

1 Sometimes the best weapon is the one that never leaves the crime scene. Remaining there, hidden, it becomes impossible to prove a killers guilt, regardless of the overwhelming evidence elsewhere. Such was the case in the ~~the~~ death of the media ~~personality~~ personality Howard Chamberlain.

A little over a year ago I was called to investigate a drowning at a local health resort. It seemed fairly straight forward - his hair had gotten caught in a intake valve for the filter system and he'd deceased before the life guards on duty noticed. I was about to write it up to gross negligence on the behalf of the resort when I noticed a small ~~spot~~ blemish on the left side of his chest.

It appeared to be a puncture wound, small but deep by the looks of it. My curiosity piqued, I decided to request an autopsy to verify his death by drowning.

The preliminary findings found conflicting evidence.

"You can see here, and here to a lesser extent, the fluid buildup in the lungs," the coroner remarked, "which can only be attributed to drowning. Yet there is no frothing which would be expected as the victim continued to attempt to breathe."

"So you're saying that he has half of the aspects of a drowning victim?" ~~asked~~ I inquired while looking round the clinically



white room.

"What I'm saying," he replied, "is that this man ^{appears to have} drowned, but at no point exhaled while doing so - almost an impossibility."

As I continued wandering through the room I realised that he wasn't finished. Turning, I looked at him expectantly.

"Well, you see, I also looked at the mark you had mentioned," he said rather nervously.

"And?"

"And it would appear that Mr Chamberlain not only drowned, but he also suffered a stabbing to the heart. He should have died without inhaling any water," he concluded with minor hesitation. "In fact, I think the water in his lungs occurred naturally after he died."

It was now that I realised that



this was no longer a drowning -
It was instead a murder case.

Before I went any further into the investigation, I took some time to find out more about Chamberlain before the press got wind of the circumstances and made my job hell. I soon found that he'd recently remarried - 'suspect one' was the first thought I had - had one daughter, and had just purchased a controlling interest in his television station, sacking the CEO - "And here is suspect two". Armed with this knowledge, I went to see the recent widower.

Entering the property, I could understand a possible motive -

this guy was loaded! Acres of carefully maintained and manicured lawns, private lake, tennis courts, to say nothing of the house! Making my way up the drive I could hear the buzz of ~~a~~ a chainsaw against something solid, and as I rounded the curve I saw why. Jessica Chamberlain was inside a shed, surrounded by ice sculptures. She was working on a new piece obviously.

'Good season to be working on them, I remarked as she cut the motor for a break.

'Yes, although it would be nice ~~if~~ if I didn't have to keep them inside here all the time - they look so beautiful in the open.' came the cultured reply.



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"Are you here about my father's ^{murder} ~~death~~?" she asked rather abruptly.

"Well actually I am," I admitted, throwing a little off guard. "How did you guess?"

~~The~~ "Oh, I just know that father was a good swimmer - he wouldn't have drowned normally," she replied off-handedly.

"Mother is out - you shall have to come back later," she continued ^{bristly} before restarting her chainsaw and resuming her sculpting.

Moving on, ^{rather bemused at this experience} I went to try to contact the ex CEO - Joe Shepperton.

I soon found him, at lunch with a woman. After introducing myself I asked

"Do you know anything about the death of a Mr Howard Chamberlain?"

The woman blanched noticeably at this and Joe comforted her.

'No I don't,' he responded acidly, 'and I find it in very poor taste to discuss such matters in front of his widow. You had best leave^{now}'

So now I could see the puzzle forming - Joe and Mrs Chamberlain, affair, kill the husband, all is well. But how did they think they'd get away with it? Surely they'd realise I'd be onto them now.

Something just wasn't adding up. I had missed something important and whatever it was, it was big.

It clicked - the weapon - where was it? And what was it?

Calling the morgue, I soon got in

touch with the coroner again.

"That's the funny thing. You see, it wasn't a blade, or a smooth metal object - no traces. And whatever it was was cold - ice cold. The ~~heart~~ heart and muscles in the area showed remarkable tissue degeneration consistent with this."

"So, it's a frozen, non-metal object?"

"Yes, and it apparently never left the body either. It's almost like it melted away." With a jolt I remembered that the water at the resort was kept temperate, and made connections. But before I could act I heard the radio

"...and local officers at the scene are attributing the fatal crash to cut brake lines. The recent widower, Mrs Chamberlain, and her passenger were killed on impact, leaving the young Jessica as sole inheritor of ~~the~~ the estate."