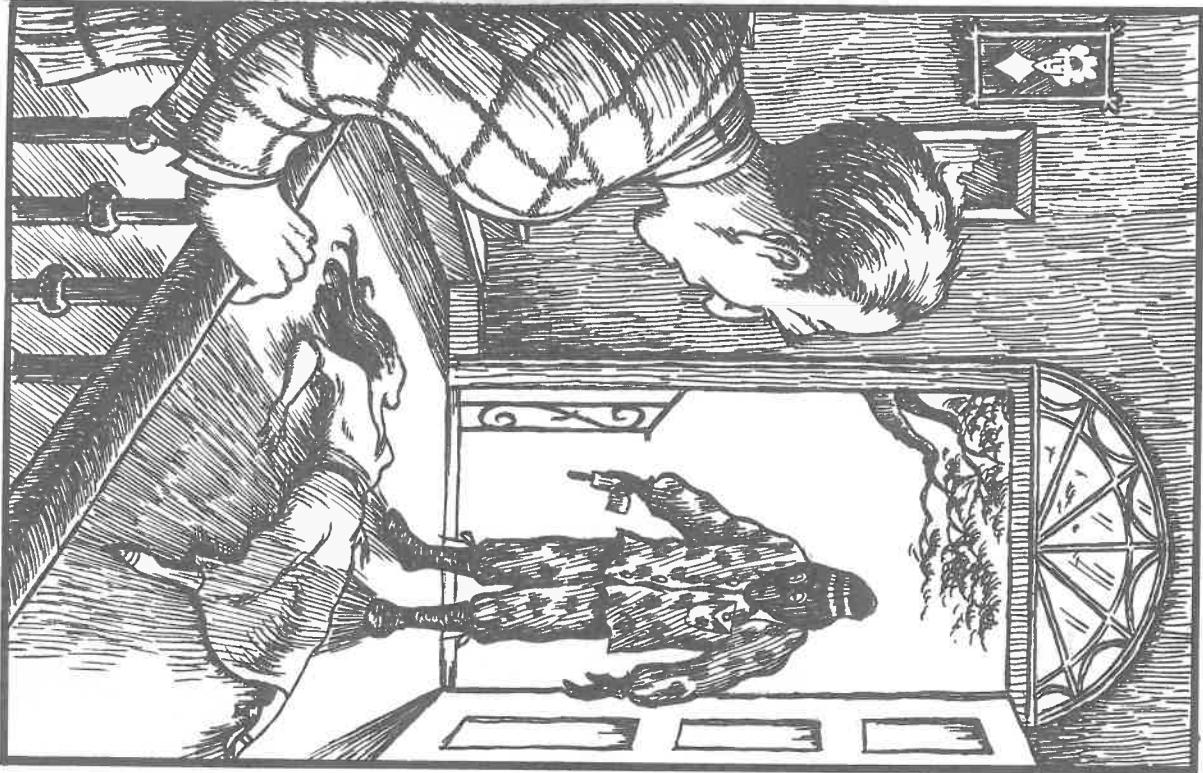


Video Violence



The tabloid television show "Exposé" was in a ratings slump when its host, Renaldo Jones, decided to expose the Mob. The Mob didn't seem thrilled by the publicity. Threatening letters and phone calls followed each new broadcast, but "Exposé's" viewership suddenly soared. Renaldo took the threats in stride, installing a security system in his country house and boldly continuing his series of fearless investigations.

The murders occurred one Saturday in late October. Four people were in residence at the country house—Renaldo; his wife, Jane; Fred Fleer, the show's producer; and Gregory, their head camera operator. It was a working weekend and Fred started the morning meeting by suggesting that the Mob was old news and that "Exposé" should move on to a new subject. "No way," Renaldo barked. "Two more weeks and I'll have the New York families cracked wide open. I've got some new sources you wouldn't believe." He sprang to his feet. "C'mon, Greg. We've got promos to tape."

Renaldo disabled the alarm. He told his wife to reset it as soon as they left; then he took Gregory with his video gear and headed out the door. Within minutes they were surrounded by brilliant sugar maples. Tape was rolling. And that was when the assassin appeared from behind a rock.

The figure was dressed in camouflage fatigues, gloves, and a ski mask. Before either man could react, the assassin raised a handgun and shot. Renaldo screamed and grabbed his leg, just below the knee. A circle of blood oozed through the fabric as the television star collapsed. The figure didn't fire again but simply turned and vanished into the woods.

"I can't move," Renaldo moaned. "Get help. No, you're turned around. The house is that way. And don't get lost."

But Gregory did. He raced frantically, trying to keep a straight path and failing to recognize any landmarks. It was 10 minutes before he ran into another human being, a neighboring farmer. The two men called the police then ran back into the woods carrying a makeshift stretcher. When they found Renaldo, he had already bled to death from the wound.

The second corpse was waiting back at Renaldo's house.

Fred Fleer greeted the police in a state of shock. He had been upstairs, he said, on the phone to New York. Bits of noise drifted up the from the hall, but he ignored them. Then came the gunshot. Fred ran to the staircase. There at the bottom, by the open front door, stood a man in full camouflage. At the man's feet was Jane Jones, lying in a pool of blood. "The guy was just standing there," Fred stammered. "When he saw me, he brandished the weapon at me but didn't shoot. He just stood there for a second, then disappeared out the door."

Jane had been shot once in the chest at close range. The police wondered what made her open the door. She had taken the threats even more seriously than her husband. There was a peephole in the door and the alarm had been turned on. Why in the world would she turn off the system and open the door to a gunman wearing fatigues and a mask?

As the homicide team continued the investigation, other oddities popped up, making the case seem more than an assassination. The .38 used in both murders was discovered just a stone's throw from Renaldo's body. The fatigues, mask, and gloves were found in a potting shed not far from the house.

A confused sergeant tried to piece it together. "Renaldo was shot first. Then the killer goes to the house and shoots Jane. He hides his disguise, in the shed, then returns to Renaldo, wipes off the gun and drops it." The officer frowned. "Why didn't he keep the disguise on? And why would he dump the gun right there instead of disposing of it? It doesn't make sense."

Whodunit? (1) Who killed Renaldo? (2) Who killed Jane? (3) How were the murders committed?

Evidence *This crime can be solved in 3 clues.*

• Gregory's Video (Miscellaneous Examinations)

• Fred's Testimony (Affidavit File)

• Crime Scene Report (The Woods)

• Renaldo's Autopsy Report

• Master Bedroom (Miscellaneous Searches)