

Killed Once, Lived Twice

By

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Prologue

It all started here in the hilly countryside of western Pennsylvania.

It was May 25th in 1961 in Barbourville, Pennsylvania. The town of Barbourville was located north of Pittsburgh with a population of 15,700 law-abiding people.

It was situated fifteen miles southwest of the town of Hampton and eighty miles southeast of the major city of Kingsville.

There was a two-lane country road that connected Barbourville to the towns of Kingsville and Hampton. This road was Amster Road and provided a beautiful view of the rolling countryside for this part of Pennsylvania.

Amster Road ran south from Kingsville for fifty-five miles. Then Amster Road made a forty-five-degree bend to the left and headed east for fifteen miles.

During that fifteen-mile trek east, Amster Road went over a section of the Brandywine Lake by way of an old wooden bridge constructed in 1939.

Brandywine Lake was a skinny lake that ran north and south with depths of twenty-five feet. It had cabins along the shore where the local people loved to relax and fish during the summer months.

Before the wooden bridge was constructed, Amster Road dead-ended on the east and western shores of the Brandywine Lake. A bumpy dirt road provided the detour around the northern part of the lake so drivers could get back onto Amster road. During these times, Amster Road was the only way to get to the larger town of Kingsville. This dirt

detour was rough on the trucks that left the General Motors plant to deliver the new Chevrolets.

Amster Road made another forty-five degree bend to the right and headed straight into Barbourville.

Amster Road changed names and was called Shady Hill Avenue when it ran straight through Barbourville.

It turned back into Amster Road again after exiting the northern part of town.

The primary industry in Barbourville was the General Motors plant that now assembled the Chevrolet Bel-Air and Corvair. The plant opened for business in 1936 and was located on Montvale Circle.

Montvale Circle started from Amster Road south of town then ran a circle around the western part in the city and ended on Shady Hill Avenue at the northeastern end of town.

At the northeastern part of town was located the Barbourville College. It had well-known engineering English, fine arts, nursing, and science programs. The college was founded in 1918 and was located off Shady Hill Avenue.

Barbourville was a friendly and great town to raise a family.

Shumaker's Lounge was located near the General Motors plant, and the majority of the patrons were workers from the plant. They loved to stop off there for a drink after a hard day of assembling the 1961 Bel-Air and Corvair.

This evening, Michael Osborne sat alone at a booth inside the Shumaker's Lounge off Montvale Circle.

He was twenty-seven years old and was handsome with a Rock Hudson style of black hair and piercing blue eyes.

Michael looked like he lacked the lust for life and hadn't slept in days by the bags under his eyes and five days of beard stubble.

He glanced at a Barbourville Times newspaper on his table. It was placed next to four empty glasses. His fifth glass of whiskey and water was next to a pack of Marlboro cigarettes, lighter and an ashtray with five cigarette butts.

Michael picked up the glass and took a drink. He set the glass down and continued to look depressed at a newspaper article.

The article had the "Local Woman Shot and Drowned In Brandywine Lake" headline.

The article also had a black and white photo of Jennifer Stodden, his twenty-seven-year-old fiancé. She had black hair in a Bouffant hairstyle and wore black cat eyeglasses. She was a beautiful woman with light blue eyes, a warm smile.

Michael's eyes welled up while he glanced at Jennifer's photo. He smashed his cigarette into the ashtray.

Kenneth Mueller in a black suit, white shirt, and white tie and Fedora hat in hand walked up to Michel's booth smoking a Lucky Strike cigarette.

Kenneth was a twenty-seven-year-old unattractive man with thinning hair. He had acne pot marks on both cheeks and a four-inch scab across the middle of his forehead.

Kenneth frowned at the sight of Michael drinking alone at the lounge. "Are you going to live at Shumaker's for now on?" Kenneth asked while he sat down in the booth across from Michael. Kenneth took another drag on his cigarette then put it out in the ashtray.

"Maybe," Michael replied without taking his eyes off the newspaper article.

"You never frequented this place," Kenneth said. He frowned when he saw the newspaper article about Jennifer.

The skinny old waitress Nancy walked up to Kenneth. "Hey, sugar. Want your usual?" she asked.

"Tonight, I'll take three shots of Jack Daniels," Kenneth replied.

Nancy smiled and walked away.

"I know you miss her. But she drowned and drinking yourself to death won't bring her back to life. And don't worry, I'll find the killer," Kenneth said then paused. "Because I carry a badge," Kenneth said in his best impression of Sergeant Friday from the Dragnet Show. He hoped to get a chuckle out of Michael. He did not.

Michael reached out and removed another cigarette from the pack of Marlboros. He grabbed the lighter and lit his cigarette.

"When did you start smoking?" Kenneth asked.

Michael ignored his question and took a drag.

Nancy walked back to the booth with her tray in hand. She placed three shots of whiskey in front of Kenneth.

"Who would shoot at her then force her car off the bridge and into the lake? Who would do such a horrible thing? Jennifer didn't have any enemies. Everybody loved her. She was the love of my life," he said while he glanced over at Kenneth and tears rolled down his cheek.

"I know," Kenneth replied, then avoided looking at the newspaper article. He grabbed one of his shot glasses and downed the whiskey.

"And why was she driving to the cabin so late at night? That doesn't make any sense," Michael said while he looked at Kenneth with tears running down his cheeks.

"I don't know buddy," Kenneth replied then grabbed the second shot glass and downed the whiskey.

"She drowned. She was terrified of being in the water. She drowned," he said while his eyes welled up.

Michael looked at Kenneth. "How did you get that cut on your forehead?" he asked as he forgot.

"A drunk the other night," said Kenneth then he looked worried about something while he took the third shot glass and downed the whiskey.

"Barbourville has been a nice place to live with hardly any major crimes. I can't remember anybody being murdered during my lifetime," Michael said while he looked at Kenneth for answers.

"Like I said, buddy, I'll use all my energy to find her killer. I promise."

"Thanks," Michael said while he folded up the newspaper to stop looking at Jennifer's picture.

While Kenneth smoked his cigarette, he avoided that newspaper article of Jennifer.

He put his cigarette out in the ashtray on the coffee table. He gave Nancy a little motion to come over to the booth.

Nancy walked over.

"Put my shots and his drinks on my tab," he told her.

"Sure sugar," Nancy replied, then walked away.

"You better get home. I don't want you don't end up a drunk like my old man," he said, then slid out of his booth and walked over to Michael.

Michael grabbed his newspaper and got out of the booth.

Kenneth walked Michael to the door of the Lounge.

Outside Shumaker's Lounge, Kenneth walked Michael to his white four-door 1958 Chevrolet Bel-Air.

"I'll follow you home to make sure you arrive safe," Kenneth said while Michael got behind his wheel.

Michael motioned that that was okay with him. He started up his car.

Kenneth rushed over to his black four-door 1960 Chevrolet Bel-Air car parked close to Michael's car. He got behind the wheel and started it up. This was his car from the Barbourville police department since Kenneth had been a detective for the past three years.

Kenneth drove his Bel-Air and followed Michael's Bel-Air all the way to his house on Dorothy Avenue, located in the Brandywine Estates.

After Michael went inside, Kenneth sat behind the wheel of his Bel-Air.

His hands shook a little while he glanced over at the white cottage style house with black shutters to the left of Michael's. That cottage house was where Jennifer Stoddard lived.

He reached under his seat and removed a Jack Daniels bottle. He opened it and took a massive gulp of whiskey. He placed the bottle between his legs, started his car up, then backed down the driveway.

Kenneth drove his Bel-Air away down Dorothy Avenue while taking an occasional drink of whiskey. He looked bothered and a little nervous.

Kenneth drove his Bel-Air through the stop sign while he made a left turn onto Woodland Avenue. He was lucky there was no traffic on Woodland at the moment.

Chapter 1

Forty-nine years had passed, and it was now Tuesday, May 4th, 2010 in Pennsylvania.

The sun started to sink below the horizon to signal the end of another beautiful day.

A 2006 blue Cavalier with a Florida tag drove east on Amster Road at the posted speed limit of forty-five miles per hour.

Driving the Cavalier down Amster Road was twenty-seven year old Abby Austin.

Abby was drop-dead gorgeous with a shapely body, shoulder-length blonde hair, soft brown eyes and a mole on her left upper lip. Abby did not wear make-up since she was a natural beauty.

In the backseat of the Cavalier was three cardboard boxes taped up.

Inside the trunk were three more cardboard boxes, a rolled-up sleeping bag, a rolled-up movie poster.

The six boxes all contained her belongings from her life in Florida.

She enjoyed the beautiful rolling hilly countryside while she drove down Amster Road. This was a nice switch from the flat land of Florida.

She sang along to a classic radio station she found. The Chubby Checker song *The Twist* played, and she performed a seated version of *The Twist* while she drove.

Ten minutes later, Abby drove her car down Amster Road and came upon a concrete bridge with the "Brandywine Lake" sign at the entrance.

Abby drove her car across the bridge and checked out the beautiful blue water of the lake.

After she drove off the bridge, she drove a little way down the road and saw a dirt road off to the right. This dirt road led down to a sandy shore area of the lake that people used for swimming.

She was starting to love the Pennsylvania countryside so far.

Eight minutes later and Abby drove her Cavalier got closer to Barbourville.

Just before the bend to the right, Abby spotted a restaurant called the "Brandywine Restaurant" off to the right of the road. It looked like a nice quaint restaurant, and she thought about eating there sometime since it was opened for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Abby drove around the bend where she saw another road to the left called Montvale Circle.

Amster Road straightened out then turned into Shady Hill Avenue that ran through the eastern part of Barbourville.

She soon spotted a Holiday Inn off to her right then pulled into the entrance.

A little while later, Abby entered a room on the top floor of the Holiday with her suitcase.

She placed her suitcase on one of the queen-sized beds.

She plopped down on the other queen-sized bed. She was exhausted from the two-day drive up from Florida, so she was asleep in minutes.

Hours had passed and Wednesday morning arrived.

Abby slept under the covers in her hotel room bed.

The digital alarm clock on the bedside table blared that annoying sound we all hate to hear in our sleep. The clock showed it was eight-thirty that morning.

Next to the clock was the "Snows Of Kilimanjaro And Other Stories" book by Ernest Hemingway. The bookmark was located at the beginning of the book.

Abby stirred in bed.

The alarm continued to blare.

Abby reached over and slapped at the alarm.

Her hand missed. She slapped another area and turned off the alarm.

Abby threw the covers off her body.

She sat up in bed and stared at the clock.

She stood up and moped across the room still half asleep.

She moped inside the bathroom.

Fifteen minutes later, Abby was dressed in a lovely black business suit with a white blouse and black trousers.

Abby walked over to her room window.

She opened the curtains and looked outside.

She got a little aerial view of Barbourville.

"Quaint," she said in a pleasing tone and closed the curtains.

She walked over to the dresser and picked up her car keys, purse, and a black leather folder by the TV.

She walked off, headed to the door, and left her room.

Fifteen minutes had passed, and Abby sat in the Barbourville Diner located off Shady Hill Avenue. She ate her breakfast, that consisted of French toast.

The diner had the appearance of an old train passenger car. Abby loved the large window at her booth that gave her a good view of the Barbourville

College across Shady Hill Avenue. While she stared out the window, she got a déjà-vu feeling about the diner and college. She shrugged off the feeling and worked on her breakfast.

Thirty minutes had passed, and Abby sat inside Dr. Bowman's office in the Science Department of the college.

Abby sat in front of his desk.

Behind the desk sat Dr. Phillip Bowman.

He was eighty-two years old with glasses, thin-framed, balding white hair, and a white goatee. He always wore a tweed jacket with brown patches on the elbows.

He read Abby's resume.

Dr. Bowman placed her resume down on his desk then looked at Abby.

She got nervous with his eyes looking at her. She silently prayed.

"Your resume looks impressive. But why would you leave a job in Orlando, Florida to move up here to Pennsylvania? I mean the warm winters versus snow," Dr. Bowman asked.

Abby looked a little sad. "My boyfriend was killed a year ago. So, I was looking for a new job since we worked for the same hospital. I found this opening online, and for some strange reason, I felt compelled to move up here," she replied and looked sincere.

Dr. Bowman felt sorry for Abby. "I'm sorry to hear about your loss," he said, then paused while he glanced down at her resume for a few seconds. He tapped his right index finger on her resume while he glanced over it again.

It was a few nerve-racking seconds for Abby's stomach since she took a huge chance moving up here.

Dr. Bowman looked at Abby. "Have you ever lived here in Barbourville?"

"No, sir."

"That's strange because I got this feeling that I've met you before," he said and looked sure of himself.

"No sir, I just arrived in Barbourville yesterday for the first time," she replied and thought his comment was a bit strange.

Abby started to sweat and got nervous while Dr. Bowman glanced back at her resume, then glanced back at her. "I would love to have you here. You can start tomorrow if that's all right. I need someone right away. The other girl that had this job quit when her husband got transferred to another General Motors plant across the country."

"I can start tomorrow."

"Great," Dr. Bowman said while he stood up then extended his hand over his desk.

Abby stood up and smiled while she shook his hand. "Thank you, sir. I'm looking forward to working with you."

"Let me walk you to the door," Dr. Bowman said while he walked out from behind his desk.

Dr. Bowman walked Abby to his office door.

"Head over to Human Resources where you can fill out some paperwork. I'll send them an email that I want to hire you. The building is located two buildings over in that direction," he said while he pointed in the appropriate direction.

"Thank you."

"Oh, your desk is out there off to the left, and I like to start my day at seven-thirty and leave around four," he told her.

"I'll be here a little before seven-thirty."

Dr. Bowman opened his office door for Abby and watched while she walked away through the office area.

He closed his office door.

"She sure looks familiar," he said while he walked back to his desk.

Abby walked into the Human Resources Department in the Administration building.

"May I help you?" asked seventy-six-year-old white-haired Maris Wallace from behind a desk.

Abby looked at Maris. "Doctor Bowman just hired me, and he said I needed to fill out some paperwork," Abby said.

"Ah yes, I just received his email a few minutes ago. You must be Abby Austin. Please have a seat at that table," Maris said while she grabbed a folder and stood up from behind her desk,

Abby walked over to the table on the other side of the room. She sat down in front of a Dell computer with a dedicated printer.

Maris walked over and handed Abby the folder. "Inside this folder contains policy and benefits information about the college. On the computer, you'll find job application and other needed forms to complete. You can print it out, sign them and bring it back to me," Maris said.

"Thank you," Abby replied while she looked up at Maris.

Maris got a good look at Abby, and her eyes widened a little.

Maris walked away, and Abby opened up the folder and glanced at the contents.

Maris sat down behind her desk. She looks familiar. She thought to herself, then shrugged off that feeling and returned to her work.

Abby opened up the Word file job application on the computer and started typing in her information.

Two hours later, Abby, with a Barbourville College employee badge clipped to her blouse, walked through the Barbourville College campus. The campus was more prominent than what she expected and loved the landscaping with large shade trees.

She headed off in the direction of one the visitor's parking lot.

Later that afternoon, Abby ate lunch in Denny's restaurant located on Shady Hill Avenue down from the Holiday Inn.

After lunch, Abby took a drive around Barbourville to get familiar with the town.

During her drive, she saw an 84 Lumber Store off to her right on Broadmoor Avenue. The sight of that store gave her another *déjà-vu* feeling.

She drove past the 84 Lumber Store and drove around some more Barbourville streets.

Later that night, Abby had her Dell laptop out, and she sat at her desk in her hotel room. She conducted a search for homes for sale in Barbourville.

She started checking out the results.

There was nothing that peeked her interests with the first five results.

She clicked on the sixth result, and she saw an older style small white cottage style house with black wooden shutters. Abby looked at the picture of the house, and she liked what she saw. Abby yawned and saw that it was nine-thirty that evening on the digital clock by the bed.

She got up from the desk and headed to the bathroom.

Chapter 2

The sun peeked above the horizon in Barbourville, and it was Thursday morning.

In her hotel bed, Abby was sound asleep.

The alarm blared again from the bedside table.

The digital clock read six-fifteen that morning.

Abby's book "Snows Of Kilimanjaro And Other Stories" was by the clock. The bookmark moved down a couple of chapters indicating she did some reading last night.

Abby stirred in bed. The alarm continued to blare that annoying sound.

Abby opened one eye and noticed it was six-fifteen. "Why can't I win lotto?" she said while she threw the covers off her body, sat up then reached over and turned off the alarm.

She got out of bed and yawned while she stretched.

She moped across the room still half asleep while she headed to the bathroom.

Thirty minutes later and Abby, dressed in a conservative outfit, and purse in hand, went down the hotel elevator.

She was soon in the lobby having the Holiday Inn's Continental Breakfast. This consisted of a glass of orange juice, oatmeal, and a bagel. She poured a cup of coffee and took it with her when she left for work.

After an enjoyable drive up Shady Hill drive, Abby drove into the main entrance of the Barbourville College.

She parked in the employee parking lot.

Abby got out of her car and headed to the campus buildings with a spring in her step.

Abby walked through the front glass doors of the Science Department building.

She walked down the hallway and passed by numerous students on their way to class.

Abby walked down to the middle of the hallway and stopped. She looked to the left and saw the wooden door with a glass window. The glass had "Science Department, Dr. Phil Bowman, Dean," in black lettering that looked a little old and started to fade.

She opened the door and went inside her new place of employment.

Abby walked over to her desk to the left of Dr. Bowman's office. It was a lovely wooden desk with an iMac computer.

"Sweet. An iMac," she said while she placed her purse on the desk then sat down in the desk chair.

The door of the office area opened, and Dr. Bowman entered with a cup of Starbucks coffee in hand. "Good morning, Abby. I see you're here bright and early," he said the second he saw her at her desk.

"Good morning, Doctor Bowman," Abby said then gave him a warm smile.

Dr. Bowman walked over and stood in front of her desk.

"I've always wanted to try out an iMac," she told Dr. Bowman.

He smiled. "That's the only computer I would use. So, let me drink my morning coffee and get caught up on my emails, then I'll go over your job duties," he replied.

"Yes, sir."

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