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the initial investigation. Except for an occasional lapse (Dennis Fung was noticeably shaky) these witnesses told a generally uniform story of a professional investigation, and the results pointed inexorably toward the killer.

In the criminal trial, molecular biologist Dr. John Gerdes had harmed the prosecution with his assertion that the LAPD was a "cesspool of contamination." But now he could cite only three DNA tests that showed signs of contamination. Under a tight cross-examination by Tom Lambert, he conceded that he could find "no direct evidence" of contamination of any evidence.

Pathologist Dr. Michael Baden attempted to counter the testimony of our expert pathologist, Dr. Werner Spitz, who had told the jury that he believed the murders were committed by one person in a very short period of time. Dr. Baden suggested that Ron might have remained on his feet for five minutes or longer, struggling with his assailant. One of the reasons for this conclusion, he said, was that blood from Ron's neck wound saturated the left side of his shirt and pants, and he would have had to be standing for this to occur.

But under cross-examination, Dr. Baden grew frustrated when Ed Medvene displayed a photo of Ron's shirt and pants. Yes, the left pants leg was saturated with blood from a wound to his leg. But the shirt was stained on the right side, not the left. Ron was found lying on his right side, and the blood had obviously collected after he had fallen. Dr. Baden tried to recover, explaining that he really did not mean to use the word "saturated." He finally admitted that Ron's wounds were so severe that he may well have lost consciousness within seconds.

A chief concern for the defense attorney was the dramatic Harry Scull photograph showing the killer wearing Bruno Magli shoes. In a desperate attempt to restore their client's credibility, they called their most absurd "expert," photo analyst Robert Groden. Dan had learned that Groden was the defense team's third choice. We knew for certain that one of their other experts had declared the photo to be authentic, and we assumed that the second expert had agreed because, to find Groden, they had to reach beneath the bottom of the barrel.

No one can simply take the witness stand, declare himself an "expert," and issue pronouncements. First, he must present his qualifications to the court, and the judge decides whether to certify him as an expert witness. The slightly built, fifty-one-year-old Groden admitted that he was a high school dropout who had never taken a course in photography. But he claimed an early interest in snapping photos, and this set him on his way to becoming an "expert." Two decades ago, he said, he had worked as an

"His NAME WAS
RON" BY THE
GOLDMAN FAMILY.

optical technician for a film company, and he also held a job with a company that duplicated slides. From 1976 to 1978 he was a photo consultant to the congressional committee that was investigating the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. He claimed to have testified four times before congressional committees; in fact, his most recent appearance was to answer charges that he had stolen photos of the Kennedy assassination and sold them to *Globe* magazine. In the past twenty years he had been paid twice—once by the *National Inquirer* and once by a Korean political party—to analyze photos purportedly showing ghosts.

Peter Gelblum argued, "The fact that he simply sits around his house looking at photos and deciding whether he thinks a picture is fake or not does not qualify him as an expert."

Judge Fujisaki appeared quizzical, as if to ask the defense: Is this the best you can do? In fact, it was, so the judge declared, "His credibility will be determined on cross-examination."

Cleared to testify, Groden immediately began to attack the authenticity of Harry Scull's photograph. He explained that he had taken the picture to a Kinko's Copy Center, made a photocopy, and enlarged it to eight times its normal size. Working with this, he pointed out a dozen "anomalies" that, according to him, indicated that the photo had been altered.

In a brutal cross-examination, Peter ridiculed Groden's qualifications and proved some of his conclusions patently false. For example, one of Groden's anomalies was a thin blue line between the edge of the negative and the film sprockets. Groden said that line appeared only on the one negative in question. But Peter showed at least two other negatives from the same roll that displayed the same line, and forced Groden to admit that the lines "could be" scratches caused by the camera mechanism.

Peter had much more to cover, but an event now occurred that, in retrospect, would loom as one of the key strokes of luck in the entire trial. The court was getting ready to adjourn for a two-week holiday recess, and the defense wanted to call forensic toxicologist Dr. Frederic Rieders, so that he could return home to Philadelphia.

Peter agreed. And that meant he would have an opportunity to resume his cross-examination of Groden after the holidays. Little did we know how important that would be.

As we were driving home, Patti asked, "Can you believe that in a month this will finally be over? I want so much to believe we are going to win

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Peter showed Groden one of the new enlargements and asked, "Does this change your mind" about the authenticity of the Scull photo?

Groden glanced at the enlargement and declared that he remained convinced, "to an overwhelming degree of certainty," that the Scull photo was phony.

Peter asked that the Flammer photo be handed to the jury. As the jurors began to examine it, Peter produced a second enlargement and asked Groden, "Does this change your mind?"

"No."

Peter methodically presented the additional prints and blowups, asking the same question and eliciting the same denial, even as the jurors passed the evidence to one another. Finally Peter asked a hypothetical question: Assume that experts studied the negatives—assume that you studied the negatives—and everyone agreed that these thirty photos were authentic, "Would that change your mind?"

The squirming witness had to admit that it "probably would."

At times some of Groden's ludicrous testimony brought muffled laughter from the spectators. During one such moment, Patti happened to glance at the killer's sister Shirley Baker. One seat from where Shirley was sitting, a woman, one of the spectators, was snickering at the witness. Shirley took umbrage with that. She reached across the person next to her and dug her nails into the woman's sweater-covered arm.

Patti concluded: Violence must run in the family.

During a break, the spectator approached us. She pointed to her arm and told Patti there were visible gouges. She asked, "Do you believe what she did?"

Patti rose to the woman's defense. "Tell her to keep her hands off you," she said. "Tell her she has no right to lay a hand on you that way!"

"I can't do that," the woman said. "They'll kick me out."

"No, they won't," Patti vowed. "I saw what she did to you."

We were jubilant as we ate our lunch, until a touchy subject arose: Would the jurors get it? Would they understand that the photos—like the other evidence—proved that the defendant had lied under oath, blatantly and with detached arrogance? Would they be able to peer through the veneer of this man's public persona and see him for what he really was?

Someone on our team idly mentioned the possibility of a hung jury.

"What do you mean?" Patti asked sharply. "I thought it's either we win or they win."

No, one of our lawyers explained, in a civil case a minimum of nine

jurors must decide said. "Seven-five is

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That proved to be a gross understatement, for Peter Gelblum took Richards through some of the most gripping moments of the entire trial. Peter set up an easel in the courtroom and positioned a large chart listing the dozen "anomalies" that Groden had cited to indicate that the Scull photo had been altered. One by one, Peter asked Richards to explain these "anomalies" to the jury.

Richards responded in an animated, easy-to-comprehend manner. And he blew the defense case to smithereens.

For example, Groden had found what he characterized as suspicious scratch marks on the negative that did not align with scratches on other negatives. But Richards produced a Canon F1, the same model that Scull used, strode over to the jury, opened the back of the camera, and demonstrated how the film wavers as it is advanced. The Canon F1 is notorious for producing these variances in scratch marks, he said, and added pointedly that any first-year photography student would know it. Peter then stepped over to the chart and scratched a large "X" over this particular anomaly.

Groden had used the enlargements he made at Kinko's to declare that there were microscopic differences in the size of the Scull negative and other negatives on the roll. Richards demonstrated on the overhead projector how a photocopy machine itself distorts the size of a copy. Then he donned a sophisticated piece of headgear, demonstrated the proper way to measure size, and showed the jury that there was no anomaly. Peter drew another "X" on the chart.

Groden had noted that the Scull photo had a reddish tint, whereas other shots on the roll had a greenish tint. Richards pointed out the obvious. The photo in question showed the killer walking through the end zone, which was painted with the red Buffalo Bills insignia; the other photos were taken on the green football field. Peter drew another "X" on the chart.

Jurors leaned over the railing of the jury box, scribbling notes.

Kim thought: This man is like the science teacher who finally makes physics exciting! The spectators were mesmerized. Judge Fujisaki's jaw sometimes dropped open in amazement. On and on it went until all twelve of Groden's "anomalies" were crossed off the chart.

I said to myself: We kicked their butts. We're going to beat them!

The force of that thought surprised me. Until now I had been unwilling to voice that opinion to anyone—even to myself. Now I truly believed that we would gain the measure of justice that we so achingly desired.

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