CSI: CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION™

STABBING PAIN

Written by Max Allan Collins
Forensics research/co-plot Matthew V. Clemens

THE MISSING PIECE™ MYSTERY PUZZLES

STORY, EVIDENCE, AND SOLUTION BOOKLET
THE STORY:

A STABBING PAIN

As a rookie CSI, you accompany CSI Level 3 Catherine Willows to the upscale home of Tim and Vivian Elliot in Summerlin, Nevada. It's a lovely, spacious house, and a uniformed officer leads you back to the large kitchen. Captain Jim Brass, who arrived before you and has already got part of the story, meets you there. It is early afternoon.

“Meet Vivian Elliot,” Brass says. “— affluent housewife, stabbed once in the abdomen. Intruder, maybe. A home invasion gone awry?”

Catherine says, “Whatever the case, the late Mrs. Elliot put up a real fight -- looks like a war zone in here. Who found the body?”

“A neighbor -- Monica Campbell. They often had coffee together, in the afternoon.”

“I didn’t see anybody in the house....”

Brass gestures with a pointing finger. “Mrs. Campbell’s at her home, next door. Pretty shaken up....”

“Well, this is not their usual coffee klatch. How did our neighbor enter the crime scene?”

“Back door. She came in, saw the body and ran home to call 911. Just stayed in her own house and waited for the good guys to show up....That would be us.”

“Anyone else home?”

“Sure. The husband, Tim, has a computer job at the Sphere. We’ve got an officer going to collect him now.”

“Children?”

“Couple is childless,” Brass says. “The neighbor says there’s a handy man who lives in a room over the garage out back, but there’s no sign of him anywhere. There’s an APB out on him -- one Frank Dayton.”

“The neighbor gave you his name?”

“That’s right, Cath. Dayton’s done some odd jobs for her, too. Guy’s kind of a neighborhood staple -- this is a nice home, in an upscale neighborhood, but they’re not filthy rich. Couldn’t likely afford fulltime live-in help.”

Catherine sighs, hands on hips. She throws a look your way, then flashes a business-like smile at Brass. “Well, Captain, let us get some processing done on the crime scene...then we'll see where you're at with the husband.”

Glancing at his watch, Brass says, “Afternoon rush hour, could take some time to get him here. But I need to follow up in more detail with the Campbell woman.”

“No rush -- judging by the condition of this kitchen, we're going to be here quite a while.”

Brass leaves and you're left alone in the kitchen with Catherine and the corpse of Vivian Elliot.

Catherine tilts her head to one side, offering up half a smile as she says, “Okay, take it from the top, Rookie -- tell me what you see.”

But before you can reply, Brass barges back into the room, with an uncharacteristically thrown expression.

“What is it?” Catherine asks.

Brass gestures behind him with a thumb. “Patrolman stopped at a convenience store a few blocks from here...to grab a soda, before driving to the Sphere to gather up Mr. Elliot?”

“No law against it.”

“But there are laws against murder?...Patrolman went into the bathroom and stumbled onto our missing handyman...Frank Dayton. Turns out he’s not all that handy.”

“How so?”

“The guy was washing blood off his hands! Trying to stop a bleeding cut on his finger...a cut he couldn’t explain.”

Arching an eyebrow, Catherine says, “I presume the officer took Dayton into custody...”

“Oh yeah...they’re on their way here.”

Just then, another officer pauses in the hallway right outside the kitchen...with a man who has obviously been crying. The man is about thirty-five, dressed in a charcoal suit with a white shirt, red tie, and freshly polished black dress shoes. The officer identifies his charge as Vivian Elliot's husband.

You follow Catherine’s lead and block the kitchen from entry and at the same time take in the brief interview Brass conducts with the stunned husband.

“Mr. Elliot,” Brass says, “we’re sorry for your loss. But we
have to ask you some questions. Time is crucial in matters like this."

The man nods, swallows, and bleats, "I just can't believe it! Viv...she's the sweetest thing...Who would do such a, a... evil thing?"

"Had your wife had any disagreements with anyone, lately? Would you say there was anyone with animosity toward her?"

"Everybody loved Viv."

"I have to ask you, sir, where were you this afternoon...since noon, say?"

Flushing with anger, his tone defensive, Elliot says, "I had lunch here...right here...with Viv. I surprised her and brought her Chinese...It's her favorite. Then I was in a meeting all afternoon at the Sphere. There were a good twenty people there...I can give you their names."

Ignoring Elliot's quiet indignation, Brass says, "Thank you, sir -- that will be helpful."

"You want those names now? I just find out this horrible thing, and you want me to sit down and -- "

"Later will be fine. For now, I need to ask you if you've seen any suspicious activity lately.... In the neighborhood in general, specifically someone watching the house, door-to-door solicitation perhaps.... Phone calls with a quick hang-up when someone answers, maybe?"

Elliot shakes his head to all of this.

Getting a sign from one of the uniformed officers toward the front of the house, Brass says, "That'll be all for now, Mr. Elliot. This officer will take you in to the other room and stay with you for a short time. Then I'll speak to you again."

"What am I? Under house arrest?" Elliot says, outraged.

"Like hell! I want to see my wife. I have a right -- "

Brass puts up a hand to stop him. "I'm sorry, sir -- this is a crime scene. I can't let you into that kitchen. I'm sure you don't want to compromise any evidence that would help us find the person who did this, as you say, horrible thing."

"Of...of course not."

"Just go with this officer, and we'll be with you again shortly."

All three of you can hear the man cursing to himself as the patrolman accompanies him down the hall, out of sight. A moment later you see why Brass gave Mr. Elliot the bum's rush. Another officer comes in with a man in his late twenties, wearing a sweat-soaked t-shirt, jeans, and well-worn work boots. He's got a heavy bandage around his hand and bloodstains on both his shirt and pants.

"Frank Dayton?"

The man's eyes are riveted on the body across the room. Numbly, he nods.

Brass continues: "The officer read you your rights?"

"Yes."

"You want to tell me how you got all bloody and cut your hand?"

Dayton just shrugs.

Brass' eyes are tight. "You did this...didn't you, Frank?"

The handyman's head droops, but he says nothing.

Turning to you two, Brass says, "I love a good, old-fashioned slam dunk now and then."

Catherine smiles at him. "Are you talking doughnuts or crime scenes? Jim, we're just getting started here.... The rookie and I will call you when we know more about our unhappy housewife."

Now assemble the puzzle and study the crime scene. Review the clues and figure out whodunit and most importantly HOW. A good CSI must show the evidence to back his or her theory.

The Clues:

CLOSE-UP #1: Does the bootprint in the bun match anyone's shoes?

CLOSE-UP #2: Look in the silverware drawer. Not seeing anything of interest? Try your ALS (Alternative Light Source)

CLOSE-UP #3: Is it possible that there's more here than just spilled food?

CLOSE-UP #4: Awfully nice house for rat poison, don't you think? And not everyone keeps poison in a kitchen. Not suspicious exactly, but worth checking.
Now read the lab results available and tell Brass what you and Catharine have concluded.

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Date: 5/03/04
Officer: Nowak, T.

- Investigation [ ]
- Accident [ ]
- Arrests Made [ ]
- Suspects [ ]

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<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<td>00-000437</td>
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<td>2. Case Number</td>
<td>04-20948</td>
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<td>3. UCR</td>
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<td>Summerlin, NV 89144</td>
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<td>7a. Cross Street</td>
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<td>8. Business Name</td>
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<td>Exit: Sliding door in back</td>
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<td>Method: Stab wound to abdomen</td>
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<td>Time of Day: Afternoon</td>
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<td>Vivian Elliot</td>
<td>501 S. Tudor Rose Ct.</td>
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<td>Monica Campbell</td>
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**LAB REPORT**

**Date:** May 5, 2004  
**Time:** 11:50  
**Incident Report #** 00-000437  
**Offense:** Homicide

**Toxicology Report:** Almond chicken from countertop contained a lethal dose of prussic acid. Same substance found in package of rat poison (evidence item #1523) taken from cupboard.

**Autopsy Report:** The victim received serious injuries from stab wound to upper right quadrant of abdomen, including puncturing the inferior lobe of the right lung and perforation of the diaphragm. The weapon missed all major organs. Skin around the wound showed hesitation marks. The cause of death was cyanide poisoning. Contents of the victim's stomach (almond chicken) tested positive for lethal amounts of prussic acid, a cyanide derivative.

**DNA Report:** Blood from towel (evidence item #1525) matches DNA of suspect Frank Dayton. Blood from knife (evidence item #1522) contained traces of blood from both the deceased and suspect Frank Dayton.

**Latent Print Report:** Boot print from hamburger bun (evidence item #1521) matches the boot of suspect Frank Dayton. Fingerprints from knife handle (evidence item #1522) a match for suspect Frank Dayton.

**Warning!** Do not continue reading until you are ready to learn the solution. Use the UV light and see if you're right.

**THE SOLUTION:**
Forensic Glossary Terms:

Level 3 CSI: On the show, the highest rank possible for a Crime Scene Investigator. Even though Grissom is the Supervisor, the rest of the team have all attained Level 3 status as well.

derived from: CSI website at CBS.com

Compromised (or tainted) evidence: This is what happens when a crime scene doesn't remain pristine, and none of them are. First responders (EMTs, firefighters, uniformed officers) all end up trampling the crime scene. It's up to the CSIs to comb through all the evidence (including the footprints and fingerprints of the responders) to identify what is out of place.

derived from: Lt. Chris Kaufman, Detective, Bettendorf Police Department, Bettendorf, IA and a crime scene analyst himself for nearly twenty years.

Fluorescine: Like luminol, a presumptive test for trace and scrubbed blood. Chemicals react with the enzymes in the blood, causing the stain to glow when exposed to an Alternative Light Source, such as UV Light.


Stab wound: The shape of a stab wound may indicate what type of weapon was used. However, like a bullet wound, the stab wound will be smaller than the blade which caused it due to the elasticity of the skin. The type of wound is, therefore, determined by estimates of minimum and maximum size. Characteristics of stab wounds are that they are deeper than wide, possibly damage vital organs beneath skin and bone and may cause internal bleeding with little or no external blood.