through heavier and heavier lift routines. Janie loved devising vegetarian nutritional plans that gave her son the massive quantities of plant-based protein he needed to fuel his development.

Robin outgrew the weight equipment in his and Jim's garage man cave within a year. Jim signed the two of them up to work out in one of the local gyms.

Jim used all his experience as an outstanding military and civilian police trainer to help his son develop. The regulars loved seeing this older man coaching his son and having fun together as the boy continuously grew in capability.

Robin's body completely changed from his freshman to senior year in high school. He had grown to just under six feet tall. His arms, chest, back, and legs were massively muscled. He resembled the pictures of Samoan warriors in books.

On the fourth anniversary of Robin's adoption, Jim and Janie planned a whole day out together to celebrate. Robin was now a successful police cadet and high school senior. He had been accepted into the two-year law enforcement Associate Degree program at *Leahi Technical Institute*, the local community college.

The plan was for Robin to finish high school, graduate with his law enforcement associate degree after two years and enter the Honolulu police force. Jim's dream was fulfilled when he saw Robin following in his footsteps.

To start the big celebration, Jim, Janie, and Robin all had lunch at the park they had visited when they first got to know each other. Following a happy and fun lunch there, the three of them went into the police headquarters building to attend the retirement ceremony of an officer Jim had served with while on active duty.

Robin had proudly worn his police cadet shirt for the occasion. He knew several of the officers at the ceremony from his participation in the cadet program. They all came up to him and said hello. They then went up to Jim and Janie and told them what a fine police cadet Robin was and what a promising career he had ahead of him as an officer.

Jim and Janie were proud to the point of becoming misty-eyed. Their most cherished hopes when deciding whether to adopt Robin were coming true. Their next stop was the orphanage.

Jim and Janie had told Sister Superior they wanted to commemorate the fourth anniversary of Robin's adoption by making a small donation to the orphanage. It was nothing compared to what the elite donors could give, but it was substantial for them. Sister had arranged a ceremony for the handing over of the check.

When they arrived at the orphanage, one of the children was waiting to usher them to Sister Superior's office. As they walked through the halls, Robin noticed

that everything looked strange. He had spent the first fifteen years of his life there yet could barely recognize the place.

It all seemed smaller and more worn out than he remembered it. He saw several kids and two of the nuns he had known, but they didn't recognize him.

When he lived here, all he could think of was his isolation and daily humiliations. Now, he saw an organization struggling for its existence and doing its best with what it had to take care of its wards.

Robin's police cadet sessions riding along with officers on patrol had exposed him to some of the city's seedier sections. He realized now that if the nuns had not provided these kids with this home, they might have ended up living on the streets instead.

When Robin, Jim Janie, and their escort finally walked into Sister Superior's office, people were shocked to see him. The fat, wheezy, downtrodden boy who slouched around and rarely made eye contact was gone.

The Robin they saw now was muscular and erect. He radiated self-confidence and competence. In his police cadet shirt, you could easily have mistaken him for a real officer.

Sister Superior and two other nuns were there to receive the check. They had laid out a plate with a few cookies and had paper cups of lemonade arrayed on a small table.

Sister Superior welcomed Jim and Janie and shook hands with them. She said hello to Robin and marveled at his transformation. Then, she invited them to partake of the refreshments. That was it for the chit-chat part of the program. Sister quickly got to what was most important to her—the check.

Sister droned on for several minutes about the good work the orphanage was doing and how significant the contributions of donors like Jim and Janie were to

the staff and children it supported. Being away from Sister and the facility for four years had given Robin a different perspective.

When Robin lived here, he couldn't see past the misery of his experience. He felt Sister Superior and the other nuns were powerful overseers who reveled in bossing him and the other "inmates" around and controlling every aspect of their lives. What he saw today was completely different.

Sister Superior was a tired old woman who probably repeated this speech to someone nearly every day of her life. It was basically a dressed-up form of "buddy, can you spare a dime?" panhandling. It was done for a good cause, but it was begging, plain and simple.

Robin realized that instead of being an evil oppressor, Sister Superior was just an elderly lady doing her best to keep things together. She probably did care about the kids who lived here—even him.

Sister Superior stopped talking. Jim handed her the check. They posed for a picture of Jim, Janie, Robin, and Sister smiling together while Sister held up the check. Then, suddenly, they were being walked back outside the facility.

The whole thing had taken about thirty minutes. That was it. Fifteen years of Robin's life had taken place here. Now, he felt disconnected from the orphanage altogether.

Robin was 19, healthy, and an incredible athlete and police cadet. He had a mom and dad who loved him. The life path ahead of him was clearly defined and bright. He had everything he had always dreamed of. He couldn't imagine how his life could be any better.

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Robin opened his eyes slowly. Every bit of his body hurt. The pain was greatest in his right leg. He tried to wiggle its toes but could not move them.

The room was semi-dark. There was a man in a bed next to him. Some machine was rhythmically cycling on and off. His bed had a railing. It didn't matter. He was so sore, so battered, he couldn't have gotten out of bed even if he tried.

Robin did not know how or why, but he judged from his surroundings that he was in a hospital. From the extent of the pain he was feeling, he knew something major must have happened to him. As hard as he tried, he couldn't remember what had occurred.

One thought kept reverberating in his mind: "I want to see my mom and dad. They'll be able to explain this. They'll know what I should do. Jim, Janie, please help me! Where are you?"

His eyes were beginning to adjust to the semi-darkness when a woman came bustling in and turned on the light over his bed. The shock of the light was like a slap in the face.

She picked up his chart, glanced at it, and said: "You're awake! Excellent, Mr. Logan. Alright, it's time for your medication. I am going to lift your head so you can take these two pills. Then, I want you to sip some water from this cup with the straw. Do you think you can do that?"

Robin choked a bit on the pills but was finally able to wash them down with the water. Then he blurted out: "Where are my mom and dad? I want to see them!"

The nurse momentarily hesitated and said, "They're not here now. But someone here has been waiting a long time to see you. I will let her know you are awake."

Robin lay still for several minutes. Then he heard a voice he recognized but would never have expected to hear. It was Sister Superior. "Thank the Lord, Robin!" she said. "We've been taking turns keeping watch over you for three days. It's a miracle that you are here."



"I want to see my mom and dad," Robin said. "I know you do, Robin. That's not possible right now. You've been in a horrible accident. You almost died. Right now, your job is to rest and try to get well. That's what your Mom and Dad want, Robin. They want you to rest."

The pills the nurse had given Robin were taking effect. He wanted to say much more but couldn't get the words out. Finally, he stopped fighting and allowed himself to slip into sleep.

The next day, Sister Superior returned with Monsignor O'Conner, the priest from the local church that sponsored the orphanage. They asked him how he felt and if he remembered anything about the accident. Then, the Monsignor looked at him and said, "Robin, do you truly believe in Jesus? Do you truly believe in heaven?"

Robin didn't know what he believed in, but he sensed that he was supposed to answer affirmatively. So he did. "Yes, Father," Robin said. "Robin, God loves us. We live in this world for a time, but our final home is with Him in heaven."

"The other day, an accident happened when you and your mom and dad pulled out of the orphanage. A drunk driver was speeding down the road and lost control of his car."

"Your dad was making a left turn out of the orphanage driveway. The drunk driver smashed into the driver's side of your family's car at 85 miles per hour. Your father was driving. Your mother was in the back seat behind him. Your parents' side of the car was destroyed. They and the drunk driver were killed instantly in the crash."

"Your family car was so damaged it took almost an hour for the firemen to cut you out of the wreckage. Riding in the front passenger seat partially protected you, or you would have died, too."

"You had a lot of internal bleeding, and your right leg was crushed in the crash. The doctors had to do major surgery to save it. They say there is a good chance you will recover at least partial use of it."

Robin was too numb, too devastated to say anything. Everything he had ever dreamed of had finally come to him. Now, it had all been taken away. Monsignor O'Connor was droning on about how Jim and Janie were now in heaven and that Robin would be reunited with them one day.

All Robin knew was that he missed them in the here and now. He cried and cried and cried. Finally, the priest and the nun felt the best thing to do was leave him alone with his grief.

The next couple of months were a blur. Robin was moved from the hospital to a rehabilitation facility as his condition improved. It was almost 90 days before he could walk, bathe, and care for himself at the most basic level.

In the meantime, Sister Superior and the nuns from the orphanage watched over him. They got a locksmith to let them into his parent's home. They found Janie's "bills box" and identified everything that needed to be paid and handled while Robin recovered.

They filed all of the paperwork required to record Jim and Janie's deaths, helped Robin access his family's bank accounts, and even helped Robin receive the payout from the small life insurance policy Jim had.

They ensured that Robin could use his family's money to pay his utilities and other bills due while he was recovering. Their help allowed Robin to focus solely on getting well.

When it came time for Robin to leave the rehabilitation hospital, his doctor and Sister Superior had a heart-to-heart talk with him. The doctor said that Robin would require much more care before fully recovering. The doctor said he

realized Jim and Janie's house now belonged to Robin. However, he said it was unsafe for him to try to live alone there.

Robin's heart sank upon hearing this news. He dreaded but was prepared for what he knew was coming next. "Robin," Sister Superior said, "we are the only other family you've ever had besides Jim and Janie. We love you and will always consider you one of our kids. Come and stay with us until you get well."

"You will be a member of our staff, not a child up for adoption. As you regain your strength, we will ask that you help out as much as you can. However, we know you will leave us when you fully recover. In the meantime, let us help you, Robin."

Robin recalled the conversation with Sister Superior when she announced her proposal to carve out a career for him as the orphanage's full-time janitor/handyman. He felt trapped back then, oppressed and controlled by this woman clad all in black who was determining his future and fate against his will. He now understood he'd been wrong.

In both cases, she was trying to rescue him. She stepped in to help him when no one else could or would. If no one was going to adopt him when he first stayed at the orphanage, she wasn't going to cast him out on the streets.

Being a janitor or handyman was not much of a career, but she had offered him the only option she had to keep him safe. She was doing the same thing again now. He and she knew he would not be happy living at the orphanage forever. But he needed her help for now, and she was offering it.

"Sister," Robin said, "thank you for taking me on for a second time. You are saving me again. I am grateful, and I won't forget it." From that moment on, as he had in his first boxing lesson with Jim, Robin narrowed his focus, looked deep inside, and willed himself to keep going.

He was not going to let the accident and the loss of Jim and Janie beat him. As he did with the heavy bag that first day with Jim, he would defeat his challenges. They would not defeat him.

Robin's next two years were a hard road of recovery advances and setbacks. Two years after the accident, he was able to walk but had a visible limp. With Sister Superior's help, he had been allowed to complete the requirements for graduation from high school.

One of the saddest adjustments Robin was forced to make was selling Jim and Janie's home at the end of his first year of convalescence. He could barely take care of himself, and there was no way he could have lived alone in the house. The nuns had helped him try to get someone to rent it until he could return to it, but no one did.

Finally, one of the couples adopting a child from the orphanage indicated they were interested in finding a bigger place to live now that their new family member was joining them. They looked at the house and loved it.

Robin met with them and saw that letting them buy it would give them and their new daughter a place they would fill with love. He thought it would be a fitting way to honor the memory of Jim and Janie.

Robin had one stipulation. He wanted to keep ownership of the freestanding garage on the property. It had been the "man cave" where Jim had helped him develop into the young man of promise he'd been on the day of the accident. Robin didn't know how and didn't know when, but he wanted to return to being that version of himself.

Robin could now perform the janitorial/handyman role at the orphanage that Sister had created for him. Because he was Jim and Janie's only heir, he was able to combine the money he received from the sale of Jim and Janie's home, the insurance money from Jim's policy, and a small amount of money left in Jim and Janie's checking accounts into a financial nest egg. He gave a large portion of that

money to the orphanage to repay Mother Superior and the orphanage for keeping him there.

Two years after the accident, Robin turned 21. At this point in his life, his original plan was to graduate with his law enforcement associate's degree and apply to join the Honolulu police force. Life didn't work out that way.

Robin had recovered sufficiently to handle most of the routine activities of daily living. But he was a shadow of his former self. Being bedridden for months had badly atrophied his body.

His right leg was still not fully recovered, and he walked with a limp. His athletic, impressively muscled 19-year-old physique was gone. Twenty-one-year-old Robin's clothes hung loosely on his shrunken body everywhere but his waist.

It had been impossible for Robin to maintain a plant-based lifestyle, eating only what was available in the hospital, rehabilitation facility, and orphanage. As a result, he once again had a noticeable spare tire of fat.

Robin was warmly welcomed when he recovered enough to visit his former friends and mentors at the Honolulu police cadet program. They all expressed their concern for Jim and Janie's passing and their gratitude that he had survived that terrible event.

While no one said it out loud, everyone—including Robin—knew that Robin's prospects were radically diminished. There was no way he would now meet the physical requirements to join the force as an officer.

One of the officers Robin had previously been close with as a cadet pulled him aside during his visit. He offered to sponsor and support Robin if he were interested in applying for administrative jobs in the department.

He said that while it wasn't front-line police work, it was still important work. He let Robin know that he still had tremendous support in the organization and

that they would be glad to have him in any capacity he could still physically handle.

Robin was moved by the incredible reception he received on that visit. He thanked everyone and said he wasn't sure what to do. Figuring that out was the challenge before him.

The accident had dramatically impacted Robin's physical strength and martial arts competence. However, Robin wasn't ready to accept the physically diminished version of himself that the accident had made him.

Once again, he reached inside himself, saying: "Jim, Janie, I promise I will not forget all you helped me to become. I will fight to get back to being the me I used to be."

Robin knew his first step was returning to where the new Robin had been forged. He returned to the garage that he still owned on the property of his old home. The family who had moved there welcomed him and thanked him again for letting them buy the rest of the property. They said he could come and go whenever he wanted to.

The key to the garage had been lost long ago. Robin had to call a locksmith to access his property. Once inside, everything was tidy but covered in dust. Emotions flooded over him as he walked around the space.

Everything was still here: the weight set, the heavy bag and sets of boxing gloves, Jim's poster showing attacking and defensive fighting strikes, the gun safe and ammunition locker, and Jim's collection of fighting knives, tactical batons, and other martial arts paraphernalia. There were pictures on the wall of Jim as a military policeman and a civilian police trainer with the Honolulu police department.

Finally, there was the picture that Jim said made him proudest. It was Jim, Janie, and Robin at a police cadet dinner, standing with the Chief of the Honolulu Police Department.

Robin was dressed in his cadet shirt and holding a framed plaque. It proclaimed him the "Outstanding Honolulu Police Department Police Cadet of the Year." Jim and Janie were beaming, and Robin had a big, uncontrollable smile.

"I promise you, Jim," Robin said as he looked at the picture. "I will get back to being the me you helped me to be. I don't know how. I don't know when. But I will do it, Jim. I will."

Robin's road back was long and hard. He continued to work as the janitor/handyman for the orphanage, but he moved out to live in a tiny studio apartment within walking distance of both the orphanage and his garage. Having his own place allowed him to control his nutrition and return to a plant-based lifestyle.

Every free minute Robin had outside his responsibilities at the orphanage he spent in his garage or the gym that he and Jim had previously frequented. It took three years, but he finally fully rehabilitated his right leg and regained his heavily muscled Samoan warrior physique and strength.

Robin was now 24 years old. He knew being the janitor/handyman of the orphanage was not his future, yet he wasn't sure what was. He thought about applying to join the police force, but it felt like that chapter of his life had closed behind him. He wanted to move forward, not back.

Robin had lived at the orphanage for 18 of his 24 years. The more he reflected on his past and considered his future, the more he understood that Sister Superior, the older nuns, and the orphanage itself had been the major anchor of his life.

Sister Superior, Sister Beatrice, and the other elderly ladies who ran the orphanage had been there for him from his earliest days through his accident,

recovery, and even now. He now realized these women, whom he thought were so cruel and draconian when he was young, had loved and protected him the whole time. It was now his turn to care for them.

Sister Superior and the other nuns who had been there at the orphanage's founding were now in their 60s, 70s, and 80s. While they continued to care for the orphanage's children, they had started to need care themselves. That's why Robin stayed engaged with the orphanage.

If you visited the orphanage, you would see Robin in his jeans and green janitorial employee shirt cleaning, fixing, and doing menial chores. If you said "Hello" to Robin, he would say "Hello" back. But that was the extent of his conversational engagement. He would quietly continue whatever small task he had been working on.

You wouldn't see how Sister Superior and the other nuns had come to rely on his judgment and advice on nearly every important decision that impacted the orphanage and the kids it protected.

Robin's life, the lives of the nuns, and the lives and well-being of the kids now rested very squarely on the counsel and support Robin provided to Sister Superior and her orphanage leadership team.

Over time, the nuns jokingly said Robin had become "one of the girls," as they referred to themselves. Robin celebrated his birthdays, holidays, and personal milestones with these remarkable women. They had given their lives to support the orphanage and the kids who passed through it—including him.

Robin considered himself poor in things but rich in people who loved and cared about him. Once again, he had reached the pinnacle of personal connection that he had felt in his years living with and being loved by Jim and Janie. Life constantly evolves, however. Robin's life and future were about to shift remarkably quickly—not for the better.



## Dead in the Water

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It all happened so rapidly that it broke everyone's hearts. Sister Superior fell in the hall one day on her way back to her office. Just as a precaution, the other sisters demanded that she be transported to the hospital so they could examine her properly and make sure she had no serious injuries. The problem was, she did.

They ran a computed tomography (CT) scan on her head. They were looking for contusions. What they found was a tumor. They conducted a biopsy. The result was cancer. It was the next part that was so concerning. It wasn't just any cancer. It was lung cancer.

They started testing other parts of her body and found lung cancer cells there, too. The diagnosis was stage four cancer that had started in her lungs and then spread throughout her body. They prescribed the strongest and harshest chemotherapy her elderly frame could tolerate. It didn't work. Within three months, she was gone.

Robin and the nuns who ran the orphanage with his help were devastated. Sister Superior had been their leader and rock for almost their entire adult lives. They felt lost and disconnected with her gone. Sister Beatrice was appointed temporary head until Monsignor O'Connor and the orphanage's Board of directors could decide what to do.

The sisters all lobbied to have Robin appointed the new head of the orphanage. They knew the leadership role he was already playing quietly behind the scenes. However, when they looked at Robin, Monsignor O'Connor and the orphanage Board saw only a janitor/handyman with a high school diploma.

They decided they needed someone with academic credentials and deep experience running youth facilities to keep the orphanage running successfully. After a search that lasted several months, Monsignor O'Connor directed the sisters to prepare dinner and a reception. He said he would bring the newly

## Frank A. Lancione

appointed head of the orphanage to meet all of them and officially install her in her new position.

The new woman, Ms. Anna Forte, was in her forties and sure of herself. At this introductory reception with her new staff, she made it very clear that she was in charge and that changes would be made. After the hellos and casual introductions, Monsignor O'Connor asked Ms. Forte to say a few words. It was quite a talk. It left the poor nuns who had given their lives to this facility speechless.

The Board and the parish had selected Ms. Forte because she had big plans. While occasionally, someone locally adopted children, most parents who adopted children from the orphanage in the past had come from Los Angeles and its surrounding area. Ms. Forte's vision was that they could reach a much larger audience by promoting the orphanage and making the children available for adoption online.

Advertising desirable children available for placement over the Internet would open them up for adoption by literally anyone, anywhere in the world. As more people showed up wanting quality children to adopt, the church could substantially raise its adoption fees.

That ever-growing stream of revenue would turn the orphanage from a continuous liability that was always on the brink of economic failure into a revenue-generating profit center that would throw off money that could be used to finance other initiatives in the church.

She emphasized that it was a win-win for everyone. She would lead the orphanage and its woefully inadequate business methods into the 21st century. She would greatly expand the number of children who could be placed and prospective parents willing to pay hefty fees to adopt them.

She said the first challenge for all of them was to closely scrutinize the orphanage's current operations to identify areas where cuts could be made,

freeing up money to purchase the necessary equipment to implement their new concept of online operations.

The poor elderly nuns, most of whom had dedicated decades of their lives to the orphanage and its children, sat stunned. They had no idea how to use the Internet or what any of what Ms. Forte had just said meant.

Sister Beatrice muttered under her breath, "So, are we selling children like pineapples now? Quick! Get them while they last! They won't be available for long at this price!" She had said it quietly out of frustration, but several of the other sisters nodded their heads. That's what they were feeling, too.

It didn't matter what the sisters felt, however. They had sworn a vow of obedience to the church. Ms. Forte wasn't asking for their support. She was telling them the new plan. Their only permissible response was: "Yes, Ms. Forte. How do we help you?" There was, however, another path, and a surprising number of sisters chose it.

When young women dedicated their lives to God and the church at their ordination ceremonies, an unspoken but corresponding commitment was made to them. The church committed to caring for its ordained nuns for as long as they remained a part of their order—even if that was the rest of their lives. That was the bargain.

Many of the sisters at the facility in their 70s and 80s had been eligible to request to be moved into retirement assignments for years. There, they would continue being nuns but would have significantly reduced responsibilities and workloads suitable for someone in their last phase of life.

Those who had been eligible for retirement but continued working did so because of their love for Sister Superior, the children, and their commitment to the orphanage's mission. However, within days of Ms. Forte's speech at the reception, six of the oldest and longest-serving nuns at the orphanage submitted

their resignations. They requested to be reassigned to a retirement posting elsewhere in the church.

Ms. Forte jubilantly accepted their resignations. She knew they could not fit into the new operations concept, and their resignations saved her from having to force them out involuntarily. She already had a cadre of younger novitiates and nuns who were tech-savvy lined up. The resignations only hastened the staff transition she, Monsignor O'Connor, and the Board had planned all along.

Robin said nothing and showed no emotion during the entire evening of Ms. Forte's installation as the new director of the orphanage. He knew, though, that his life at the orphanage was over. The nuns who were retiring were all that was left of the group that had been here when his mother delivered him and then left him for the orphanage to raise.

With Sister Superior's death and their departure, this place that had been his home for virtually his whole life was irrevocably changed. Two weeks after taking over the orphanage, Ms. Forte called Robin into her office. She thanked him for his many years of dedication and service and then told him his job at the orphanage was being eliminated.

She said that a member of the parish church that sponsored the orphanage had offered to provide janitorial and handyman services on a volunteer basis. That freed up money for the new equipment needed to get the facility up and running on the Internet.

She handed him a check equivalent to two weeks' salary and shook his hand. Just then, her phone rang. She took the call, said it was important, and asked if he wouldn't mind stepping out. That was it. He would never again see the inside of the office where Jim and Janie adopted him, and he spent so much time advising Sister Superior and the other nuns on important decisions.

Robin gathered his things from the janitorial closet, where he kept his work equipment. Then he went around the facility, saying goodbye to his few

remaining friends there. Finally, he started his last walk from the orphanage to the tiny one-room apartment he had called home since he had recovered sufficiently from his accident to live alone again.

Along the way, he thought about a conversation he had with Jim. “Dad,” he’d asked, “did you know you would join the Honolulu police force when you were still an MP in the Army?”

“No, son,” Jim replied. “I had no idea what I would do after I left the Army. The Army was my whole life while I was in it.”

“But, after you left the Army, the Honolulu police force became your whole life. How could you have two such different experiences both be your whole life?”

"Robin," Jim said, "we don't have just one 'life' and do nothing else. Our lifetime is divided into a lot of smaller 'lives.' You can think of your life as a book with many chapters."

"We do something for a whole lot of years and think that it defines everything about who we are. But then, something else comes along, and it takes us in a completely different direction. It becomes the new chapter of our life that defines who we are after the change."

"I'm not sure I understand," he'd told his dad. "Well," Jim said, "think about it this way. The first fifteen years of your life were at the orphanage. Then you came to live with Janie and me."

"The 'You' you are today is a completely different Robin than the boy you were when you lived at the orphanage as a child. You had no idea, back then, that this 'chapter' of your life would ever happen or that you would become the person you are today. Yet here you are."

"Currently, you are a high school student, a police cadet, and our son. You will always be our son, but you won't always be a cadet or a high school student."

"Hopefully, after you graduate from high school, you will become a person who holds an associate degree in law enforcement from *Leahi Community College* and an entry-level police trainee on the Honolulu police force. That chapter of your life will differ completely from the one you're living out now.

“But how do you know what your next life ‘chapter’ will be and when it will start,” Robin asked. “You don’t,” Jim said. It doesn’t work that way.”

"All you can do is try your hardest to put yourself in the best position possible for the next 'chapter' you hope will happen. Unfortunately, hope and working hard aren't always enough. Sometimes, something bigger than us—fate—gets involved. When that happens, despite our best efforts, our next chapter may not turn out the way we wished it would."

Robin pondered Jim's explanation as he walked home from the meeting in which Ms. Forte had just fired him. He thought about the life 'chapters' he had lived until now. He was the lonely and downtrodden boy who had lived at the orphanage until his fifteenth birthday. Then, he became the beloved son of Jim and Janie and an accomplished police cadet, athlete, and high school student with an incredible future ahead of him.

For several years after the accident, he was a cripple struggling mightily just to regain enough strength to be able to live a normal life. As hard as that was, some very good things happened during that period. It was then that he finally understood how he had been loved and supported throughout his entire life by Sister Superior and the nuns of the orphanage.

He reflected on how to best describe these last few years. He had physically recovered from the accident enough to live on his own. However, his cheap and tiny apartment was nothing more than just a place to sleep. The orphanage, the gym, and his and Jim’s old man cave were the true ‘worlds’ within his world.

Robin knew there would always be some kind of workout place in his life, wherever life took him. Staying fit, physically formidable, and plant-based was his way of honoring the memory of Jim and Janie and all they had done for him.

Robin could have made much more money had he left and taken other jobs before Ms. Forte arrived. Instead, he had continued working at the orphanage for meager janitorial wages. It wasn't money that kept him there; it was loyalty and love.

The sisters had taken care of him in his times of need. As they aged and needed help, it was a labor of love for him to provide it. With Sister Superior's death and the retirement of the nuns he had known since childhood, that life 'chapter' was now closed. But it had been wonderful and fulfilling while it lasted.

As he reached his building and climbed the stairs to his little third-floor apartment, Robin realized that tomorrow really would be the first day of the rest of his life. As he settled down to sleep that evening, he wondered what his next life chapter would be.

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It took Robin no time to start the next chapter of his life. He went to the gym, looked up the owner, and said he was finally ready to take up the owner's offer to have Robin become a trainer and personal coach at the gym.

The owner was ecstatic. He started making phone calls. By the end of the day, fifteen enthusiastic regulars had signed up to have Robin act as their personal trainer. In addition to the personal training, the owner talked Robin into starting up boxing and mixed martial arts group classes.

The owner and the gym's long-time customers had seen Robin progress over the years into a fierce and unstoppable fighter. His classes sold out immediately, and there were long waiting lists to get into any new sessions that opened up.

Robin had a full schedule of individual and group training sessions booked. His share of the revenue from those programs was four times what he had been paid at the orphanage.

Many good things were quickly coming Robin's way. His wallet was full, his schedule was full, and his address book was full. But his heart felt hollow and empty. He missed the warmth and close connection of having the nuns, who had been like family to him for so many years, as a part of his everyday life.

Over time, Robin developed a special closeness to his junior classes of students, who had enrolled to have him teach them boxing and mixed martial arts skills. They ranged in age from 14 to 19. As he worked with them, he realized that he was now in Jim's role as instructor, and they were in his role as students.

Many of them lacked the money to pay for classes. The gym owner was very entrepreneurial, however. He had applied for and received a Federal grant to provide physical training classes to underprivileged kids. The experience opened up a whole new world for these kids.

They loved having Robin as their instructor. Many of them were children of single mothers who had never had a male role model in their lives. Robin taught them to fight but even more so how to live. They were fiercely loyal to him, and he to them.

Robin loved kids, but like Jim and Janie, he never had biological kids of his own. Women had come into and out of his life over the years, but 'the one' never seemed to appear.

In the years that he worked at the orphanage, it seemed that every woman he became serious with eventually ended up having "the talk" with him. They all started saying how much they loved and admired him and wanted to spend their whole lives with him. Then, inevitably, they explained how that was just not possible with him plodding along in a dead-end janitorial position at a non-profit orphanage.



They knew he could make more of himself, they would say. They knew that he could have the kind of job that would allow the two of them to raise a family and have a wonderful life together, they would plead. All he had to do was bail out on those ridiculous nuns and the go-nowhere career track he was currently on.

In other words, they were asking him to abandon the nuns who had never abandoned him. He wouldn't do it. They would break up. He would find someone new. The cycle would repeat itself.

By the time he was established at the gym, the story had changed, but only slightly. Personal trainer was a step up from janitor. It wasn't enough of a step, though, for the working-class bridezillas who fantasized about marrying someone who could bootstrap them into an upper-class lifestyle. They all fervently believed it was possible if only Robin would quit wasting his time teaching kids how to box and get a real job.

Robin's bond with the kids he was instructing was more important to him than what the women nagging him to abandon them were offering. The kids needed him much like the nuns had. The kids were loyal to him, and he was loyal to them.

Robin eventually gave up looking for 'the one' true love of his life. He finally decided to settle for casual sex with available women who were not looking for long-term commitments. There was an almost endless line of women who wanted to spend time with him under those ground rules. It met his physical needs and simplified his life.

Robin continued to work at the gym into his early 30s. He became a well-respected and widely known trainer throughout the city. Several of the boxers he trained competed in Golden Gloves and became regional champs in the high school divisions. Robin became a famed fighter competing in the Hawaiian islands' local mixed martial arts circuit. This only boosted his credibility as a trainer and increased his coaching fees.

One of the other changes in this chapter of Robin's life was the loss of one of the important icons of his past. One night, lightning struck the garage he and Jim had used as their man cave.

The family that lived in his old house on the property where his garage was were out of town. The rainstorm was a torrent, so no neighbors were outside. No one saw that the lightning strike had ignited a fire.

By the time neighbors recognized what was happening and called the fire department, it was too late. The entire building and its contents were reduced to ashes.

A fireman who knew him from the gym told Robin he was lucky he no longer kept large stores of ammunition on the property or the results could have been even worse. Robin gifted the property the garage had been on to the family that had bought the house he, Jim, and Janie had lived in.

Signing the papers to execute the land transfer was like closing the door on a part of his past. As always, Robin looked inside himself and willed himself to go on.

Robin had lost the physical mementos of his days and nights training with Jim in their man cave, but nothing could take away his wonderful memories of those times. He vowed to make his work training kids his new monument to those days and all Jim and Janie had done for him.

Robin became interested in his Samoan heritage at this point in his life. He started reading about legendary Samoan warriors and researching the stories about how they had decorated their bodies with numerous tattoos.

The tattooing techniques Samoans used in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries were very primitive compared to the standards of his day. Robin had no interest in copying the exact tattoos they had. However, he wanted to adorn his body with tattoos and connect spiritually with their fierce Samoan fighting traditions.

Robin settled on tattoos in the style of the contemporary Japanese "fish" school of tattoo artists. They created beautiful yet powerful drawings of sacred carp and other fish on their customers' bodies. Their body art was expensive but worth it.

Robin still lived in his tiny studio apartment and drove a beat-up old truck. He lived way below his ample income and could easily adorn his body with these powerful tattoos. Once he started, he didn't stop until his arms, legs, and back were an art gallery of potent and mystical fish images.

When Robin entered the ring for an all-Island MMA fight, he looked every bit the Samoan warrior. His fish tattoos became a kind of trademark—an identity. Some of his students even got similar tattoos to emulate his style.

One night, when he was entering the octagon for a local MMA fight, the announcer introduced him as Robin "Fish" Logan. He won decisively that night. As the referee raised his hand to signify the win, the crowd started to chant: "Fish, Fish, Fish." It amused him, but he thought nothing of it.

The next time Robin went to fight, it happened again. He had a loyal following of local fans. Soon, every time he fought, they would chant "Fish" throughout the bout. The nickname stuck.

Eventually, everyone, including his students, fellow fighters, ring announcers, and gym customers, began calling him Fish. Far from objecting, he encouraged it. It was part of his effort to configure this next chapter of his life on his terms and to his liking.

Life for Fish settled into a comfortable and rewarding routine. However, Jim's caution that fate had a major role in determining how our life's chapters turned out was prophetic. Fish had no way of knowing that his current life chapter was about to come to a violent and sudden end.

\* \* \* \* \*

It started with a harried and frightened call from Tommy Fong, one of Fish's former students. Fish had trained Tommy to box through the gym's grant program for underprivileged kids while the boy was in high school.

Tommy had a lot of talent as a boxer but lacked the discipline to excel. Tommy never trained seriously enough to compete in Golden Gloves high-school-level boxing competitions. In the end, Tommy dropped out of high school altogether without finishing.

The last Fish had heard, Tommy was acting as a small-time street-level dealer for an up-and-coming drug lord named Koa. Koa was vicious, violent, and looking to move up the ladder in the world of drug distribution and territorial control—all essential qualities to succeed in his chosen profession.

Fish was sorry to hear Tommy was caught up in that world, but it wasn't his business. He had enough kids in his classes who wanted more from life and worked hard to achieve it. He didn't have time to worry about the various black sheep who had willfully and foolishly strayed from his flock over the years.

Even so, when Fish heard Tommy's voice on the phone, he realized the young man was desperate, in real trouble, and probably did need his help.

"Fish, Fish, please don't hang up," Tommy pleaded.

"You don't sound good, Tommy. What's up?" Fish responded.

"Fish, I got into something, and it's out of control. I mean, it's really out of control. They are coming after me, and they're going to kill me, man. Really kill me," Tommy cried out in a panicked voice.

"Tommy, why are you calling me? You chose your path. I have nothing to do with it," Fish barked at Tommy.

"Fish, please, man. I have no one else to call, nowhere else to go," Tommy said.

"I'm holed up down on Vine Street in that hooker hotel not far from the gym. Koa and his guys are after me. So are Mano and his guys. I'm caught in the middle between them."

"Please, man, just help me get out of town without either of them finding me. I promise I'll never bother you again. I have money, Fish. I can pay you, man. I'll pay you. Just help me get out of here alive."

Fish thought for a moment before he answered. Koa was the Hawaiian word for warrior. Mano was the Hawaiian word for shark. These two ruthless drug lords headed rival gangs and were sworn enemies. If Tommy had somehow gotten on the wrong side of both of them, he was indeed a dead man walking.

"Tommy," Fish said, "you got yourself into whatever you're involved in. It has nothing to do with me. I don't want to be a part of it."

"Fish, please," Tommy screamed into the phone. "They'll kill me, man. They'll kill me. You know they will. All I'm asking is for you to get me out of town. You don't need to do anything else. Just get me out of town."

"You know what it is to be desperate, to have no one, Fish. That's where I am now. Please, man. Help me. There's no one else who can."

This last plea moved something deep inside Fish. Fish had been desperate at points in his life. He had not willfully put himself into those situations as Tommy had. But he knew what it was like to be utterly alone with no one caring enough to want to help or even be concerned about what happened to you.

"Look, Tommy," Fish said. "I don't want to be involved in this. But I am willing to pick you up and drive you to the airport. What you do from there is your business."

"I warned you about getting involved in this drug stuff, but you wouldn't listen. I'll give you a ride to the airport, and that's it. What room are you in? Room 302? OK."

"Keep the drapes closed, stay inside, and stay quiet," Fish told Tommy. "Don't let anyone in. Don't call anyone else. Don't do anything until I get there. Do you understand? Don't screw this up, Tommy, or you will have me after you as well as Koa and Mano."

Fish argued with himself the whole drive to the dreary hotel where Tommy was hiding. He knew he shouldn't be taking personal risks for someone as irresponsible and foolish as Tommy.

He knew Tommy deserved whatever happened to him. Yet, a part of him still wanted to help the frightened young man, pleading with him on the phone. "Wants to help. Yeah, that describes me alright. What a sucker," Fish said to himself.

Fish shifted into action mode as the motel came into sight. Jim's training shaped his approach. Not knowing who might be watching, Fish drove past the motel and parked down the block rather than in the motel parking lot. Next, he walked around the block and entered the parking lot from the back of the property.

The motel itself was a cheesy dump used by hookers and bottom-feeders who couldn't afford to live anywhere else. It was three stories and had no elevator or inside halls. You walked up exposed metal stairs and along an outside balcony in front of the rooms on each floor to get to your room.

Fish made it to the bottom of the stairs, looked around, and climbed quickly up to the third floor. Tommy was in room 302. Fish knocked, and Tommy let him in. Tommy looked frantic and scared.

"Fish, man," Tommy babbled. "I appreciate this man. Really, I . . ."

"Save it, Tommy." Fish barked. "Get your stuff. We need to move."

"It's just this backpack," Tommy said.

"Then grab it, and let's go," Fish commanded.

As they approached the door, Fish said, "Tommy, what the hell have you gotten me into?"

"Look, Fish. I've been trying to get ahead in the gang and move up from being a street dealer. But Koa wouldn't give me a chance, no matter how much I did. So, I said I would be muscle as well as deal. You taught me to box, man. You know what I can do."

"Koa called me yesterday. He said one of his guys, who was supposed to pick up money from his dealers on the west side, had gone off the grid. He said he needed someone to collect the money from that part of the city right away. He didn't want it sitting around tempting people to think about skimming from money that was his."

"I said I'd do it. But then, I get a call from George Kamaka. He's the guy who Koa said went off the grid. He tells me that he's now working for Mano, Koa's rival."

"He says he knows Koa has told me to collect the money from the west side. He says go ahead and do it. But, he says, I have to turn the money over to him instead of Koa. He says if I don't, he'll kill me. I told him that Koa will kill me if I do."

He says, "No, you come and work for us. We'll protect you from Koa. We are going to take over that west side territory. We'll let you work it for us. But first, you need to bring us the money."

"I collected the money and called Mano's guy George like he told me to. He said he was on his way here. But then, I get a call from Koa. He said he was checking up on me. He made me tell him where I was and said he was sending someone to pick up the money. He said I'm dead if the money isn't there when his guy comes to pick it up.

"I'm in an impossible situation. I don't want to die, Fish. I called you because I have nowhere else to turn. I'll give you whatever you want. Just get me out of here and out of this mess!"

A thousand things to say flashed through Fish's mind, but this was not the time for them. "Alright, let's get out of here," Fish said. Fish pulled the drape aside and checked to see if it was safe to exit the room. "Shit!" he swore.

A heavily tattooed man dressed in black was slowly making his way up the railing. He was looking directly at room 302 as he carefully climbed. It was over 90 degrees outside, but he wore a light nylon windbreaker.

"Definitely wearing that jacket to hide a gun," Fish thought. Fish momentarily caught a faint outline of the gun under the thin material of the man's jacket. The length indicated that the gun had a silencer. This intruder was a professional coming to do his job, Fish reflected.

Mona's gang was not recruiting Tommy. They were using him. This man's orders were most likely to kill Tommy, take the money, and then bring the proceeds back to Mona.

"We have company. Get in the bathroom and stay there," Fish whispered to Tommy. Tommy made his way to the bathroom in the right rear corner of the room. In the meantime, Fish considered his options. The entrance from the balcony was the only way into the room. The door had only a cheap handle lock and a flimsy chain.



It would be very easy for an experienced fighter to kick the door open and shoot everyone visible as they burst into the room. The element of surprise would be on the attacker's side, especially if they were careful not to telegraph their attack before it happened.

The best and perhaps only way to counter such an attack would be to ensure you were not visible when the attacker burst into the room. One way would be to hide behind the bed and pop up after the intruder burst in. Fish didn't like that scenario. He would be in front of the attacker, unarmed, and directly in his line of sight.

Viewed from the balcony, the door to the room opened inward from right to left. Someone bursting into the room would have their view to the left momentarily blocked by the door as it swung open. There was just enough room to the left of the door for Fish to position himself on that side so the door would fully open without hitting him.

Fish planned to attack the intruder from the left as soon as he entered the room. Fish would have a split second to disarm and disable the attacker before the attacker could shoot him. It wasn't the best alternative, but it was his only one. He put himself in position and waited for the attack.

It seemed an eternity before Fish heard the door handle gently rattling. "Smart," Fish said to himself. "No need to break in if the door is unlocked." It wasn't, however. Fish braced himself for what he knew was coming next.

The seconds ticked slowly by. Fish imagined himself standing out on the balcony. He'd first look around to make sure no one was watching. Then he would step back from the door, twist his body slightly, and explode into the door with a vicious sidekick. Just as this last thought crossed his mind, the door burst open like a bomb had gone off.

Fish saw the man in black rush through the opening. It was exactly as he had anticipated. What he didn't expect was what happened next. As the intruder

burst through the front door, and Tommy immediately popped out of the bathroom, shooting a tiny, almost effeminate little 38 caliber revolver at the man. Tommy's shots missed. The intruder's did not.

The exchange of fire with Tommy momentarily distracted Mona's henchman. Fish attacked him, disarmed him, and scuffled with him. They tumbled out to the balcony. It ended with Fish throwing his attacker off the balcony.

Fish checked Tommy. He was dead. That meant there were two dead bodies and a bag of illicit cash involved. He thought about calling the police, but the story was so farfetched he knew they would suspect he was in on it. People were already milling around the body in the parking lot below. The police would arrive soon enough.

Even if Fish somehow managed to dodge the police, there was no way of knowing if someone hadn't seen him scuffling with Mona's guy and throwing him off the balcony. With his big body festooned in distinctive tattoos, Fish would have been very easy for eyewitnesses to identify.

It's also possible that Mona's man had not been alone. There could easily have been a second of Mona's men waiting below as a spotter and getaway driver. And even if he could somehow elude Mona and his guys, Koa and his set of street thugs would be hunting Fish, too.

Koa would kill Fish even if he gave the money back. He had to. Koa needed to send a clear message to rival drug gangs that bad things happened to anyone who tried to cross him.

Tommy's impossible situation had now become Fish's. His whole life, his whole history, had been on the island. Yet to stay here now was certain death. The clock was ticking. He had to decide. As unthinkable as it was, he made his choice.

\* \* \* \* \*

Fish's plane touched down in LA on time. He had slept some on the flight, but he was mentally exhausted. That evening, he decided to check into the Hilton at the airport.

Over the next few days, he connected with the fence and converted his Cartier baubles back to cash. He then transferred all his money from his accounts in the banks he had used in Hawaii to a new account at Bank of America with a local LA address.

He rented an economy car and transferred from the Hilton to a low-cost, two-star hotel off the airport property. The hotel was full of traveling salespeople, construction workers on long-term assignments, and middle-class tourists visiting the area. His tattoos didn't look so out of place in this more working-class environment.

He spent a fair amount of time thinking about what he wanted to do next. People went back and forth from LA to Hawaii regularly. It would not be out of the question for someone to spot him in LA who had seen him in Hawaii. He didn't want to spend every day of his life from here on out looking over his shoulder. He needed to disappear completely. Therefore, LA would not work as a new base of operations.

He also knew he didn't want to live somewhere where it got cold. Forget Buffalo, NY, or Fargo, ND. He was an island boy. He wanted sun, sand, and ocean water. He called up a map of the United States on the new laptop he had just purchased. He saw a peninsula instead of an island, but it had sun, sand, and ocean water. Florida would be a worthy destination, he thought.

That evening, he passed by a used car lot when he went out to find something to eat. There, he saw a small used Winnebago recreational vehicle for sale. He found a Chinese restaurant where he could get a vegetarian meal and had dinner.

He considered how best to lay low for a while and thought about the RV. It couldn't be that hard to drive. It was small, but he was used to living in small spaces. It would allow him to cook his own meals and maintain his plant-based lifestyle.

He could also take his time making his way to Florida. He was American but had never seen mainland America. He could lay out a cross-country route that would take him to places he'd heard about but never thought he would see: the deserts, the mountains, Texas, Las Vegas, the Grand Canyon, the plains of the Midwest, Niagara Falls, New England, New Orleans, New York City.

After dinner, he stopped at the car lot. He took the RV for a test drive and bickered with the salesperson over the price. He didn't buy it, but it sparked his interest in pursuing the idea of an RV journey. A week later, he found just the used RV unit he was looking for at a Camping World RV dealership. It was slightly bigger, newer, and had a few more features.

The dealership had an RV park right at its location. Robin bought the unit and stayed in his rig in the adjacent RV park for about two weeks. During this time, he learned more about how his RV worked and bought what he would need to make the trip. At the end of the two weeks, he got up, broke camp, and embarked on what would be an incredible adventure.

Hawaii and his life there seemed like a dream now. He had a physical destination—Florida—a route and a capable RV to get there, but he had no idea how all of this would turn out.

\* \* \* \* \*

Had Fish taken the most direct route from LA to Florida, he could have easily made it in a few weeks. Instead, it took him over a year. But what a glorious year it was!

## Dead in the Water

Because he was frugal, he could comfortably pay cash for his RV and live off his remaining savings while crossing the country. On his journey, he had seen things he never dreamed of. He was especially taken with the enormous, seemingly endless vistas of the American West.

Fish had decided to start his search for a new permanent home in Florida in the Miami area. He was driving his rig south on U.S. Interstate Route 75 to get there.

Interstate 75 runs south to the Naples, Florida, area along the west coast of Florida. Just outside Naples, Route 75 takes a sharp turn to the east and heads through the Everglades. The east-west section of 75 is Florida's famed Alligator Alley. Route 75 finally brings you to Miami.

RVs are relatively complex. They have all of a house's plumbing, wiring, and infrastructure, plus all of the systems required of a large over-the-road motorized vehicle.

During his cross-country adventures, Fish periodically stopped at Camping World dealerships to have his RV serviced and safety checked. A large Camping World dealership was located in Summerfield, FL, close to Interstate Route 75.

Fish planned to stop at this Camping World dealership, get his rig serviced, and then make his final run to the Miami area to start his new life. It didn't work out that way.

While Fish waited in the customer lounge for his RV to be worked on, he struck up conversations with some of the other RVers who also had their rigs in for service.

His custom was to ask fellow travelers if there was anything noteworthy to see when visiting a new area. To Fish's amazement, everyone he talked to said he needed to visit Sunset Years while he was in the area. He wasn't sure what it was, but it piqued his interest.

## Frank A. Lancione

Sunset Years was the largest senior citizen retirement community in the world. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, It was home to over 155,000 residents, with an average age of 68.

When Fish first heard about Sunset Years, he envisioned it as a bleak wasteland of shriveled, washed-out old people in wheelchairs, walkers, and canes slowly shuffling down the streets of faded buildings with joyless looks of hopelessness, despair, and resignation on their faces. It seemed to him it was the last train station on the rail line before meeting the Grim Reaper. God's waiting room was another image that came to mind.

When Fish shared his misgivings with other RV'rs who'd been there, they laughed at him out loud. "Oh no, honey," one of the women in the customer lounge said. "Hell, those people have more fun than people half their age elsewhere."

Her husband chimed in, "They have three town squares with dancing and music every night, every recreational facility you can think of, and supposedly a very active over 55 dating scene."

"The story is that good-looking, well-to-do widows in their 60s and 70s are looking for 'companionship' in those bars at the town centers every evening. Believe me, if I were single. I'd be going there myself!"

Fish was not looking for any geriatric pick-up experiences, but he was intrigued. Like most of the other RV mega dealerships he had visited, this Camping World dealership had an RV campground adjacent to it. When the service on his rig was finished, he checked in and set up. He decided he would spend a few nights in the area and look around.

A few nights in the area stretched out into a few months. Fish was fascinated by Sunset Years. What the people in the customer lounge had observed when he first considered visiting Sunset Years was true. The seniors living in Sunset Years were having more fun than people half their age who lived elsewhere.

Instead of broken down and dispirited, the seniors living in Sunset Years were fit, vibrant, and still growing and achieving in their 60s, 70s, 80s, and beyond. It was like they had found the fountain of youth. Fish found himself really enjoying the optimistic environment, the thriving economy of the area, and all that the area had to offer.

Fish had initially thought his ideal home would have to have sun, sand, and ocean water. He was beginning to reconsider. The area in central Florida surrounding Sunset Years was booming. "Maybe Sunset Years is a good place to start my next chapter," he thought.

He signed up with a small local *Anytime Fitness* gym. 24/7 access to the weight room and other equipment perfectly fit his needs. He was able to go in at night and heavy lift without any observers or interruptions. He'd also found several great markets that sold organic produce. He maintained his plant-based diet, weight training, and martial arts practice. Everything was coming together.

Fish relocated his RV from Summerfield, FL, where the Camping World dealership was, to a small private mobile home park next to Sunset Years that also accepted RVs. They offered month-to-month and long-term leases. It would be perfect if he decided to stay in the area.

One night, Fish was sitting at the bar in the City Fire restaurant in Sunset Years' Brownwood Town Center. He and the heavy-set guy next to him were drinking beer and commenting to each other about the football game being shown on the bar's TV.

As they laughed at the foibles of the losing team, the other man asked Fish where he was from and what he did for a living. Fish explained that he was originally from Hawaii and had spent the past year touring the U.S. He said he was thinking about spending some extended time here in Sunset Years. The other man excitedly asked Fish if he might be interested in a job.

Fish said he might. The other man immediately went into "sell" mode. "Look," he said. "My name is Jordan Greer. I run an independent pool maintenance and supply business, *Sumter Pool Services*. The economy down here is growing unbelievably. Good workers are hard to find. I could easily double my business if I could hire additional qualified workers."

Fish heard Greer out and then asked a bunch of questions. The money Greer was offering was very good. If he wasn't working or traveling and seeing new things, Fish tended to get bored. So, the chance to be outside in the blue sky and warm sun cleaning pools seemed appealing. Fish said he'd give the job a try. Greer said he had all the paperwork Fish needed to sign in his truck.

The two went out to the parking lot. Fish read and signed the papers. Greer congratulated Fish and gave him an address. Greer said Fish was to meet him there the following day. He said he'd just had a person leave who was servicing the pools in that area.

Greer had planned to work that route himself tomorrow. He said he would have Fish observe and then practice doing the work while Greer confirmed Fish's quality of service and effectiveness in dealing with the customers. If Fish did a good job, Greer said he could take over that route and work it independently going forward.

Fish met Greer the following day on a small circle on a street called Flint Loop. It was in the Monarch Grove neighborhood of Sunset Years. The houses were large and upscale. They all backed up to a beautiful pond. Nearly every home on the pond had an elaborate pool and patio covered by a sizeable screened-in birdcage in the back. The architecture and views from these back patios were beautiful.

Greer had pool services contracts with ten customers on the pond side of Flint Loop. Eight were widows or divorcees in their 60s and 70s who lived alone. They had formed a group called the *Big Beautiful Babes Water Aerobics and Social Club*—the BBBs.



## Dead in the Water

A few of them were somewhat "big." However, they were all friendly, engaging, stylish, and fun to talk with. He flirted with a couple of the "sixty-ish" ones in an exaggerated, comical way. They flirted right back. Both sides enjoyed the playful banter.

Once they finished the pools on Flint Loop, Greer took Fish to other customer sites on the route and worked the pools on those properties. Greer said he was delighted with what he had seen regarding Fish's work ethic, cleanliness on the job sites, and ability to interact with customers. Fish said he'd had a good time, liked the work, liked Greer, and was happy to have been given the opportunity.

Within a few weeks, Fish was an accepted part of the pond-side Flint Loop community. The BBB ladies looked forward to talking with him each time he visited their property, and he looked forward equally to talking with them.

The BBBs began to accept Fish and integrate him into their social network. When they discovered his coaching and training background, they started hiring him to coach the rotating group water aerobics sessions in their pools.

Then, they hired him to cook and bartend for their annual Fourth of July potluck get-together at BBB member Allie Beck's home. He did so well that they eventually hired him to work all their social events.

Being asked to participate in the BBB holiday parties was a significant development from Fish's perspective. It meant that he would never have to spend another Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, or other family-centric holiday alone.

As the nuns earlier had, the BBB women started teasing Fish that he was becoming "one of the girls." He didn't mind a bit. Fish began to feel the same personal connection with the women of the BBBs that he had once had with Sister Superior and the nuns of the orphanage where he grew up.

## Frank A. Lancione

He liked the BBB ladies. He wanted to support and protect them. He began to feel like he was a part of them—that maybe they could be that family anchor he was always seeking but had rarely been able to find.

One thing Fish would never have envisioned was that his emotional attachment to the BBBs would be the death of him.

## 1.0 Welcome to the Play/Game Experience



**INCLUDE THIS PAGE IN PLAY/GAME MODE.  
SKIP IT IN BOOK MODE.**

“Hello everyone and thanks for joining us. I’m Senior Inspector Lance of the Wildwood Florida Police Department Homicide Division This is an introduction for those of you who are experiencing our story in play/game mode.

*Dead in the Water* takes place in the Sunset Years senior retirement community. It’s modeled on the many super-sized retirement developments that have sprung up in central Florida. Each year tens of thousands of new retirees flock to Florida and make these senior centric communities their final home.

In play/game mode, the sections of our story from this point forward advance by having the people who have volunteered to play characters read Witness Statements. These statements reveal which characters had the motive, means, and opportunity to commit the murder.

My character orchestrates this process. Specifically, I:

- Physically control this book
- Alert other characters when it’s their turn to speak
- Hand them this book open to their correct Witness Statement
- Retrieve this book from them when they finish, then provide it to the next character open to the page with their correct statement
- Start and stop the voting and discussion at the ends of Acts 1, 2, 3

So, let’s begin. Our play opens with a neighbor discovering Robin Logan unconscious in his truck parked on Flint Loop in the Monarch Grove neighborhood of the Sunset Retirement community.”

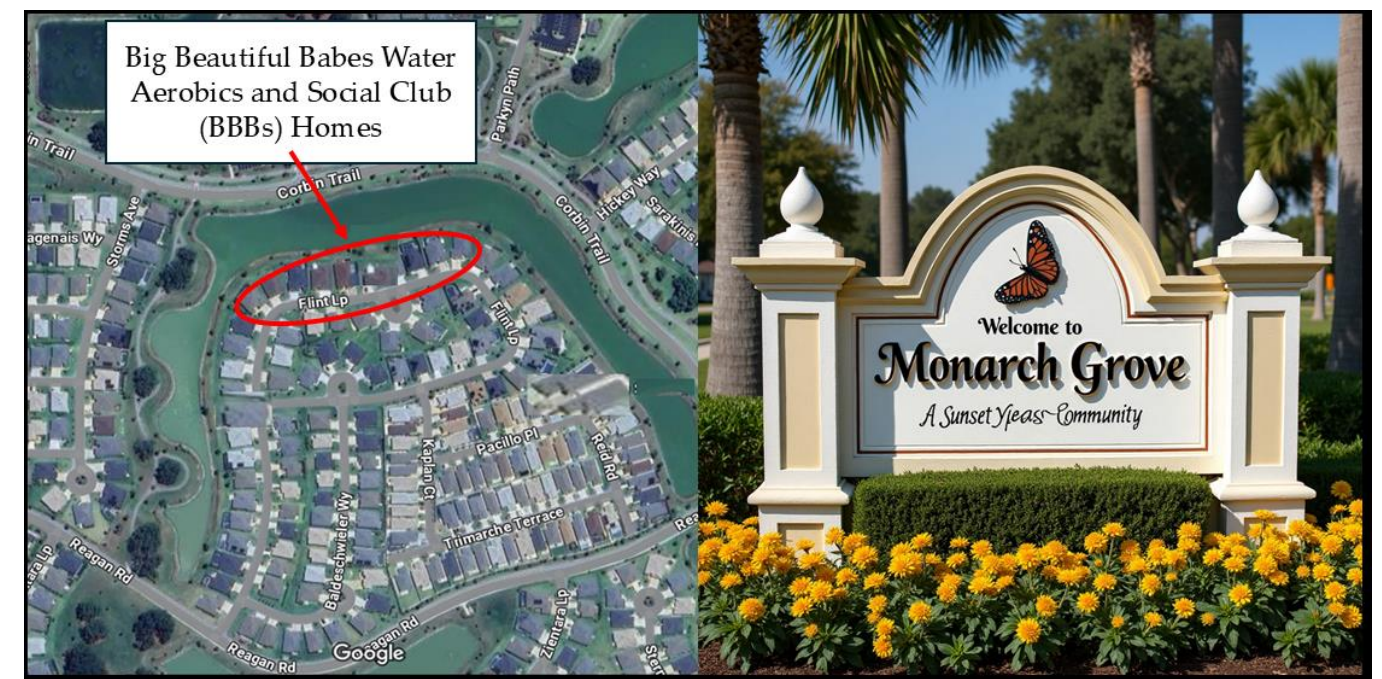
Dead in the Water

Frank A. Lancione

## ACT 1 A FISH OUT OF WATER

### Scene 1 - A Rough Way to Start the Morning

#### Setting - Flint Loop in the Monarch Grove Neighborhood







**Robin (Fish) Logan Unconscious in His Truck**  
**6:00 am on Flint Loop in the Monarch Grove neighborhood**  
**City of Sunset Years, Florida**

### **1.1 A Neighbor Finds Robin Logan Unresponsive in His Truck**

"Hello? Is this 911? My name is Allie Beck. I'm on Flint Loop in the Sunset Hills Monarch Grove neighborhood. There is a truck parked here on the circle on the pond side of Flint Loop.

The driver is slumped over the wheel unconscious. I touched his shoulder and tried to see if he was just asleep. No response. Then I opened the door and jostled him. Still no response. He doesn't appear to be breathing.

We know him. His name is Robin Logan. He's a pool guy/handyman who does work for a group of us in the neighborhood. Please send an ambulance. I'm afraid something is very wrong." (.6 Minute - 110 Words)





**Senior Inspector Lance**  
**Wildwood Police Homicide Detective**  
Assigned to Respond to The Call

### 1.2 Inspector Lance Answers the Call

"Damn, 7:00 am on my way to work and Dispatch is already calling me in my car. This better be good.

Senior Inspector Lance here, go ahead. A death you say. Where? Monarch Grove neighborhood. What is the exact location? The small circle on the pond side of Flint Loop. Yeah. I know it. Unfortunately, I've been there before.

Is the Crime Scene Investigation team there yet? They are, good. Who is it? Gordy? That's even better. You say the witness who called it in is also still on the scene.

Look, instead of coming into the office, I'm going straight to the site so I can talk with them. What's the name? Allie Beck? Ok, I'll look for her when I arrive.

Alert my partner, Inspector DiSalvo, that I will be at the site and will meet her at police headquarters once I've interviewed this witness. Also, when they arrive, tell the coroner's team not to remove the body. I want to look at it when I get there." (.9 minute - 169 words)



**Allie Beck – 78 years old**

Founder and President of the *Big Beautiful Babes Water Aerobics and Social Club (BBB's)*. Resident of Flint Loop in the Monarch Grove Neighborhood

**1.3 Allie Beck Describes Logan's Activities in the Neighborhood**

"Pleased to meet you, Inspector Lance. My name is Allie Beck. I live across the street. I was starting out for my morning walk when I saw Robin's truck parked here.

We all know him. He's a pool cleaner/handyman who does work for many of us who live in this neighborhood. He goes by the nickname of "Fish" because of all those fish tattoos he has.

I wasn't surprised to see Fish's truck here. He frequently waits here on the circle in his truck until it gets light enough for him to begin working in people's backyards.

He says mucking around in people's backyards in the dark gets people all upset. So, he just waits until it's light enough for them to see that it's him and not a robber.

Fish is well known and well-liked in the neighborhood. There's eight of us ladies with homes that back up to the pond section of Flint Loop. We are all friends and all have pools.

We call ourselves the *Big Beautiful Babes Water Aerobics and Social Club*--the BBBs for short. We socialize together and take turns hosting water aerobics sessions in each other's pools on a rotating basis.

Fish is kind of an honorary BBB member. He maintains our pools and does handyman work for all of us. We hire him to tend bar and cook the food for our club holiday parties and special events. He even drives us when we rent a van and go on day trips together.

We jokingly say he's one of the girls. I guess I should say, was one of the girls. What else can I tell you?" (1.5 Minutes - 279 Words)



**Senior Inspector Lance**  
**Wildwood Police Homicide Detective**  
Lead Investigator on the Case

#### **1.4 Lance Probes for Additional Information on Logan**

"I appreciate anything you can tell me about Mr. Logan's routines, his friends, and especially anyone who might have had a dispute with him or a reason to do him harm.

Also, who else should we be talking with to better understand what might have happened to Mr. Logan?" (.3 Minute- 49 Words)





### Robin (Fish) Logan

Found Unresponsive in His Truck and Declared Dead on the Scene by the Emergency Medical Technicians That Responded

### 1.5 Allie Beck Provides Additional Background on Robin Logan

"Certainly you will want to talk to all of the BBBs. I'm the President and founder of the club. I can give you their names and contact information. You may want to speak with some other neighbors, too. I can help your there as well.

Up until a year ago, Fish worked for *Sumter Pool Services*. They were a good company. But we all felt that if he went out on his own he could charge us less and still take home a lot more money for himself. It was a win for everyone--except *Sumter*.

I used to own and run several small businesses. So, I took the lead in helping Fish get started. I set up a Florida Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) and hired Fish to do the customer work.

I keep a small portion of the gross receipts for keeping the books and running the administrative side of the business. Everything else goes directly to Fish.

Fish's former employer, Jordan Greer, was furious when Fish went into competition with him. Greer couldn't sue Fish because the new contracts were with the LLC I'd set up, not directly with Fish. Greer definitely had it out for Fish.

Fish was very close to all of us BBBs. Most of us are in are our sixties and seventies and have no living relatives. Fish was in his thirties. He was Samoan and grew up in Hawaii.

Like most of us in the club, he had no blood relations in the area. We were his family. He called us his "Aunties." We treated him like a nephew—heck, almost like a son. I will do anything you need to help you find who did this." (1.6 minutes Words 289)





**Conference Room – Wildwood Florida Police Headquarters**

**Scene 2 – Lance Questions the BBBs**  
**Setting - Wildwood Florida Police Headquarters**

**1.6 Inspector Lance Meets With Logan’s BBB Customers**

Thank you for joining us here in Police Headquarters today. Please take your seats everyone. We are going to start.

I’m Senior Inspector Lance of the Wildwood Police Homicide Division. The lady on my right is my partner, Inspector Alexa DiSalvo.

As you are all aware, three days ago Mr. Robin Logan was found unconscious in his truck on Flint Loop in the Monarch Grove neighborhood. The Coroner has uncovered evidence that leads us to believe that he was murdered.

Please share with us any information you have on anyone who might have had a reason to harm Mr. Logan and anything that might help us better understand the circumstances of his death.

I know that it is awkward to implicate other individuals in investigations like this. However, someone has purposely ended Mr. Logan's life. That individual may still be in your community.

For your own safety, as well as the safety of others, it’s imperative that you identify anyone you are aware of who may have a connection to this murder.

I am going to call upon each of you in turn. Please give us your name, your age, your residence, and your association with Mr. Logan. Ma'am, would you like to go first? (1.1 minutes - Words 205)





**Chrissy Pines – 79 years old.**  
Member of the *Big Beautiful Babes Water Aerobics and Social Club (BBB's)*. Resident of Flint Loop in the Monarch Grove Neighborhood

### 1.7 Chrissy Pines Responds

"Inspector, I'm Chrissy Pines. I'm 79 years old and I live on the section of Flint Loop that backs to the pond.

Honestly, I have no idea why I'm here. I used to employ Logan for pool and yard service. However, I fired him over a year and a half ago. I know my neighbors think he is so wonderful. I found him to be unreliable and frankly a scam artist.

I went on a 75-day cruise. He was supposed to take care of my pool and property while I was away. A former sorority sister of mine lives in the area. She checked on my property while I was gone.

She said it was obvious that Logan was simply letting things go while I was out of town. She called him and complained. He said he'd been doing the work and planned to keep billing me.

I was supposed to be enjoying myself on my trip. Instead, I was emailing and texting trying to resolve this matter. It was so irritating.

I terminated Logan while I was still on my trip. My dropping him created a lot of personal friction with my neighbors—including some of the ladies here at this meeting. Things got so bad that I ended up quitting our neighborhood BBB club altogether.

I don't know anything about Logan's death. If you want my opinion though, I think he got what he deserved." ( 1.3 minutes - Words 237)



**Emery Landon – 73 years old.**

Member of the *Big Beautiful Babes Water Aerobics and Social Club (BBB's)*. Resident of Flint Loop in the Monarch Grove Neighborhood. Younger Sister of Drew Landon.

**1.8 Emery Landon Responds**

"Inspector, I'm Emery Landon. I'm 73 years old. Like the other BBBs, my home backs to the pond on Flint Loop.

We all knew Fish. He was in our neighborhood pretty much every day. He worked for a variety of people in Monarch Grove and Linden. We, BBB club members, were his main customers.

We eight ladies in the BBB group are more or less family to each other. We celebrate holidays together, take turns hosting water aerobics and parties for each other at our homes, and even do day trips together. Fish was a part of all of those activities.

When Allie Beck convinced Fish to go out on his own, our BBB group stood by him. We all signed up to have him exclusively do our pool cleaning, yard work, and handyman work. He even started coaching our water aerobics sessions and driving us to doctors and shopping.

Like all of us, Fish had no family in the area. He really appreciated being a part of our BBB celebrations, particularly on holidays. He called us his "Aunties." He was as emotionally attached to us as we were to him.

Unfortunately, sometimes I felt Fish acted a little too familiar. We BBBs had fallen into the habit of bantering back and forth with him in a flirtatious way. He would flirt back. My sister Drew liked him a great deal and spent a lot of time with him.

Frankly, I thought Fish's interactions with Drew crossed the line. Their exchanges often became downright embarrassing. I talked to Drew about it. She said that it was all in good fun and she didn't mind."

( 1.6 Minutes - Words 294)





**Drew Landon – 77 years old.**

Member of the *Big Beautiful Babes Water Aerobics and Social Club (BBB's)*. Resident of Flint Loop in the Monarch Grove Neighborhood. Older Sister of Emery Landon

### 1.9 Drew Landon Responds

"Inspector, let me go next. I'm Drew Landon. I'm 77 and Emery's older and more reasonable sister. I, too, live on the pond on Flint Loop, three houses down from Emery.

I love you Emery, but sometimes you are just a stick in the mud. Inspector, Fish was like a younger family member to all of us. He came here from Hawaii and had no one and nothing when he arrived. Pool cleaning is not very glamorous. But he was conscientious and had a fun, infectious personality.

All of us in the BBBs liked him and were rooting for him to do well. Allie helped him start out on his own and the other BBBs all pitched in. We absolutely were flirtatious with Fish--all of us. Even you, Emery.

My goodness, how many chances do women in their sixties and seventies have to kid around and flirt with a good-looking man in his thirties? He was husky, but on someone of Samoan heritage bulky is sexy. He was good-looking, dressed mainly in bathing suits, and was around us every day.

While we all kidded around with Fish, I don't think there was any actual hanky-panky going on between him and any of our members. I was very close to him. I think I would have known if he was servicing more than just the pools of one of our members." (1.3 minutes words 233)





**Nicky Lane – 62 years old.**

Member of the *Big Beautiful Babes Water Aerobics and Social Club (BBB's)*. Resident of Flint Loop in the Monarch Grove Neighborhood

### 1.10 Nicky Lane Responds

"Inspector, I'm Nicky Lane. I'm 62 and I also live on the pond on Flint Loop.

Fish was more or less an unofficial member of our BBBs. The eight of us in the BBB group do almost everything together. Between water aerobic workouts four times a week, parties, day trips, and just hanging out together in the evenings, it's like living in a sorority house, except that the member are in their sixties and seventies instead of their teens and twenties.

Fish was paid support staff, an employee, but we treated him like one of the "girls." I was the closest to Fish in age of anyone in our group. I think if Fish were going to fool around with a BBB, it would have been me based on that factor alone. However, there was nothing going on between Fish and me or between Fish and any of the other BBBs as far as I could tell.

In fact, I am on record stating that I suspected Fish was gay. He was very attractive and at an age to still be sexually active. Yet, he never talked about relationships with any females except us.

I don't know who or why someone would want to hurt him. His passing is certainly going to change things for our BBB group." ( 1.2 minutes - Words 216)



**Allie Beck – 78 years old**  
Founder and President of the  
*Big Beautiful Babes (BBB) Water Aerobics & Social Club.*  
Resident of Flint Loop in the Monarch Grove  
Neighborhood

### 1.11 Allie Beck Responds

"Inspector, as you know I'm Allie Beck. I'm 78 and I live on the pond on Flint Loop.

I described my relationship with Fish to you the other day. I'm not going to repeat that. I have, however, been thinking about other people you need to talk with.

First, three of our BBB members are snowbirds who are away for the summer. I'll give Inspector DiSalvo contact data for all three of these people. I'm sure their families can confirm they weren't in town when Fish was killed.

There are two other people you should also talk with. The first is Jordan Greer. He's the owner of *Sumter Pools Services*. Fish worked for him before he started his own business. Greer was furious when Fish left to start his own company.

The second person, unfortunately, is my nephew, Adrian Beck. Adrian's dad and I received a large inheritance from our father when he passed away.

Under the terms of our dad's will, Adrian's father's share reverted to me when he died a few years ago. It will only be passed on to Adrian upon my death.

Adrian worried that my relationship with Fish might somehow jeopardize his future windfall. He was very negative towards Fish. You should talk to him, too." (1.1 minutes - Words 210)





**Jules Parker – 63 years old**

Member of the *Big Beautiful Babes (BBB) Water Aerobics & Social Club*. Lives on Flint Loop in the Monarch Grove neighborhood

### 1.12 Jules Parker Responds

"Inspector, I'm Jules Parker. I'm 63 and I live on the pond side of Flint Loop along with the other BBBs.

Fish's death was a real blow to me, Inspector. Allie helped Fish start his business, but I was really the one who spent the most time with him and was closest to him personally. He didn't just clean my pool and cut my bushes. He became a personal trainer and health coach to me.

Two years ago I was forty pounds heavier, in dreadful shape, and felt like hell. Fish was very athletic. I paid him to coach me individually in the pool and in my home gym. He convinced me to switch to a plant-based diet and to take up yoga and meditation.

Today, I am stronger, leaner, more flexible, and more in touch with my body than at any other time in my life. Fish was an inspiration and a soul mate to me. I just hope I can maintain all that he helped me achieve now that he's gone.

I really don't know anything about Fish's death. I do know someone you should talk to though, Melvin Riley. He lives on the pond side of Flint Loop also. Several years ago, before Fish started working in our neighborhood, he and Allie were a thing.

Allie broke things off with Riley shortly after Fish started working with us. He blamed Fish for their breakup. He was constantly bad-mouthing Fish to anyone who would listen.

Allie, please don't be upset with me for mentioning Riley. You aren't responsible for what he does. I just thought that the Inspector should know that, if anyone had a motive, Riley clearly did." (1.6 minutes -Words 283)





**Senior Inspector Lance**  
**Wildwood Police Homicide Detective**  
Lead Investigator on the Case

### **1.13 Inspector Lance Closes the Meeting**

"I appreciate everyone coming here today. We are just at the beginning of our investigation. It's likely we will need to speak with you again.

Please inform Inspector DiSalvo if you need to leave town for any reason or if you think of anything else that might assist our inquiries. That's all for today."  
(.3 Minute – 54 Words)



**Chrissy Pines**



**Melvin Riley**

**Scene 3 - Chrissy Pines' Phone Call to Melvin Riley**  
**Setting - Chrissy Pines' Home on Flint Loop**

**1.14 Chrissy Pines Asks Melvin Riley for a Favor**

"Hi Melvin. It's Chrissy Pines. How are you? Say, what do you think of what happened to your best buddy Robin Logan?

Now, Melvin, you shouldn't be swearing when you say the name of someone like Logan who's recently departed. But I agree with you. He got what he deserved, bless his heart.

I'll tell you why I'm calling. I finally talked my baby sister Rory Skyler into taking a break from that tiny one-horse town in southern Georgia where she lives. Melvin, it is so boring there! It's awful! Podunk is the actual name of her town!

She's coming here to visit me. I want to take her around and see all this place has to offer. I have a ton of things planned. There's only one problem. My eyes have gotten so bad that I just don't drive at night anymore. Fortunately, Melvin, you do.

So, here's my offer. You drive Rory and me to Brownwood town square and hang around with us for the evening and I'll buy your dinner.

What's that? Yes, Melvin, she is single. And yes, Melvin, she is as good-looking as me. Well, not quite, but close enough and better than you deserve anyway, Darlin'!

Ok. it's a deal. She comes in tomorrow morning, so if you're free, let's do it tomorrow night." (1.2 Minutes- 220 Words)



**Rory Skyler – 72 years old.**  
Sister of Flint Loop Resident Chrissy Pines  
Visiting from Podunk, GA

## Scene 4 - Getting Old Is Not For Sissies

### Setting - Blue Fin Restaurant, Brownwood Town Square

#### 1.15 Rory Explains Her Health Issue During Dinner

“Oh darn! There I go again!

Chrissy, Mel, I am so sorry. I don't mean to keep dropping my fork and making a mess at dinner. It's just that my hands really hurt tonight. My arthritis is killing me.

Usually, I take CBD to keep it under control. But I was afraid to bring CBD on the plane. I didn't know if it would be legal.”  
(.4 Minute - 65 Words)





Age of Aquarius Herbal Remedies shop  
Brownwood Paddock Square Town Center  
City of Sunset Hills, Florida

### 1.16 Melvin Riley Explains the Herbal Remedy Options Available

“Rory, you have nothing to apologize for. Look around. Nearly everyone in Sunset Years is the same age as us. I have arthritis too. I know just what you're going through.

Look, CBD products are legal in Florida, and there's a CBD/medical marijuana dispensary right here in Brownwood. It's open until 8:00 pm. Why don't we walk over there after dinner and get some CBD cream for your hands?

Chrissy, I see you shaking your head, yes. Waiter, check, please! Give it to this good-looking woman with beautiful red hair.

Boy! How lucky am I to be escorting the two prettiest women in this entire restaurant? C'mon, ladies! Let's go get us some plant-based relief!”  
(.7 Minute - 120 Words)



**Chrissy Pines**



**Rory Skyler**



**Melvin Riley**



**State Licensed  
Marijuana  
Dispensary in  
Brownwood Town Center**

## **Scene 5 - Really, It's for Medical Purposes!**

### **Setting - Age of Aquarius Medical Marijuana Dispensary**

#### **1.17 Melvin Takes the Girls to the Age of Aquarius Dispensary**

"This store is where I get my CBD and medical marijuana products. Rory, you look a little confused. Let me explain.

The Federal Farm Act of 2018 legalized the sale of CBD products derived from hemp as long as they have no more than .3% THC. THC is the stuff in marijuana that gets you high. CBD has virtually none of it. It has medical benefits but no recreational uses.

Florida also authorizes the sale and use of medical marijuana through state-licensed dispensaries like this one. Medical marijuana products have medical uses but can also get people high. Because of that, the sale and use of medical marijuana is strictly regulated and controlled.

To purchase medical marijuana products, you need to be certified by a doctor to have a qualifying medical condition and hold a state-issued medical marijuana permit/card. I am a cardholder. I buy my herbal supplements at this dispensary regularly.

With my medical marijuana card, I can buy anything in the store. Of course, as the store clerk who is standing here with us will attest, everything I buy is strictly for my personal consumption. I'm not allowed to share my medical marijuana products with other people.

Now, let's check out the different types of non-marijuana CBD hand creams they carry and see if we can get Rory some legally authorized medical relief."

(1.6 Minutes - 282 Words)



### 1.18 Chrissy Pines Teases Mel Riley About His Purchases

"I can't believe that the medical marijuana dispensary has been here in Brownwood for several years, and I didn't even know it existed.

Melvin, they sure like you. The way you spend money on that marijuana stuff, it's no wonder. How many bags are you carrying? You must have dropped \$800 in there!

What are you going to do with all that stuff?" (.3 Minute – 62 Words)





### 1.19 Melvin Makes Chrissy and Rory an Offer They Can't Refuse

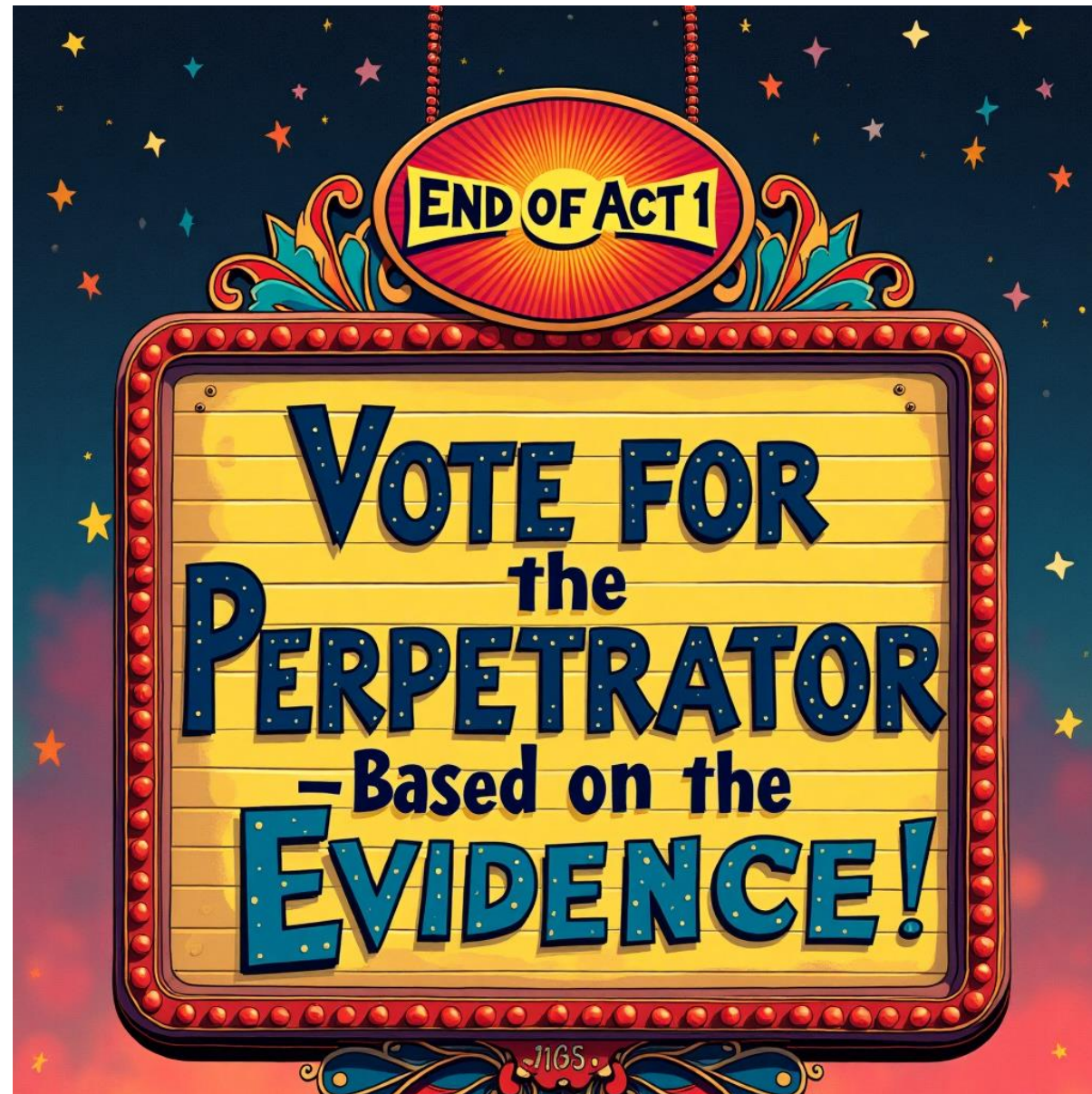
“Chrissy don't be so uptight. Look, it's obvious that you don't know anything about medical marijuana. You didn't even know that it comes in edible form. No smoking required.

I'm not going to eat four dozen marijuana brownies, two dozen gummies, and several bags of assorted marijuana chocolate candies all by myself. The lady who waited on us knows that. Once you are out of the store, you are no longer their responsibility.

Here are the options, ladies. We can walk over to *Scooples Ice Cream Shop* on the square, and the two of you can order boring vanilla ice cream cones with sprinkles for dessert.

Or the two of you can come back to my place with me. We can sit out on the lanai by the pool, light a fire, drink some wine, and then wash it down with some goodies that have an after-effect like no dessert you've ever experienced before.

What it'll be, ladies? Boring or bold? Still adventurous or past your prime old? C'mon Chrissy, live a little!” (1 Minute - 175 Words)



### 1.20 Inspector Lance's Act 1 Summary – Vote Now!

"Folks, we've come to the end of Act 1.

It's time for you to vote now who you think the killer might be based on what you have heard so far.

After voting, please discuss why you voted for that suspect with your neighbor and identify any specific clues that influenced your vote."

(.3 Minute - 53 Words)



Dead in the Water

Frank A. Lancione

## ACT 2 DIGGING FOR ANSWERS

Scene 1 - Lance and DiSalvo Assess What They've Learned

Setting – Wildwood Police Headquarters







**Inspector DiSalvo**  
Senior Inspector Lance's Partner

## 2.1 Inspector DiSalvo Briefs Lance on the Coroner's Full Report

""Inspector, I followed up with the coroner as you requested. He told me that Logan's body had extensive bruising. The heaviest areas were on his right knee and the tops of his shoulders. But there were scuff marks, bruises, and even rope imprints on other parts of his body.

He said the damage to Logan's knee and the bruises on his body would not have been fatal. When he examined Logan's lungs, though he found they were full of water. His official assessment is death by drowning.

Since Logan was nowhere near water when his body was discovered, the coroner suspected foul play. He was able to salvage a considerable amount of water from Logan's lungs. He's sent it to the state crime lab to have it analyzed.

The coroner said the analysis might help us identify the type of water Logan was drowned in. With that data, we'd be able to determine where the killing took place. There's a backup at the state lab, so he was unable to say when we might get the results.

The coroner said it was difficult to pin down the exact time of death. Given the body temperature and degree of rigor mortis, he thinks Logan had been dead somewhere between four to six hours when Allie Beck found him and called 911. The call came in at 6:00 am. So, that puts the time of death somewhere between midnight and 2:00 am.

They are going to check Logan's truck for DNA and fingerprints. It's not likely to tell us much, though. Logan was constantly ferrying the BBBs around to appointments and other errands. It's almost certain they would have left trace evidence in his vehicle that is unconnected to his murder."

(1.6 minutes - 286 Words)



Senior Inspector Lance

## 2.2 Lance Lays Out Their Next Steps

“Drowning, I wouldn't have guessed that. Why go to all the trouble of drying him, dressing him, and putting him in his truck? Why do that?”

Alexa, I think our best bet is to focus on who and why for now. The BBBs, as they call themselves, are our first priority. The five that were in town at the time of Logan's death and that Pines woman all seemed to have potential motives

Chris Pines was mad enough at Logan to fire him. That ruined her relationships with the rest of the club members. That's motive to me.

Allie Beck apparently broke up with Mel Riley when Logan came on the scene. Then she gets involved in Logan's finances. Was she hoping for more from Logan than he was willing to give?

Then there's Drew and Emery Landon. Drew appears to have taken the flirting with Logan farther than Emery was comfortable with. Was Emery upset because she was afraid things had gone from talk to action between Drew and Logan, or because she wanted Logan herself?

Nicky Lane said she thought if Logan would go for anyone it would have been her because she was closest to his age. Is that what happened? Or was she mad at Logan because of his disinterest in her?

The final BBB suspect is Jules Parker. I have to tell you, she actually creeped me out. She acted like Logan was a guru and she was his disciple. How far did her devotion to him go? Was she worried one of the other BBBs would displace her?

Then there's Adrian Beck, Riley, and Greer. All three have grievances. Just how upset were they? Let's get interviews set up with all three men. I think that's our next step.” (1.6 Minutes - 297 Words)



## Dead in the Water



Inspector DiSalvo



Senior Inspector Lance



Jordan Greer

Frank A. Lancione

### 2.3 Lance and DiSalvo Question Jordan Greer

"Mr. Greer, I'm Senior Inspector Lance, and this is my partner, Inspector DiSalvo. Thanks for coming to Police Headquarters to meet with us.

As you know your former employee Robin Logan has died. We have evidence that he was murdered. It has been reported that you were very angry about his leaving your employment. You were witnessed having several very intense public altercations with him over the issue.

Please tell us: your full name, your age and city of residence, the state of your relationship with Mr. Logan, and where you were between midnight and 2:00 am four nights ago at the time of his death". (.5 Minute - 96 Words)





Jordan Greer

#### 2.4 Jordan Greer Responds

"Inspector, my full name is Jordan Greer. I'm 57 years old and I live in Leesburg, Florida.

You want to know the state of my relationship with Logan? Betrayed and angry sums it up, Inspector.

Logan had no job, and no prospects when I first met him. I trained him, gave him the tools he needed, and gave him a territory of well-to-do clients to take care of.

How does he repay me? He quits my company, steals my clients, and leaves me high and dry.

I'm a widower. I had taken a lady friend out to dinner that evening. We went back to her place by ten. I didn't leave again until the next morning. She'll back up my story. I'll give you her contact details." (.7 Minute - 127 Words)

## Dead in the Water



Inspector DiSalvo



Senior Inspector Lance



Adrian Beck

Frank A. Lancione

### 2.5 Lance and DiSalvo Question Adrian Beck

“Mr. Beck, please take a seat. I am Senior Inspector Lance and this is Inspector DiSalvo. We've asked you here to assist us with our ongoing investigation of the murder of Robin Logan. Mr. Logan was an associate of your aunt, Allie Beck.

Please tell us: your full name, city of residence, the state of your relationship with Mr. Logan, and where you were between midnight and 2:00 am four nights ago at the time of his death.” (.4 Minute - 78 Words)



**Adrian Beck**

## **2.6 Adrian Beck's Initial Response**

“My full name is Adrian Beck. I'm forty years old and I live in Clermont.

I don't really understand why you are asking me about Logan. I had no relationship with him. Robin Logan was just some handyman my aunt employed to clean her pool and do yardwork.

He was no more an "associate" of my aunt than the guy on the garbage truck that picks up her trash is an associate of her.

I have no idea what you are talking about.” (.5 minute - 84 Words)



## Dead in the Water



Inspector DiSalvo



Senior Inspector Lance



Adrian Beck

Frank A. Lancione

### 2.7 Lance Bears Down on Beck

"I'm afraid that kind of response isn't going to cut it, Mr. Beck. We know about your issues with your aunt regarding your grandfather's estate and her receiving your father's inheritance instead of you.

Your aunt is the one who informed us that there was great animosity between you and Logan and that you verbally confronted him multiple times.

She also stated that she formed a limited liability corporation and hired Logan as her employee and business associate.

We know you know all this Beck. This is a murder investigation, We don't have time for games. This is your chance to tell us your side of the story.

How would you describe your relationship with Logan, and where were you at the time of his death?" (.7 Minute - 126 Words)



**Adrian Beck**

## 2.8 Adrian Beck Finally Responds

“That stupid, stupid woman. I can't imagine why my grandfather left my father's inheritance to her instead of allowing him to pass it down to me as he wanted. What an idiotic mistake.

Look, Robin Logan was a grifter. His former employer rescued him from the gutter and gave him a job. He repays him by going into business in competition with him and stealing his customers.

He sweet-talks my aunt and her senile old lady friends, telling them how sexy they are and how lucky he is to be around such beautiful ladies.

In reality, it was all just BS to cover up the fact that he was milking them for all they were worth. He charged them for everything. He even billed them for the time he spent at their holiday parties.

My aunt was so bird-brained and gaga over Logan that I was afraid she was going to adopt the guy. Then I'd get none of the money that should have rightfully come to me when my father passed.

That's my relationship with that shyster. I was home in bed alone at the time you said he died. If I'd known he was being killed that evening, believe me, I'd have had nothing but sweet dreams.

That's all I'm going to say. If you want to talk to me again, it will be in the presence of my attorney.” ( 1.3 Minutes -235 Words)



Inspector DiSalvo



Senior Inspector Lance



Melvin Riley

2.9 Lance and DiSalvo Question Mel Riley

“Mr. Riley, thank you for coming here today. We are investigating the death of Mr. Robin Logan.

Logan did pool cleaning, landscaping, and handyman work for many of the female residents in your neighborhood. He died four nights ago.

Please give us your age and full name and describe the state of your relationship with Logan. Please also tell us where you were four evenings ago between the hours of midnight and 2:00 am. ( .5 Minutes - 84 Words)





Melvin Riley

## 2.10 Melvin Riley Responds

"I'm Melvin Riley and I'm 80 years old. As you know, I live in the Monarch Grove neighborhood on the water side of Flint Loop.

I know that Logan worked in my neighborhood, but I did not associate with him. In fact, I think he was a scam artist. Logan ingratiated himself into the lives of the elderly ladies in our neighborhood through flattery and deception. Then he took advantage of them financially every chance he had.

I used to be on very good terms with my female neighbors, especially my next door neighbor, Allie Beck. After Logan showed up he purposely isolated those ladies from the rest of us in the neighborhood.

That's what abusers and con artists do. They try to cut their marks off from everyone around them. That isolation gives them control.

Regardless of what night Logan was killed, if it happened between midnight and 2:00 am, I was home alone in bed.

I don't know who might have harmed Logan. However, they did the ladies on my street that he was swindling a favor. He was a conniving con artist. No one should be sorry to see him gone." (1 minute - 194 Words)



Inspector DiSalvo



Senior Inspector Lance

## 2.11 Lance and DiSalvo Wrap Up the Day

“Well our male suspects are three for three in despising Logan. Greer has an alibi but Riley and Beck do not. We have a similar situation with our female suspects.

Chris Pines and the five BBBs who were in town when Logan was killed all have at least some level of motive for his murder. When we questioned them, we didn't have the coroner's input on the time of death.

Now that we do have that information, we need to reinterview them. We need to assess whether they had an opportunity to kill Logan. We also need to get samples of the water from their pools and the pond in case the state crime lab comes up with anything.

The real challenge for us, I think is means. We know Logan drowned but not where or exactly how it happened.

Go back to the coroner and ask him what he thinks the pattern of Logan's bruises tells us about how he was drowned. There can't be that many drowning scenarios that would produce that pattern of bruises.

Alexa, you're on your own tomorrow for these interviews. I'm going to be tied up all day in court. Good luck and be ready to brief me when I'm back in the afternoon. In the meantime, let's call it a day.”

(1.2 Minutes – 214 Words)



Dead in the Water



Melvin Riley

Frank A. Lancione

## Scene 2 – Dessert Anyone?

Setting - Melvin Riley's Pool Overlooking the Pond on Flint Loop







**Rory Skyler**

## **2.12 Rory Begins to Understand the Sunset Years Lifestyle**

“Oh, Melvin! Your place is absolutely beautiful! This pool overlooking that gorgeous pond and all the lights reflecting on the water is like something out of a movie.

If we try to sit out at night in Podunk where I'm from, we're half eaten to death by mosquitos. I don't know why we don't enclose our backyards in screened bird cages like you do down here.

Chrissy, sitting out here on a warm summer night, sky full of stars, dancing flames in the fire pit, hanging out with wonderful people like you and Melvin, it's like a dream.

I see now what you've been trying to tell me, Chrissy. On a night like this back home, I'd be sitting alone feeling desperate, dead-ended, and depressed. The only entertainment available to me would be watching some nothing program on TV and then going to bed — alone.

Life is different here in Sunset Years for people our age. That town square was jammed with people in their sixties, seventies, and eighties, laughing, singing, dancing to the rock band, holding hands, loving each other.

I don't know if I'll ever want to settle for life in Podunk again.”  
(1 Minute - 191 Words)

**Chrissy Pines**



**Rory Skyler**



**Melvin Riley**



**Eldercare Medicinals**

### 2.13 Melvin Offers “Sweets to the Sweet”

“Well, I know what could be better, Rory! I’m going to unpack the stuff I bought and bring us out plates so we can have dessert.

What’ll it be, ladies? Do you want brownies, gummies, candies or all three? Oh, and I’ll open another bottle of wine. I’ve got a dry red wine that goes great with marijuana-laced chocolate brownies and candies”.  
(.3 Minute – 62 words)





The Woodstock Experience Chrissy Passed Up

## 2.14 Chrissy Tells Rory Not to Make the Same Mistake She Did

"I am 79 years old and I am stoned from marijuana for the first time! I can't believe it! Who'd have thought three brownies and several glasses of wine would make you 19 again? This is incredible!

Rory, honey, everything you said was true. You are wasting what's left of your life in that dead-end, do-nothing place you've been living in. You need to sell that little house of yours, come down here, and move in with me.

Admit it, you've had more fun in one evening hanging around with Melvin and me than you've had in the last year up there. Just do it Rory!

Ok! I need to use your "facility" Melvin. Oh Lordy! Standing up is harder than I thought it would be. Can somebody make the room stop spinning?

Before I go, though, Rory honey, do you remember the summer of 1969? That was the summer of Woodstock. My friends Debra and Diane were going to Woodstock and they wanted me to go with them.

At the last minute I decided to stay behind. I figured I'd just go to the next year's Woodstock festival. But there was no next year's Woodstock festival. It was a once in a lifetime experience—and I just let it slip away.

I settled for less and I didn't even know that's what I was doing. I think my life would have been very different if I'd had the courage to make that trip to Woodstock. Don't make the mistake I did."

(1.4 Minutes – 247 Words)





**2.15 Inspector Lance's Act 2 Summary - Vote Now!**

"Well, that's the end of Act 2. I am going to ask you now to vote who you think the killer might be based on what you have heard so far.

After voting, please discuss why you voted for that suspect with your neighbor. Identify any specific clues that influenced your vote."

(.3 Minute - 52 words)

Dead in the Water

Frank A. Lancione

## ACT 3 THE HUNT CONTINUES

### Scene 1 - And Where Were You?

Setting - Allie Beck's Residence on Flint Loop



The Flint Loop Neighborhood





**Street View of Allie Beck's Residence on Flint Loop**

### **3.1 Inspector DiSalvo Explores Opportunity**

"Thanks to all of you for attending this meeting on short notice. I especially want to thank Ms. Beck for offering to host this meeting in her beautiful home here on Flint Loop. I can see why you ladies love this neighborhood.

Unfortunately, our purpose for being here today is to discuss a much less pleasant topic—Robin Logan's murder. The coroner has been able to estimate the time of Robin Logan's death as being between midnight and 2:00 am five nights ago.

I need each of you to tell me where you were, what you were doing, and whether there is anyone who can corroborate your whereabouts at that time.

Who would like to go first?" (.6 Minutes - 117 Words)





Chrissy Pines

### 3.2 Chrissy Pines Responds

“If the murder occurred between midnight and 2:00 am five nights ago, I think I can prove it wasn't me.

I have a dear friend who lives in the Saint Catherine's section of the Sunset Years Saw Grass neighborhood. Five nights ago, she called and awakened me at about 10:00 pm.

She said she was having terrible chest pains and needed me to take her to the hospital. I told her she needed to get help quicker than I could get there.

I told her to get dressed, turn on her outside lights, unlock her front door, and lie down on her living room sofa. Then I called 911 and said it sounded like she was having a heart attack. I asked them to send her an ambulance.

I arrived at her place at about 10:40 pm. The EMT's had already examined her and were getting ready to take her to the Leesburg hospital emergency room. I followed them to the hospital.

By the time she got checked in, seen by a doctor, put through tests, and finally sent to a room it was 11:45 pm. It was midnight when the doctor came in and gave her a diagnosis.

The doctor said her blood contained enzymes showing she had experienced a heart attack. He scheduled her to have heart catheterization surgery the next morning.

I spent the night in her room so she wouldn't feel alone. The nurses can vouch that I was there until morning. Hopefully, that should put me in the clear.”  
(1.4 Minutes - 249 Words)



Nicky Lane

### 3.3 Nicky Lane Responds

“Inspector DiSalvo I think you've been working here in the city of Sunset Years long enough to know that we basically roll up the sidewalks at 9:00 pm.

The average age in Sumter County, Florida, where we live, is 68 years old. At 10:00 pm most of us are either in the process of getting ready to turn in or already in bed. Very few of us are still up at midnight. Even fewer would be up at 2:00 am except for a quick trip to the bathroom.

The night you are talking about was the evening of the final episode of a ten-part series on Netflix that I had been watching. I loved the program and made sure I watched the finale as soon as it came out. It ended at 9:00 pm.

I was in bed by 10:00 pm. Unfortunately, the only handsome man I share my bed with is a cat. I don't think he can vouch for me, so I guess I have no corroboration for my story. “ (1 Minute - 175 Words)





**Emery Landon**

### **3.4 Emery Landon Responds**

"I'll go next. I'm afraid my situation is very much like Nicky's. I was reading an e-book. At 10:30 pm, I went to bed and fell asleep almost immediately.

At this time of year, I like to keep the window to my bedroom open a few inches in the evenings just to let some fresh air enter. The only disadvantage is that outside noises also come in. We have gators in the pond. They like to hunt at night and they are noisy.

Around 1:00 am I awoke to the sound of a gator thrashing around in the pond. He must have been fighting with something really big. There were some bird cry sounds and a lot of splashing. Then suddenly it stopped.

I lay quiet and still for a minute to see if I could hear anything further. I didn't. I looked at the clock again. It read 1:07 pm. The whole gator kill had played out in just a little over six minutes. I turned over and went back to sleep.

The next morning I looked at the bank of the pond. I didn't see anything left over from the previous evening's excitement. I don't know if anyone else heard the gator.

Like all of us in the club, I sleep alone. I don't have anyone to vouch for me. You'll just have to take my word." (1.3 Minutes - 232 Words)





**Allie Beck**

### 3.5 Allie Beck Responds

“Inspector, I may be the exception here. I have insomnia. It's hard for me to fall asleep or to stay asleep for any length of time.

I often stay up until 1:00 or 2:00 am, sleep a few hours, and then get up at 5:30 or 6:00 am and go walking. I make up for it with naps during the day.

I remember the evening you're talking about well. The company that we started for Fish is actually in my name with him as my employee. I do all of the bookkeeping, reporting, and bill paying.

Each month, we spend an evening jointly documenting the charges, invoices, receipts, and tax deposits for the prior month. It's tedious but has to be done. Fish stopped by around 8:00 pm. We went right to work.

We finished around 10:30 pm. He let himself out through my lanai door and left. I stayed in the Lanai working for another two hours. Then I started getting ready to go to bed.

Around 1:00 pm I was just slipping into bed. I heard the same thing Nicky heard. There was horrendous gator splashing and some high-pitched bird sounds. It went on for what seemed like a long time. When I looked at the clock though, it was probably only a few minutes.

I was shocked when I got up the next morning and saw that Fish's truck was still parked on the circle in front of our homes. I checked on him. When he didn't respond I called 911.” (1.4 Minutes - 250 Words)



**Drew Landon**

### 3.6 Drew Landon Responds

“Inspector, I’m in bed every night by 10: 00 pm. I wake up without an alarm at 6:00 am. The night Fish died is no exception. So, no alibi for me for that time period. I did see Fish that evening, however.

My husband died four years ago. He was a coin collector. I hadn’t looked at his coin collection since we settled the estate. I decided I better check our safe deposit box to see if everything was still there.

A safe deposit box full of coins is too heavy for me to handle. I asked Fish to accompany me to the bank to help me. I see your frown, Inspector. Yes, that’s how much I trusted Fish. We all did. I had no fear that he would try to cheat me. Fish was a friend, not just a handyman.

At the bank, my safe deposit box was on the highest row in the vault. Fish offered to help the female bank employee escorting us to take the safe deposit box down. She refused. As expected, when she tried to retrieve the box by herself, it was too high over her head and too heavy for her.

She fell backwards off the step stool she was using. She lost control and the heavy box crashed into Fish’s knee. It was awful. He was in terrible pain. I wanted to call an ambulance. Fish refused. He said he just wanted to get out of there. I told the bank I’d come back another time. We left.

I wanted Fish to see a doctor. He refused. I made him promise to at least come see me at the end of the day.” (1.6 Minutes - 284 Words)





**Jules Parker**

### **3.7 Jules Parker Responds**

“Inspector, I don’t know what you expected to hear when you asked if anyone could corroborate our whereabouts the evening Fish died. The fact is we’re a bunch of widows and divorcees.

We live alone. We sleep alone. God knows we all wish things had worked out differently. They didn’t. This is what life is like for people like us.

On the night you’re describing, I watched some stupid TV program and went to bed around 10:00 pm. I got up during the night twice to go to the bathroom. I can’t tell you when. I finally got up for the day at 7:00 am.

I think all of us would rather have a companion to live with. We don’t. Thank goodness we have each other. At least our BBB club activities fill up our days. They make us feel like someone knows and cares whether we’re alive.

Woman-to-woman, I have one piece of advice for you, Inspector DiSalvo. Don’t get old. If you do, hopefully, find some man--or nowadays even a woman, I guess--to still love you and live out your days with you. If you don’t, you are looking at what your life will be.

Living alone, sleeping alone, being alone is the rule not the exception for single women at our stage of life, Inspector. That’s why having Fish around to brighten our days was so important to all of us.”  
(1.3 Minutes – 237 Words)





**Inspector DiSalvo**

### **3.8 Inspector DiSalvo Closes the Meeting**

“Ms. Parker, I understand how you feel. But this is a murder investigation. It's my job to ask these questions. It's my job to find out who did this.

I want to give you all a heads-up. Based on new information provided by our state crime lab, we are going to be collecting water samples from the pond and from private pools in the area.

A person from our crime scene investigation unit will be calling on each of you to take a sample of your pool water. We are requesting that you comply voluntarily. If necessary, we can obtain a warrant.

Thank you all for assisting us today. Please call me if you have any questions or think of anything that can assist us.” (.7 Minute - 131 Words)



Inspector DiSalvo



Senior Inspector Lance

### 3.9 Lance Changes the Investigation's Focus

“Alexa, thanks for the debrief on your meeting with the BBBs. It appears that Chris Pines had motive but not opportunity. She is no longer a suspect. The BBBs still are. All of them had some level of motive. None have any witnesses who can corroborate where they were at the time of the murder.

It looks like we really need to home in on means. How and where did Logan drown? How did his body get moved from the scene of the crime to his truck on the circle?

We know from Drew Landon that Logan injured his knee at the bank. We don't know how he got the bruises on the rest of his body or how they fit into his murder.

Light a fire under the folks at the state crime lab. We need to see if they were able to simulate any scenarios that would explain how Logan's bruises related to his drowning.

Also, see if they have been able to match the water from Logan's lungs to any of the samples of the pool and pond water we collected.”

(1 Minute - 189 Words)





**State of Florida Criminal Investigation and Forensic Research Laboratory, Tallahassee Florida**

### 3.10 DiSalvo Updates Lance on the Crime Lab's Theory

"Inspector, I reached out again to the state crime lab. They haven't finished the water testing. However, they do have a strong theory of how Logan was drowned.

The lab ran computer simulations of Logan's death. They estimated that an assailant would need to be in excess of six feet tall and of uncommon upper body strength to force someone of Logan's size underwater while facing him. None of our five final female suspects meet these criteria.

The lab team then ran scenarios in which the assailant was riding up on the shoulders of the victim "horsey style." In this scenario, it is not the assailant's strength but rather their weight that is important.

On the day of the attack, Logan had a severe injury to his right knee. Given this injury, the techs believe that if a person of one hundred and sixty or more pounds were riding on Logan's shoulders, even in the water, Logan's leg would give way. The team then played out this scenario in several ways.

The most likely drowning scenario was Logan standing in chin-high water facing the side of the pool with the assailant riding on his shoulders. As Logan's knee gives way, the assailant locks their legs around Logan's neck, grabs the stone coping that sticks out over the water at the edge of the pool and pulls up on it.

This action plus their body weight forces Logan's head down and under the water. It also helps the assailant stay mounted while Logan struggles. In four to six minutes, Logan would have run out of breath and ingested enough water into his lungs to lose consciousness and drown." (1.5 Minutes - 281 Words)





**Native Samoan Dance Troupe**

### **3.11 Senior Inspector Lance Reviews Means in Light of the New Data**

“You know, when you think about it, that scenario makes sense. It also knocks out a couple of our suspects.

I don't see Melvin Riley or Adrian Beck as our killer. Melvin Riley is eighty years old. He's in good shape for his age, but he's no way near one hundred sixty pounds in weight. Adrian Beck's in the same situation. He's five foot four inches tall and probably barely over a hundred and forty pounds. Neither one has the body mass to pull off the crime lab's scenario of the murder.

If Logan was giving anyone a "horsey ride" it was one of the women. Chris Pines is out. It has to be Drew or Emery Landon, Allie Beck, Jules Parker, or Nicky Lane.

They call themselves the “*Big Beautiful Babes Water Aerobics and Social Club*” for a reason. I think it's pretty safe to say even the smallest of them meets that one hundred sixty pound criterion.

That would turn off some men, but not necessarily Logan. If you've seen pictures of native Samoans, full-bodied women are considered beautiful and are treasured in their culture.

I think we need to get the BBB ladies to meet with us at the station again. We need to confront them with this new information and observe how they react. See if you can set it up for tomorrow afternoon.”

(1.2 Minutes – 224 Words)



Dead in the Water



Frank A. Lancione

Scene 2 – You’re Not in Podunk Anymore Rory

Setting - Melvin Riley’s Pool Overlooking the Pond on Flint Loop



## Dead in the Water



Melvin and Rory go to Woodstock

Frank A. Lancione

### 3.12 Chrissy Gets a Shock!

"I'm back! Where are you guys? What the heck!

Rory and Melvin, what are you guys doing in the water? Rory, where are your clothes? Are you crazy? I think you're taking this a little too far!

Heavens! Melvin's 80 and you're 72!

What are you doing?" (.3 Minute – 46 Words)





Will Chrissy Finally Go, Too?

### 3.13 Rory's Woodstock Moment

"Chrissy, for the last 60 years all you've talked about is how you wish you'd gone to Woodstock.

You've whined, whimpered, and wished you'd had the courage to do something daring and different instead of just defaulting to conventional, boring, and bland.

You've gone on and on about how you missed the most important cultural event of your generation. You've gone on and on about how differently your life would have turned out.

Well, Chrissy, as far as I'm concerned tonight is Woodstock for me and Melvin. I'm tired of living in Podunk. I'm tired of seeing my life get smaller and duller every year. I'm not dead yet and I'm going to stop living like I am.

It can finally be Woodstock for you, too, Chrissy. It's your call, big sister. Sit up there on the sofa and watch us have fun. Or get out of those clothes and jump in here with us.

This is your second chance, Chrissy. Are you going to Woodstock with us tonight, or are you going to just continue living what's left of your life wishing you had? " (.9 Minute - 169 Words)



### Scene 3 - Old Dog, New Tricks

#### Setting - Chrissy Pines' Home on Flint Loop

#### 3.14 Rory and Melvin Show Chrissy Their New Ride

"What's all that honking? Who's out in front of my house?"

Life hasn't been the same since Rory relocated down here and moved in with Melvin. I wonder what they are up to now? I better go see what's going on.

Rory, Melvin, what the heck are you driving? What is that thing?"  
(.3 Minute - 59 Words)





### 3.15 Rory and Melvin Invite Chrissy to Join Their Next Adventure

"It's a 21st Century VW bus, Chrissy. It's just like the classic ones you always dreamed about buying. Except this is no dream.

It's real! It's air-conditioned, all-electric, and a thousand times better than the old VW buses you used to think you wanted.

It proves that a lot of times, what we actually have in the present far exceeds anything we thought we missed out on in the past. We just got it. We're taking it on a road trip. Come with us, Chrissy!

We've got reservations for three nights at a bed and breakfast down in Key West overlooking the ocean. You've been retired in Florida for ten years. Yet, you've never been there. It's about time you did.

Melvin has an old army buddy we're going to have dinner with while we're there. Join us. You never know what could happen. You might end up as happy as Melvin and I are. Grab a bag, lock the door, and come with us, Chrissy. There is no reason not to.

I can't believe the life I've had since we all jumped into the pool that first night at Melvin's.

Once you've been to Woodstock, you can't settle for boring and bland anymore. It changes you, Chrissy, even if you're in your seventies before you get up the courage to take that leap of faith and go there." (.9 Minute - 171 Words)





### 3.16 Inspector Lance's Act 3 Summary – Vote now!

"Well ladies and gentlemen. We've come to the end of Act 3

I'm asking you to vote now who you think the killer might be based on what you've heard so far.

After voting, please discuss why you voted for that suspect with your neighbor. Identify any specific clues that influenced your vote".  
(.3 Minute – 54 Words)

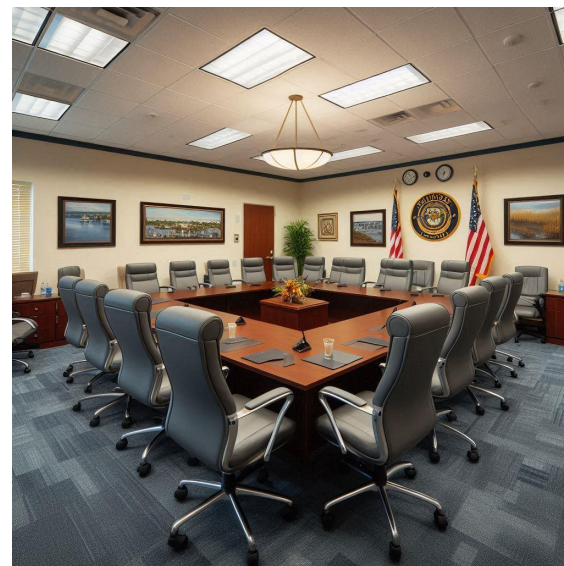




Inspector DiSalvo



Senior Inspector Lance



Wildwood Florida Police Headquarters

## ACT 4 LANCE UNMASKS THE MURDERER

### Scene 1: The Final Showdown

#### Setting - Wildwood Florida Police Headquarters

#### 4.1 Lance and DiSalvo Question the Remaining Suspects

"I want to thank the five of you for coming here to Police headquarters today.

Inspector DiSalvo has just shared with you the coroner's finding that Robin Logan died from drowning. She also explained the state crime laboratory's theory of how the drowning occurred.

I'd like to hear from each of you your thoughts on this matter. Ms. Lane, you look skeptical. Would you like to speak first?"

(.3 Minute - 69 Words)



Nicky Lane

#### 4.2 Nicky Lane Responds

“Inspector, I am personally having a hard time envisioning the scenario your crime lab has cooked up actually happening.

Over the past two years, every one of us has been in the pool dozens of times while Fish acted as our group water aerobics coach.

Did Fish exchange flirting words with us in those classes? Yes. Did he ever touch any of us in a sexually provocative way while we in the pool with him? No. In countless hours of group water aerobics classes and social encounters, I have never seen Fish physically touch anyone in the BBBs directly.

I think Fish realized that becoming sexually linked to any one of us would have ended his relationship with the rest of us completely. Fish was so averse to physically touching of any of us that I really did wonder if he was gay.

That's why I find it so hard to believe your theory that Fish invited one of us to climb up on his shoulders, ram our private parts into the back of his neck, and ride around on him in the pool like he was a donkey.

It just doesn't ring true, Inspector. I am sorry, I just don't buy it. Something else must have happened.” (1.1 Minutes - 209 Words)





Senior Inspector Lance

#### 4.3 Lance Continues to Probe

“You have a right to your own views Ms. Lane. The fact remains that the physical evidence we have is best explained by the crime lab's hypothesis.

Ms. Parker, you look upset, is there something you want to say?”  
(.2 Minute - 36 Words)



**Jules Parker**

#### **4.4 Jules Parker Responds**

"Oh God! My poor beautiful Fish! How will I go on without you?"

Fish helped me turn my life around this past two years, Inspector. He was my trainer, my plant-based living coach, and my friend. My days were better because Fish was a part of them.

He was decades younger than me, but we were soulmates in ways that I have never been with any other man.

I don't know why anyone would do this. But whoever did, Inspector, I want you to catch them. Please, catch them and make them pay, Inspector."  
(.5 Minute - 95 Words)





Allie Beck

#### 4.5 Allie Beck Reacts to Jules Parker's Statement

"Fish meant a lot to all us, Jules. He wasn't your personal property. You didn't own him. We all cared for him and he cared for all of us. Do you think I won't miss him?

I started a company to protect Fish from being sued by Jordan Greer. I did his bookkeeping. I kept track of when he had to be at customer homes. I did everything but the hands-on work itself.

Fish could never have started his own company without me. And we were being successful together! That night after we closed the books, I uncorked a bottle of champagne to celebrate.

We had our third quarter in a row of solid profit. We were working as a team. We were an integral part of each other's daily lives. I don't think I've ever been this happy before in my entire life!

Fish, we will all miss you. I especially will miss you. It's going to be awful to try to make our business work without you. I hope I can do it. I'll try my best. I promise you Fish." (1 Minute - 190 Words)



Senor Inspector Lance

#### 4.6 Lance Questions Emery Landon

“Emery, you and Allie both said you heard splashing and loud sounds around 1:00 am on the night of Logan's death.

Could what you heard have been a struggle between Logan and an assailant of the type the state crime lab thinks killed him?”

(.2 Minute - 44 Words)





Emery Landon

#### 4.7 Emery Landon Responds

"It could have been, Inspector. Gators hunting in the pond at night are so common that I just automatically assumed that's what I was hearing.

Oh, heavens! If you are right, what I heard was Fish fighting for his life and losing! That's horrible, Inspector—unthinkable.

I will never feel safe sleeping with my window open again."  
(.3 Minute - 58 Words)



Senior Inspector Lance

#### 4.8 Inspector Lance Questions Drew Landon

“Ms. Landon, you witnessed the damage to Logan's knee firsthand.

Does the crime lab's assessment of how it would have played into his murder seem credible to you?” (.2 Minute - 30 Words)





**Drew Landon**

#### **4.6 Drew Landon Responds**

“Inspector, I can validate that Fish's knee was badly damaged. I was heartsick when that safe deposit box full of coins came crashing down on his knee. The pain on his face was awful.

He never cried out, though. He just hopped around trying to shake off the injury and saying that he wanted to leave.

When Fish stopped by later that evening, he was still limping. He said that, after he got home from the bank, he'd taken some old Tylenol with codeine pain tablets left over from a prior prescription.

I told him he should go home and rest. He said he couldn't. He had to meet with Allie to close the monthly books for his business that evening. He said he'd stopped by just to reassure me that everything was all right.

I was relieved. I wished him and Allie luck. Then, I closed up my home for the evening. As I said in my initial statement, I was in bed by 10:00 pm and fell asleep quickly. I didn't wake up until 6:00 am the next day.

I can't say whether your crime lab's theory is correct. I do know that Fish's knee was badly damaged. It's conceivable that his injury would have hampered him from fighting off an attacker.’ (1.3 Minutes - 223 Words)



Inspector DiSalvo



Senior Inspector Lance



State Crime Lab

#### 4.8 Inspector Lance Receives Startling New Information

“Ladies, I am about to lose my patience with you. Our crime lab has used the techniques it applied in this case in hundreds of other investigations.

If there is conflict between their theory of the murder and your testimony, I say it's because one of you is not telling the truth.

Every one of you here had a motive. Every one of you meets the physical criteria for being able to kill Logan in the manner the crime lab has identified. That's means.

Finally, none of you has anyone who can confirm your whereabouts at the time of the murder. That's opportunity.

Motive means and opportunity, you all had them, ladies. If we have to stay here all day we are going to . . . . .

Excuse me. Inspector DiSalvo is calling me. She would not be doing that while I am in this session unless it was critical to this case.

**INSPECTOR LANCE SIMULATES TALKING WITH DISALVO ON HIS PHONE.**

**“YOU SAY THE CRIME LAB REPORT ON THE WATER SAMPLES HAS JUST COME IN. WELL, WERE THERE ANY MATCHES? YOU'RE KIDDING! WHICH ONES? WOW! I WOULDN'T HAVE PREDICTED THAT.**

**OK, GET DOWN HERE TO THE CONFERENCE ROOM NOW. I WANT YOU TO SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH THIS GROUP.”**

(1.2 Minutes - 221 Words)





**Inspector DiSalvo**

#### **4.9 Inspector DiSalvo Presents the New Information to the Group**

“One of the things that has bothered Inspector Lance and me from the beginning is that Logan died from drowning, but his body was found dry and fully dressed in his truck.

The crime lab gave us insight into how the crime was likely committed, but not where. We finally have that last piece of the puzzle.

The coroner was able to salvage water from Logan's lungs during the autopsy. We submitted that evidence, along with the water samples we collected from each of your pools earlier this week, to our state lab.

Logan maintained all of your pools the same way. But each of your pools are different. There are variations in your pool equipment, the interior surface coatings of your pools, even the kind of run off and debris from your surrounding patio decking that fall into your pools

Each of these variations creates a slightly different chemical profile in the water of your pool. That chemical profile differentiates your pool's water from your neighbor's. We used this chemical water profile "fingerprint" to identify which pool Logan drowned in.

The crime lab says they found a 99% certainty of a match. This evidence will hold up conclusively in court. I now want to turn the meeting back over to Senior Inspector Lance.” (1 Minute - 204 Words)



Senior Inspector Lance

#### 4.10 Lance Accuses the Murderer

"Thank you Inspector DiSalvo. Ladies as I said earlier, you all have motive, means, and opportunity to have killed Robin Logan.

Only one of you, though, has water in their pool that matches the chemical fingerprint of the water found in Robin Logan's lungs.

It was you, Allie Beck. What do you have to say for yourself?"  
(.3 Minute - 60 words)



Dead in the Water



**Allie Beck**

Frank A. Lancione

#### **4.11 The Murderer Responds**

“Me? Why would I kill Fish? I loved him like a son. Look at all I did for him!”  
(.1Minute - 19 Words)



Senor Inspector Lance

#### 4.12 Lance Shares His Theory of the Murder

“I think you wanted the world to believe that you loved Logan like a son. However, I think that wasn't the kind of relationship you actually wanted with him.

Everyone in the BBB club flirted with Logan. They were teasing. I think you were not. The BBB club members signed up as customers to help Logan start his own business. None of them went as far as you did.

It wasn't really Logan's business at all. You put up the money. You signed up your friends as customers. You did all the scheduling, finances, and management. You sacrificed a lot for Logan. More than anyone else in your group.

The evening Logan died, we know he already had codeine-laced pain pills in his system. Then you open a bottle of champagne to celebrate together. Opioids and alcohol are a strong combination. His judgment was most likely impaired.

It was late. The two of you were excited about your success. How did it start? A friendly hug? Then, maybe the two of you kissed. How far did it go? However far it went, I think something happened to spoil that moment you had dreamed of for so long.

We know Logan was killed in your pool, Ms. Beck. Then his body was moved. There's no way that could have happened without you knowing about it. Yet, you've covered it up.

What happened Ms. Beck? It's time for you to put all this to rest.”  
(1.3 Minutes - 240 Words)





Allie Beck

#### 4.14 The Murderer Confesses

'That night when Fish and I finished our monthly financials, the results were outstanding. Fish impulsively hugged me. That hug became a kiss, then a full-body caress. Then I lovingly led Fish to my bedroom. Every dream I'd ever had about our being together as a man and woman was fulfilled.

Afterward, I made the devilish suggestion that we go skinny dipping. Fish loved the idea. We splashed around, caressed, and kissed. I said I wanted him to give me a horsey back ride. He said it would be an honor.

As Fish moved into the deeper water with me on top of him, I asked if his knee was too sore for this. He said, 'This is not my first rodeo, Allie. This horse knows what he's doing.' I said: 'You know Nicky Lane thinks you're gay.' 'Gay no,' he replied, 'just discreet.'

Adrenaline shot through me like lightning. 'What do you mean discrete?' I said, suddenly furious. 'Do you do this with other women in the club?' 'No,' he said. But I knew from this tone that he was lying.

'Put me down,' I said as I struggled to get off of him. 'Ow'' he cried out. 'Allie, please stop moving around. My knee is really hurting.' 'I thought this wasn't your first rodeo,' I said. 'I thought you were good at playing horsey.' Then he said the thing that ended my life along with his: 'I am. But Jules is a lot lighter than you are.'

In that moment I realized that the whole time I had been yearning after Fish from afar, Jules Parker was sleeping with him for real. Rage welled up inside me. I grabbed the stone pool edging that stuck out over the water. Instinctively, I pulled up on it. When I did, I felt Fish's head begin to sink beneath the water.

The more he struggled, the tighter I wrapped my legs around his neck and the harder I pulled up on the wall. Eventually, there was no fight left in him. He died." (1.9 Minutes - 347 Words)



Senior Inspector Lance

#### 4.15 Lance Demands the Details

“Ms. Beck, sometimes people admit to things they actually haven't done.

If it happened as you say, how did you get Logan's body from your pool into his truck parked out on the circle?

Was there someone else involved?” (.2 Minute - 39 Words)





**Allie Beck**

#### 4.16 The Murderer Explains

"No, Inspector. No one else was involved. It was torture, but I did it by myself. For the last five years of his life, my former husband was paralyzed from the waist down. His weight ballooned to over 300 pounds. He couldn't get into and out of bed or do anything without my assistance. We had all kinds of handicap assistance mechanisms built into this house so I could move him around

I knew I had to get Fish's body out of my house. Our pool has an electric handicapped chair lift. I dragged Fish's body through the water over to it and used it to lift him out of the pool. Then I used my former husband's electric mobility scooter to move Fish's body to my garage.

I found Fish's keys and moved his truck from the circle to the inside of my garage. The hardest part was getting Fish up into the truck. My garage has one of those electric platform lifts that you can raise and lower to transport things up into the attic.

I have a three-car garage, so I was able to park the truck alongside the lift with the door open and use it to raise Fish's body level with the truck's seat. I dried him and dressed him while he was on the platform.

The last step was the worst. I tied a rope around him and tried to pull him from the platform into the truck myself. He was too heavy. Finally, I found a way to hook up the rope to the mobility scooter. My husband had been heavier than Fish. The scooter had more than enough power to pull Fish into the truck.

I drove Fish's truck back to the circle and put him behind the wheel. Then, I waited until the normal time for my morning walk, went outside, and 'discovered' his body.

The whole thing was like a dream—like it was happening to someone else."  
(1.8 Minutes – 328 Words)



Senior Inspector Lance

#### 4.17 Act 4 Conclusion - Lance Arrests the Murderer

“Allie Beck I am arresting you for the murder of Robin Logan. Inspector DiSalvo, please read Ms. Beck her rights and take her into custody.

Folks, I have to tell you this case really challenged Inspector DiSalvo and me. How does a man who is dry, fully dressed, and sitting in a parked truck die from drowning? The answer is that, from the beginning, things in this case were ambiguous and open to more than one interpretation.

Was Robin Logan a con man who was financially exploiting a group of elderly ladies as Adrian Beck, Melvin Riley, and Jordan Greer asserted? Or was Logan a loyal and supportive ‘helper’ who found in the ladies of the BBB club the loving sense of family connection that he had sought out his whole life?

Was Robin Logan the grateful and devoted late in life lover that Allie Beck had dreamed of for decades but never found? Or was Logan a cad, a playboy who was simultaneously sexually exploiting multiple BBB club members and making fools of all of them?

Believing—or more accurately, fearing—the worst about Logan led Allie Beck to impulsively and brutally murder him. Was she right? In the end, that’s for each of you to decide.

What is clear is that things will never be the same for any of you BBB club ladies. The happy days you had with Robin Logan leading you in water aerobics, bartending your parties, working around your homes, celebrating holidays with you, and being an integral part of your lives are now like Logan himself, *Dead in the Water*.

This case is now closed. I thank everyone here for their participation.”  
(1.5 Minutes - 278 Words)



## Appendix 1- How to Experience this Story as a Book, Play or Game

### To Experience this Story as a Book

Start by reading the Introduction. It is formatted like and reads like a book. The Introduction describes the Sunset Years retirement community where the murder takes place and provides insights on Robin Logan, the deceased. After the Introduction, read the material in acts 1-4 all the way to the arrest of the murder in Act 4 Witness Statement 4.17.

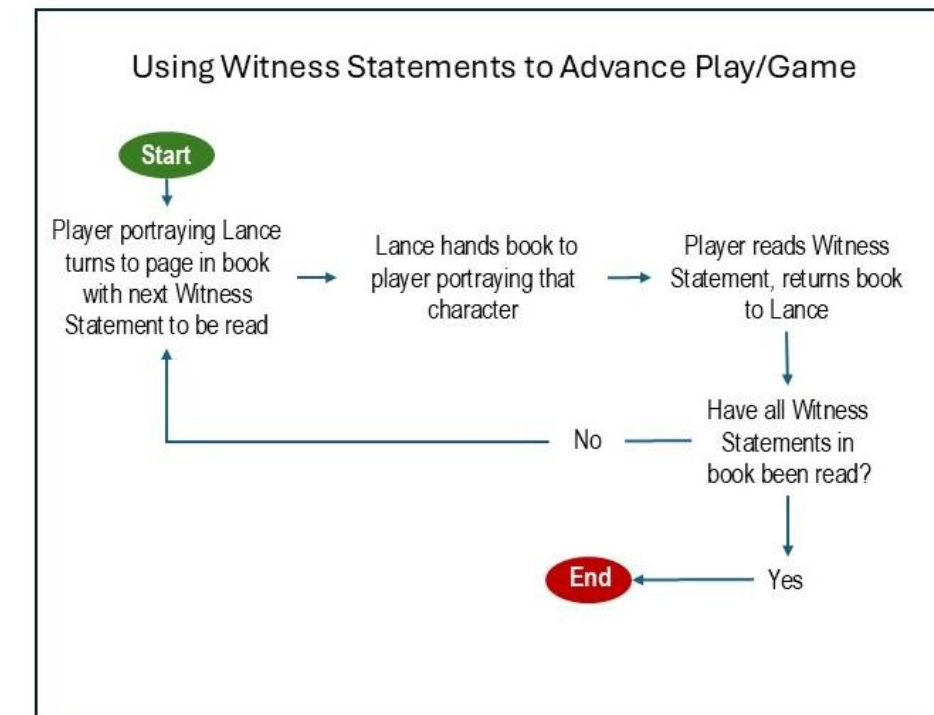
### To Experience this Story as a Play or Game

Skip the Introduction. Beginning with Act 1, the story is formatted as a four act play. The story advances in this section by having the individuals assigned to each character role read their "Witness Statements" out loud to the audience. The person playing Senior Inspector Lance controls this book which contains the Witness Statements and coordinates the process.

1. The play/game experience starts by having the person who plays Senior Inspector Lance read statement **1.0 Welcome to the Play/Game Experience** to the group
2. The Lance actor then manages the flow of the play/game by calling upon the other participants to read the Witness Statements for their characters in the order shown in the Navigation Checklist Handouts
  - a. Lance hands the book to the individual playing the role of the next character whose turn it is to speak in the order shown in the Navigation Checklists, That person reads their Witness Statement and then returns the book to Lance
  - b. Lance then opens the book to the page of the next Witness Statement to be read and hands it to the individual playing that role.
  - c. That person reads their Witness Statement and returns the book to Lance

- d. When all Witness Statements have been completed and Lance has read his Act 4 Conclusion, the play is ended
3. If you are experiencing the story as a game:
  - a. The Witness Statements for Inspector Lance provide prompts in **ALL CAPS RED FONT** informing when it is time for Lance to have the group vote and discuss suspicions at the ends of acts 1,2,3 and take other actions as required
  - b. The player or players who identify the killer correctly the most times in the voting across acts 1, 2, 3 win the game

Figure 1 below depicts the process:



### Play/Game Experience Tips

It is important that the witness statements be read in the specific order in which they are numbered (e.g., 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc.). DO NOT allow participants to view any Witness Statements before they are to be read to the entire group.

Appendix 2 has templates you can use to create handouts for participants. These include 1) character profiles of all of the roles, 2) a voting sheet, and 3) Navigation Checklists to help participants keep track of whose turn it is to read Witness Statements within an act.

You can photocopy all handouts directly from this book. You can also visit the *Sunset Years Murder Mystery Series* homepage and download digital copies of the entire handout package to print out at home. The web address is [Murder Mystery Events \(frankalancione.com\)](http://MurderMysteryEvents.frankalancione.com).

### Adjusting If You Lack the Right Number or Mix of Players

We recommend that you read through the entire play in book form before you undertake hosting a play or game interactive event. Going through the entire script, you will get a feel for which roles the people you intend to invite would be best suited to play and would have the most fun portraying.

If you don't have the right number or mix of participants, you can:

- **Assign people to play more than a single role.** All this requires is for people to read the witness statement of more than one character.
- **Drop roles.** If you don't want to have people cover more than one character, you can choose to drop characters altogether. There is only one murderer. That means that when you do your pre-read of the mystery as a book you will learn which players can be eliminated without disrupting the central storyline.
- **Ignore gender.** The character names in the storyline were purposely crafted to be gender neutral (e.g., Jules, Mel, Jordan). You can execute the story as a play or game without regard to whether any specific character is male or female.

## Appendix 2 – Participant Handouts



Appendix 2 contains templates you can photocopy to create participant handouts.

The **Character Profiles** handout briefly describes each role. It helps participants keep track of the various characters in the play.

The **Vote Tally** handout provides participants with a place to record their votes. It also provides helpful hints for voting and suggests open-ended questions to stimulate participant discussion.

The **Navigation Checklists** assist players to keep track of the action. These checklists show by act the sequence in which Witness Statements are to be read, the reference number of the statement (1.1, 1.2, etc.), and the page in the book where the statement is found.

You can photocopy these handouts directly from this book. You can also visit the *Sunset Years Murder Mystery Series* homepage and download digital copies of the handout package to print out at home The web address is [Murder Mystery Events \(frankalancione.com\)](http://frankalancione.com).

Character Profiles

Character Profiles - Dead in the Water	
Adrian Beck	Male 40 – Nephew of Allie Beck
Allie Beck	Female 78 – Founder and President of Big Beautiful Babes Water Aerobics and Social Club (BBBs). Formed company to help Logan launch his own business
Jordan Greer	Male 57 – Owner of Sumter Pool Services. Hired Logan to provide pool services in the Monarch Grove and Linden neighborhoods
Drew Landon	Female 77 – Member of BBBs. Older sister of Emery Landon
Emery Landon	Female 73 - Member of BBBs. Younger sister of Emery Landon
Nicky Lane	Female 62 – Youngest member of the BBBs
Robin Logan	Male 35 – The deceased. Provided pool & handyman services to the BBBs. An associate in the company Allie Beck formed to help him launch his own business
Jules Parker	Female 63 –BBB member. Logan was her athletic trainer and plant-based living coach in addition to providing her pool/handyman services
Chrissy Pines	Female 79 – Former member of the BBBs. Older sister of Rory Skyler
Melvin Riley	Male 80 – Neighbor of Allie Beck and Chrissy Pines. His relationship with Allie Beck changed after Logan started working for the BBBs
Rory Skyler	Female 72 – Lives in Podunk, GA. In Sunset Years visiting her older sister Chrissy Pines
Sr. Inspector Lance	Male 60 – Wildwood Florida Police Department Homicide Division Senior Inspector in charge of this case
Inspector DiSalvo	Female 24 - Lance's partner

Vote Tally Sheet

Vote Tally Sheet- Dead in the Water						
Who Killed Robin (Fish) Logan?						
Place an X by your first and second choice suspects after Acts 1,2,3. Only one X per column						
Suspects	ACT 1		ACT 2		ACT 3	
	1 <sup>st</sup> Choice	2 <sup>nd</sup> Choice	1 <sup>st</sup> Choice	2 <sup>nd</sup> Choice	1 <sup>st</sup> Choice	2 <sup>nd</sup> Choice
Adrian Beck						
Allie Beck						
Jordan Greer						
Drew Landon						
Emery Landon						
Nicky Lane						
Jules Parker						
Chrissy Pines						
Melvin Riley						
Rory Skyler						
Sr. Inspector Lance						
Inspector DiSalvo						
Vote quickly, then discuss your vote with those around you. Who do you think did it? Why? If you changed your mind from earlier votes, why?						

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Act 1 Navigation Checklist – Dead in the Water

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About the Author

Frank A. Lancione’s books chronicle how today’s senior citizens are reinventing aging for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Frank’s *Sunset Years Poems and Essays Series* is a celebration of what life looks like when you never stop striving, dreaming, and achieving even in your 60’s, 70’s. 80’s and beyond.

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*Sunset Years: You’re Still the One* is a book of love poems that shows romance and passion can still thrive in your last phase of life

*Sunset Years: Looking for America* puts you up in the cab riding with Frank and his wife Diane on a 10,000-mile three-month recreational vehicle (RV) circumnavigation of the U.S. It changes their whole view of America and themselves. It might change yours, too.

*Sunset Years: Living Your Best Life for the Rest of Your Life* continues the focus on love, vitality, and achievement in your senior years.

Frank’s *Sunset Years Book-Play-Game Murder Mysteries Series* transforms traditional murder mystery novels into exciting interactive play/game events. This series includes:

- *Death of a Socialite*
- *Death by Cat*
- *Dead in The Water*
- *Deserved to Die*
- *Double Down on Death*

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