

PAUL GRUBER HAD been living in Casanova Towers for about two years and something always seemed to be going wrong. When he came home from work Tuesday evening, his new roommate was in the bathroom mopping up a puddle of water. "It started 15 minutes ago," Archie explained. "I pounded on the door of the apartment upstairs. No one's home. And the doorman's not answering the intercom."

Paul looked up at the bathroom ceiling. Water was dripping between the seams of the cheap acoustic tiles. "Ginger Mint's apartment."

"Didn't she give you a key for emergencies?" Archie asked. "Yeah. I hope nothing's wrong."

Paul and Archie walked up one flight. Paul knocked on the door, then finally flipped through his keys, finding the one labeled Ginger.

"Inside her place it was deadly quiet," Paul later told the police. "Archie turned one way, to the bathroom. I turned the other, to the bedroom. Ginger's body was behind the bed; so, it took me a little while to see it. I called out. As soon as Archie came and saw the blood, he started to heave. He was heaving so hard he popped a button on his shirt. Archie wanted to look around for it, but I said no."

"On the way out of the apartment, I heard water running. I went into the bathroom and turned off the sink taps. I know I shouldn't have touched anything, but I didn't want the flooding to get worse."

Ginger Mint had moved to town 6 months ago and became involved with Todd Iona, a movie projectionist. On the day of the murder, Ginger told a coworker that she was nervous. Her boyfriend was going to drop over that evening. She was hoping to end their tempestuous relationship once and for all and wasn't sure how he would react.

Todd Iona is sitting at the Defense table as the Prosecutor previews the case against him.

PROSECUTION: We will introduce witnesses who will testify to

Mr. Iona's jealous rages. Indeed, the victim told friends they were going to be meeting that night and she was afraid. Iona arrived at Ginger's prepared for murder. It took him only a minute to do it, using a knife from the kitchen. We will show how, after brutally stabbing her to death, Iona set up the bathroom sink to overflow, knowing that this would cause the body to be discovered. And why did he want it discovered so quickly? Because at that particular moment Todd Iona had an alibi.

Mr. Iona, you see, was a projectionist in a movie theater only a few steps from Casanova Towers. Between changing reels, he had 20 minutes, plenty of time to sneak out and run through the apartment tower's rear entrance, using the key Ms. Mint had given him just a month before. Minutes later, he was back in the privacy of his booth, where he had another full hour before his break, all the time he needed to clean up and dispose of his bloody clothing.

DEFENSE (sarcastic): What bloody clothing? Was any blood at all found in the projection booth or on my client? No. Ms. Mint did not ask my client to her apartment that evening. Why would she? He was working. No one saw him leave the theater or enter Casanova Towers. And as for having access, so what? The doorman had keys to her apartment. So did her downstairs neighbor. All the Prosecution has is the hearsay of a friend who said Ms. Mint was meeting her boyfriend. Is that enough evidence to convict a man of murder? I think not.