

Brady knelt down next to the body and examined her head. One apparent gunshot wound above the right eye. Her half-opened eyes were fixed in a death stare, straight up at the ceiling.

Killebrew pointed at a hole in the wall opposite the front door. “We removed the bullet. It appears to be a nine millimeter. Same as the shell casing.”

Brady saw blood spatter sprayed onto the lower half of the wall. He stood up, moved to the living room, and made a mental inventory of the room. The front window was covered with flowery-patterned drapes. A piano sat in the far corner by the front window. He was no expert on furniture but the victim’s appeared to be fairly expensive pieces. He saw mail lying on the coffee table. Using a pen, he sifted through it, checking the sender’s address, but nothing jumped out at him. A family portrait of her, an ordinary-looking man with narrow shoulders he assumed was Burt Smith, and twins—a girl and a boy—sat on the end of the table.

He ambled over to a European-style, white corded telephone, covered with black fingerprint powder, sitting on a table next to a leather tufted sofa. From the room’s furnishings and appearance, it seemed to him that she had money, and lots of it. Since no evidence indicative of a robbery existed, he wondered whether Burt Smith shot her or hired someone to do the job. As he walked through the remainder of the house, he asked himself, “Where the hell are you, Burt Smith?”

Brady did a records search of divorce records through the Bell County District Clerk’s online database.

When the Becker-Smith divorce record showed up on the screen, he wrote down Burt Smith’s last known address, the Candlewood Suites, as well as the attorney’s name and address. The divorce petition was filed by Becker claiming irreconcilable differences as grounds. It listed two children, both over the age of eighteen.