

RED DRAGON



THOMAS HARRIS



BERKLEY BOOKS, NEW YORK

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**“The best popular novel to be published
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RED DRAGON

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Titles by Thomas Harris

BLACK SUNDAY

RED DRAGON

THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS

HANNIBAL

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One can only see what one observes,
and one observes only things
which are already in the mind.

—ALPHONSE BERTILLON

... For Mercy has a human heart,
Pity a human face,
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress.

—WILLIAM BLAKE, *Songs of Innocence*
(The Divine Image)

Cruelty has a Human Heart,
and Jealousy a Human Face,
Terror the Human Form Divine,
and Secrecy the Human Dress.

The Human Dress is forged Iron,
The Human Form a fiery Forge,
The Human Face a Furnace seal'd,
The Human Heart its hungry Gorge.

—WILLIAM BLAKE, *Songs of Experience*
(A Divine Image)¹

FOREWORD TO A FATAL INTERVIEW

I want to tell you the circumstances in which I first encountered Hannibal Lecter, M.D.

In the fall of 1979, owing to an illness in my family, I returned home to the Mississippi Delta and remained there eighteen months. I was working on *Red Dragon*. My neighbor in the village of Rich kindly gave me the use of a shotgun house in the center of a vast cotton field, and there I worked, often at night.

To write a novel, you begin with what you can see and then you add what came before and what came after. Here in the village of Rich, Mississippi, working under difficult circumstances, I could see the investigator Will Graham in the home of the victim family, in the house where they all died, watching the dead family's home movies. I did not know at the time who was committing the crimes. I pushed to find out, to see what came before and what came after. I went through the home, the crime scene, in the dark with Will and could see no more and no less than he could see.

Sometimes at night I would leave the lights on in my little house and walk across the flat fields. When I looked back from a distance, the house looked like a boat at sea, and all around me the vast Delta night.

I soon became acquainted with the semi-feral dogs who roamed free across the fields in what was more or less a pack. Some of them had casual arrangements with the families of farm workers, but much of the time they had to forage for themselves. In the hard winter months with the ground frozen and dry, I started giving them dog food and soon they were going through fifty pounds of dog food a week. They followed me around, and they were a lot of company—tall dogs, short ones, relatively friendly dogs and big rough dogs you could not touch. They walked with me in the fields at night and when I couldn't see them, I could hear them all around me, breathing and snuffling along in the dark. When I was working in the cabin, they waited on the front porch, and when the moon was full they would sing.

Standing baffled in the vast fields outside my cabin in the heart of the night, the sound of breathing all around me, my vision still clouded with the desk lamp, I tried to see what had happened at the crime scene. All that came to my dim sight were loomings, intimations, the occasional glow when a retina not human reflected the moon. There was no question that *something* had happened. You must understand that when you are writing a novel you are not making anything up. It's all there and you just have to find it.

Will Graham had to ask somebody, he needed some help and he knew it. He knew where he had to go, long before he let himself think about it. I knew Graham had been severely damaged in a previous case. I knew he was terribly reluctant to consult the best source he had. At the time, I myself was accruing painful memories every day, and in my evening's work I felt for Graham.

So it was with some trepidation that I accompanied him to the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane, and there, maddeningly, before we could get down to business, we encountered the kind of fool you know from conducting your own daily business, Dr. Frederick Cilton, who delayed

us for two or three interminable days.

I found that I could leave Chilton in the cabin with the lights on and look back at him from the dark surrounded by my friends the dogs. I was invisible then, out there in the dark, the way I am invisible to my characters when I'm in a room with them and they are deciding their fates with little or no help from me.

Finished with the tedious Chilton at last, Graham and I went on to the Violent Ward and the steel door slammed shut behind us with a terrific noise.

Will Graham and I, approaching Dr. Lecter's cell. Graham was tense and I could smell fear on him. I thought Dr. Lecter was asleep and I jumped when he recognized Will Graham by scent without opening his eyes.

I was enjoying my usual immunity while working, my invisibility to Chilton and Graham and the staff, but I was not comfortable in the presence of Dr. Lecter, not sure at all that the doctor could not see me.

Like Graham, I found, and find, the scrutiny of Dr. Lecter uncomfortable, intrusive, like the humming in your thoughts when they X-ray your head. Graham's interview with Dr. Lecter went quickly, in real time at the speed of swordplay, me following it, my frantic notes spilling into the margin and over whatever surface was uppermost on my table. I was worn out when it was over—the incidental clashes and howls of an asylum rang on in my head, and on the front porch of my cabin in Rich thirteen dogs were singing, seated with their eyes closed, faces upturned to the full moon. Most of them crooned their single vowel between O and U, a few just hummed along.

I had to revisit Graham's interview with Dr. Lecter a hundred times to understand it and to get rid of the superfluous static, the jail noises, the screaming of the damned that had made some of the words hard to hear.

I still didn't know who was committing the crimes, but I knew for the first time that we would find out, and that we would arrive at him. I also knew the knowledge would be terribly, perhaps tragically expensive to others in the book. And so it turned out.

Years later when I started *The Silence of the Lambs*, I did not know that Dr. Lecter would return. I had always liked the character of Dahlia Iyad in *Black Sunday* and wanted to do a novel with a strong woman as the central character. So I began with Clarice Starling and, not two pages into the new novel, I found she had to go visit the doctor. I admired Clarice Starling enormously and I think I suffered some feelings of jealousy at the ease with which Dr. Lecter saw into her, when it was so difficult for me.

By the time I undertook to record the events in *Hannibal*, the doctor, to my surprise, had taken on a life of his own. You seemed to find him as oddly engaging as I did.

I dreaded doing *Hannibal*, dreaded the personal wear and tear, dreaded the choices I would have to watch, feared for Starling. In the end I let them go, as you must let characters go, let Dr. Lecter and Clarice Starling decide events according to their natures. There is a certain amount of courtesy involved.

As a sultan once said: I do not *keep* falcons—they live with me.

When in the winter of 1979 I entered the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane and the great metal door crashed closed behind me, little did I know what waited at the end of the corridor; how seldom we recognize the sound when the bolt of our fate slides home.

Will Graham sat Crawford down at a picnic table between the house and the ocean and gave him a glass of iced tea.

Jack Crawford looked at the pleasant old house, salt-silvered wood in the clear light. "I should have caught you in Marathon when you got off work," he said. "You don't want to talk about it here."

"I don't want to talk about it anywhere, Jack. You've got to talk about it, so let's have it. Just don't get out any pictures. If you brought pictures, leave them in the briefcase—Molly and Willy will be back soon."

"How much do you know?"

"What was in the *Miami Herald* and the *Times*," Graham said. "Two families killed in their houses a month apart. Birmingham and Atlanta. The circumstances were similar."

"Not similar. The same."

"How many confessions so far?"

"Eighty-six when I called in this afternoon," Crawford said. "Cranks. None of them knew details. He smashes the mirrors and uses the pieces. None of them knew that."

"What else did you keep out of the papers?"

"He's blond, right-handed and really strong, wears a size-eleven shoe. He can tie a bowline. The prints are all smooth gloves."

"You said that in public."

"He's not too comfortable with locks," Crawford said. "Used a glass cutter and a suction cup to get in the house last time. Oh, and his blood's AB positive."

"Somebody hurt him?"

"Not that we know of. We typed him from semen and saliva. He's a secretor." Crawford looked out at the flat sea. "Will, I want to ask you something. You saw this in the papers. The second one was all over the TV. Did you ever think about giving me a call?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"There weren't many details at first on the one in Birmingham. It could have been anything—revenge, a relative."

"But after the second one, you knew what it was."

"Yeah. A psychopath. I didn't call you because I didn't want to. I know who you have already to work on this. You've got the best lab. You'd have Heimlich at Harvard, Bloom at the University of Chicago—"

"And I've got you down here fixing fucking boat motors."

"I don't think I'd be all that useful to you, Jack. I never think about it anymore."

"Really? You caught two. The last two we had, you caught."

"How? By doing the same things you and the rest of them are doing."

"That's not entirely true, Will. It's the way you think."

"I think there's been a lot of bullshit about the way I think."

"You made some jumps you never explained."

"The evidence was there," Graham said.

“Sure. Sure there was. Plenty of it—afterward. Before the collar there was so damn little we couldn’t get probable cause to go in.”

“You have the people you need, Jack. I don’t think I’d be an improvement. I came down here to get away from that.”

“I know it. You got hurt last time. Now you look all right.”

“I’m all right. It’s not getting cut. You’ve been cut.”

“I’ve been cut, but not like that.”

“It’s not getting cut. I just decided to stop. I don’t think I can explain it.”

“If you couldn’t look at it anymore, God knows I’d understand that.”

“No. You know—having to look. It’s always bad, but you get so you can function anyway, as long as they’re dead. The hospital, interviews, that’s worse. You have to shake it off and keep on thinking don’t believe I could do it now. I could make myself look, but I’d shut down the thinking.”

“These are all dead, Will,” Crawford said as kindly as he could.

Jack Crawford heard the rhythm and syntax of his own speech in Graham’s voice. He had heard Graham do that before, with other people. Often in intense conversation Graham took on the other person’s speech patterns. At first, Crawford had thought he was doing it deliberately, that it was a gimmick to get the back-and-forth rhythm going.

Later Crawford realized that Graham did it involuntarily, that sometimes he tried to stop and couldn’t.

Crawford dipped into his jacket pocket with two fingers. He flipped two photographs across the table, face up.

“All dead,” he said.

Graham stared at him a moment before picking up the pictures.

They were only snapshots: A woman, followed by three children and a duck, carried picnic items up the bank of a pond. A family stood behind a cake.

After half a minute he put the photographs down again. He pushed them into a stack with his fingers and looked far down the beach where the boy hunkered, examining something in the sand. The woman stood watching, hand on her hip, spent waves creaming around her ankles. She leaned inland to swing her wet hair off her shoulders.

Graham, ignoring his guest, watched Molly and the boy for as long as he had looked at the pictures.

Crawford was pleased. He kept the satisfaction out of his face with the same care he had used to choose the site of this conversation. He thought he had Graham. Let it cook.

Three remarkably ugly dogs wandered up and flopped to the ground around the table.

“My God,” Crawford said.

“These are probably dogs,” Graham explained. “People dump small ones here all the time. I can give away the cute ones. The rest stay around and get to be big ones.”

“They’re fat enough.”

“Molly’s a sucker for strays.”

“You’ve got a nice life here, Will. Molly and the boy. How old is he?”

“Eleven.”

“Good-looking kid. He’s going to be taller than you.”

Graham nodded. “His father was. I’m lucky here. I know that.”

“I wanted to bring Phyllis down here. Florida. Get a place when I retire, and stop living like a cave fish. She says all her friends are in Arlington.”

“I meant to thank her for the books she brought me in the hospital, but I never did. Tell her for me.”

“I’ll tell her.”

~~Two small bright birds lit on the table, hoping to find jelly. Crawford watched them hop around until they flew away.~~

“Will, this freak seems to be in phase with the moon. He killed the Jacobis in Birmingham on Saturday night, June 28, full moon. He killed the Leeds family in Atlanta night before last, July 26. That’s one day short of a lunar month. So if we’re lucky we may have a little over three weeks before he does it again.

“I don’t think you want to wait here in the Keys and read about the next one in your Miami *Herald*. Hell, I’m not the pope, I’m not saying what you ought to do, but I want to ask you, do you respect my judgment, Will?”

“Yes.”

“I think we have a better chance to get him fast if you help. Hell, Will, saddle up and help us. Go to Atlanta and Birmingham and look, then come on to Washington. Just TDY.”

Graham did not reply.

Crawford waited while five waves lapped the beach. Then he got up and slung his suit coat over his shoulder. “Let’s talk after dinner.”

“Stay and eat.”

Crawford shook his head. “I’ll come back later. There’ll be messages at the Holiday Inn and I’ll be a while on the phone. Tell Molly thanks, though.”

Crawford’s rented car raised thin dust that settled on the bushes beside the shell road.

Graham returned to the table. He was afraid that this was how he would remember the end of Sugarloaf Key—ice melting in two tea glasses and paper napkins fluttering off the redwood table in the breeze and Molly and Willy far down the beach.

Sunset on Sugarloaf, the herons still and the red sun swelling.

Will Graham and Molly Foster Graham sat on a bleached drift log, their faces orange in the sunset, backs in violet shadow. She picked up his hand.

“Crawford stopped by to see me at the shop before he came out here,” she said. “He asked directions to the house. I tried to call you. You really ought to answer the phone once in a while. We saw the car when we got home and went around to the beach.”

“What else did he ask you?”

“How you are.”

“And you said?”

“I said you’re fine and he should leave you the hell alone. What does he want you to do?”

“Look at evidence. I’m a forensic specialist, Molly. You’ve seen my diploma.”

“You mended a crack in the ceiling paper with your diploma, I saw that.” She straddled the log to face him. “If you missed your other life, what you used to do, I think you’d talk about it. You never do. You’re open and calm and easy now . . . I love that.”

“We have a good time, don’t we?”

Her single stytic blink told him he should have said something better. Before he could fix it, she went on.

“What you did for Crawford was bad for you. He has a lot of other people—the whole damn

government I guess—why can't he leave us alone?"

"Didn't Crawford tell you that? He was my supervisor the two times I left the FBI Academy to go back to the field. Those two cases were the only ones like this he ever had, and Jack's been working a long time. Now he's got a new one. This kind of psychopath is very rare. He knows I've had . . . experience."

"Yes, you have," Molly said. His shirt was unbuttoned and she could see the looping scar across his stomach. It was finger width and raised, and it never tanned. It ran down from his left hipbone and turned up to notch his rib cage on the other side.

Dr. Hannibal Lecter did that with a linoleum knife. It happened a year before Molly met Graham, and it very nearly killed him. Dr. Lecter, known in the tabloids as "Hannibal the Cannibal," was the second psychopath Graham had caught.

When he finally got out of the hospital, Graham resigned from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, left Washington and found a job as a diesel mechanic in the boatyard at Marathon in the Florida Keys. It was a trade he grew up with. He slept in a trailer at the boatyard until Molly and her good ramshackle house on Sugarloaf Key.

Now he straddled the drift log and held both her hands. Her feet burrowed under his.

"All right, Molly. Crawford thinks I have a knack for the monsters. It's like a superstition with him."

"Do you believe it?"

Graham watched three pelicans fly in line across the tidal flats. "Molly, an intelligent psychopath—particularly a sadist—is hard to catch for several reasons. First, there's no traceable motive. So you can't go that way. And most of the time you won't have any help from informants. See, there's a lot more stooling than sleuthing behind most arrests, but in a case like this there won't *be* any informant. *He* may not even know that he's doing it. So you have to take whatever evidence you have and extrapolate. You try to reconstruct his thinking. You try to find patterns."

"And follow him and find him," Molly said. "I'm afraid if you go after this maniac, or whatever he is—I'm afraid he'll do you like the last one did. That's it. That's what scares me."

"He'll never see me or know my name, Molly. The police, they'll have to take him down if they can find him, not me. Crawford just wants another point of view."

She watched the red sun spread over the sea. High cirrus glowed above it.

Graham loved the way she turned her head, artlessly giving him her less perfect profile. He could see the pulse in her throat, and remembered suddenly and completely the taste of salt on her skin. He swallowed and said, "What the hell can I do?"

"What you've already decided. If you stay here and there's more killing, maybe it would sour this place for you. *High Noon* and all that crap. If it's that way, you weren't really asking."

"If I *were* asking, what would you say?"

"Stay here with me. Me. Me. Me. And Willy, I'd drag him in if it would do any good. I'm suppose to dry my eyes and wave my hanky. If things don't go so well, I'll have the satisfaction that you did the right thing. That'll last about as long as taps. Then I can go home and switch one side of the blanket on."

"I'd be at the back of the pack."

"Never in your life. I'm selfish, huh?"

"I don't care."

"Neither do I. It's keen and sweet here. All the things that happen to you before make you know it. Value it, I mean."

He nodded.

“Don’t want to lose it either way,” she said.

“Nope. We won’t, either.”

Darkness fell quickly and Jupiter appeared, low in the southwest.

They walked back to the house beside the rising gibbous moon. Far out past the tidal flats, bait fish leaped for their lives.

Crawford came back after dinner. He had taken off his coat and tie and rolled up his sleeves for the casual effect. Molly thought Crawford’s thick pale forearms were repulsive. To her he looked like a damnably wise ape. She served him coffee under the porch fan and sat with him while Graham and Willy went out to feed the dogs. She said nothing. Moths batted softly at the screens.

“He looks good, Molly,” Crawford said. “You both do—skinny and brown.”

“Whatever I say, you’ll take him anyway, won’t you?”

“Yeah. I have to. I have to do it. But I swear to God, Molly, I’ll make it as easy on him as I can.

He’s changed. It’s great you got married.”

“He’s better and better. He doesn’t dream so often now. He was really obsessed with the dogs for a while. Now he just takes care of them; he doesn’t talk about them all the time. You’re his friend, Jack. Why can’t you leave him alone?”

“Because it’s his bad luck to be the best. Because he doesn’t think like other people. Somehow he never got in a rut.”

“He thinks you want him to look at evidence.”

“I do want him to look at evidence. There’s nobody better with evidence. But he has the other things too. Imagination, projection, whatever. He doesn’t like that part of it.”

“You wouldn’t like it either if you had it. Promise me something, Jack. Promise me you’ll see to it he doesn’t get too close. I think it would kill him to have to fight.”

“He won’t have to fight. I can promise you that.”

When Graham finished with the dogs, Molly helped him pack.

Will Graham drove slowly past the house where the Charles Leeds family had lived and died. The windows were dark. One yard light burned. He parked two blocks away and walked back through the warm night, carrying the Atlanta police detectives' report in a cardboard box.

Graham had insisted on coming alone. Anyone else in the house would distract him—that was the reason he gave Crawford. He had another, private reason: He was not sure how he would act. He didn't want a face aimed at him all the time.

He had been all right at the morgue.

The two-story brick home was set back from the street on a wooded lot. Graham stood under the trees for a long time looking at it. He tried to be still inside. In his mind a silver pendulum swung in darkness. He waited until the pendulum was still.

A few neighbors drove by, looking at the house quickly and looking away. A murder house is ugly to the neighbors, like the face of someone who betrayed them. Only outsiders and children stare.

The shades were up. Graham was glad. That meant no relatives had been inside. Relatives always lower the shades.

He walked around the side of the house, moving carefully, not using his flashlight. He stopped twice to listen. The Atlanta police knew he was here, but the neighbors did not. They would be jumpy. They might shoot.

Looking in a rear window, he could see all the way through to the light in the front yard, past silhouettes of furniture. The scent of Cape jasmine was heavy in the air. A latticed porch ran across most of the back. On the porch door was the seal of the Atlanta police department. Graham removed the seal and went in.

The door from the porch into the kitchen was patched with plywood where the police had taken out the glass. By flashlight he unlocked it with the key the police had given him. He wanted to turn on lights. He wanted to put on his shiny badge and make some official noises to justify himself to the silent house where five people had died. He did none of that. He went into the dark kitchen and sat down at the breakfast table.

Two pilot lights on the kitchen range glowed blue in the dark. He smelled furniture polish and apples.

The thermostat clicked and the air conditioning came on. Graham started at the noise, felt a trickle of fear. He was an old hand at fear. He could manage this one. He simply was afraid, and he could go on anyway.

He could see and hear better afraid; he could not speak as concisely, and fear sometimes made him rude. Here, there was nobody left to speak to, there was nobody to offend anymore.

Madness came into this house through that door into this kitchen, moving on size-eleven feet. Sitting in the dark, he sensed madness like a bloodhound sniffs a shirt.

Graham had studied the detectives' report at Atlanta Homicide for most of the day and early evening. He remembered that the light on the vent hood over the stove had been on when the police arrived. He turned it on now.

Two framed samplers hung on the wall beside the stove. One said "Kissin' don't last, cookin' do." The other was "It's always to the kitchen that our friends best like to come, to hear the heartbeat of the

house, take comfort in its hum.”

Graham looked at his watch. ~~Eleven-thirty P.M.~~ According to the pathologist, the deaths occurred between eleven P.M. and one A.M.

First there was the entry. He thought about that . . .

The madman slipped the hook on the outside screen door. Stood in the darkness of the porch and took something from his pocket. A suction cup, maybe the base of a pencil sharpener designed to stick to a desktop.

Crouched against the wooden lower half of the kitchen door, the madman raised his head to peer through the glass. He put out his tongue and licked the cup, pressed it to the glass and flicked the lever to make it stick. A small glass cutter was attached to the cup with string so that he could cut a circle.

Tiny squeal of the glass cutter and one solid tap to break the glass. One hand to tap, one hand to hold the suction cup. The glass must not fall. The loose piece of glass is slightly egg-shaped because the string wrapped around the shaft of the suction cup as he cut. A little grating noise as he pulls the piece of glass back outside. He does not care that he leaves AB saliva on the glass.

His hand in the tight glove snakes in through the hole, finds the lock. The door opens silently. He is inside. In the light of the vent hood he can see his body in this strange kitchen. It is pleasantly cool in the house.

Will Graham ate two Di-Gels. The crackle of the cellophane irritated him as he stuffed it in his pocket. He walked through the living room, holding his flashlight well away from him by habit. Though he had studied the floor plan, he made one wrong turn before he found the stairs. They did not creak.

Now he stood in the doorway of the master bedroom. He could see faintly without the flashlight. A digital clock on a nightstand projected the time on the ceiling and an orange night-light burned above the baseboard by the bathroom. The coppery smell of blood was strong.

Eyes accustomed to the dark could see well enough. The madman could distinguish Mr. Leeds from his wife. There was enough light for him to cross the room, grab Leeds's hair and cut his throat. What then? Back to the wall switch, a greeting to Mrs. Leeds and then the gunshot that disabled her?

Graham switched on the lights and bloodstains shouted at him from the walls, from the mattress and the floor. The very air had screams smeared on it. He flinched from the noise in this silent room full of dark stains drying.

Graham sat on the floor until his head was quiet. Still, still, be still.

The number and variety of the bloodstains had puzzled Atlanta detectives trying to reconstruct the crime. All the victims were found slain in their beds. This was not consistent with the locations of the stains.

At first they believed Charles Leeds was attacked in his daughter's room and his body dragged to the master bedroom. Close examination of the splash patterns made them reconsider.

The killer's exact movements in the rooms were not yet determined.

Now, with the advantage of the autopsy and lab reports, Will Graham began to see how it had happened.

The intruder cut Charles Leeds's throat as he lay asleep beside his wife, went back to the wall switch and turned on the light—hairs and oil from Mr. Leeds's head were left on the switchplate by a smooth glove. He shot Mrs. Leeds as she was rising, then went toward the children's rooms.

Leeds rose with his cut throat and tried to protect the children, losing great gouts of blood and an unmistakable arterial spray as he tried to fight. He was shoved away, fell and died with his daughter in her room.

One of the two boys was shot in bed. The other boy was also found in bed, but he had dust balls in his hair. Police believed he was dragged out from under his bed to be shot.

When all of them were dead, except possibly Mrs. Leeds, the smashing of mirrors began, the selection of shards, the further attention to Mrs. Leeds.

Graham had full copies of all the autopsy protocols in his box. Here was the one on Mrs. Leeds. The bullet entered to the right of her navel and lodged in her lumbar spine, but she died of strangulation.

The increase in serotonin and free histamine levels in the gunshot wound indicated she had lived at least five minutes after she was shot. The histamine was much higher than the serotonin, so she had not lived more than fifteen minutes. Most of her other injuries were probably, but not conclusively, postmortem.

If the other injuries were postmortem, what was the killer doing in the interval while Mrs. Leeds waited to die? Graham wondered. Struggling with Leeds and killing the others, yes, but that would have taken less than a minute. Smashing the mirrors. But what else?

The Atlanta detectives were thorough. They had measured and photographed exhaustively, had vacuumed and grid-searched and taken the traps from the drains. Still, Graham looked for himself.

From the police photographs and taped outlines on the mattresses, Graham could see where the bodies had been found. The evidence—nitrate traces on bedclothes in the case of the gunshot wounds—indicated that they were found in positions approximating those in which they died.

But the profusion of bloodstains and matted sliding marks on the hall carpet remained unexplained. One detective had theorized that some of the victims tried to crawl away from the killer. Graham did not believe it—clearly the killer moved them after they were dead and then put them back the way they were when he killed them.

What he did with Mrs. Leeds was obvious. But what about the others? He had not disfigured them further, as he did Mrs. Leeds. The children each suffered a single gunshot wound in the head. Charles Leeds bled to death, with aspirated blood contributing. The only additional mark on him was a superficial ligature mark around his chest, believed to be postmortem. What did the killer do with them after they were dead?

From his box Graham took the police photographs, lab reports on the individual blood and organic stains in the room and standard comparison plates of blood-drop trajectories.

He went over the upstairs rooms minutely, trying to match injuries to stains, trying to work backward. He plotted each splash on a measured field sketch of the master bedroom, using the standard comparison plates to estimate the direction and velocity of the bloodfall. In this way he hoped to learn the positions the bodies were in at different times.

Here was a row of three bloodstains slanting up and around a corner of the bedroom wall. Here were three faint stains on the carpet beneath them. The wall above the headboard on Charles Leeds's side of the bed was bloodstained, and there were swipes along the baseboards. Graham's field sketch began to look like a join-the-dots puzzle with no numbers. He stared at it, looked up at the room and back to the sketch until his head ached.

He went into the bathroom and took his last two Bufferin, scooping up water in his hand from the faucet in the sink. He splashed water on his face and dried it with his shirttail. Water spilled on the floor. He had forgotten that the trap was gone from the drain. Otherwise the bathroom was undisturbed, except for the broken mirror and traces of the red fingerprint powder called Dragon's Blood. Toothbrushes, facial cream, razor, were all in place.

The bathroom looked as though a family still used it. Mrs. Leeds's panty hose hung on the towel racks where she had left them to dry. He saw that she cut the leg off a pair when it had a runner so she

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