

They worked each case with or without media fanfare. They were impervious to the mind-crushing emotional gamut of murders. They had seen too many. They knew and understood the stench and reality of death. Their lives revolved around the sudden finality of a life ended before its time. They understood that age and youth were no barrier to death, nor race or wealth, nor position or status. They knew that when death came for you, you went. It really was that simple.

The Three Amigos with Irish Accents enjoyed the moment, said their good-byes, and left the lawyer to await the call.

He sat at this desk and told himself it was just a matter of time.

Each day followed the next, and then the next. Time passed without a word. The lawyer frequently found himself blankly staring at the black phone in the left-hand corner of his desk, imagining it was ringing. There were times when he swore he could hear the phone ring. He would turn down the ever-present music from the nearby radio and pick up the receiver to hear nothing but a hollow dial tone. Each day when he returned from court he would automatically ask if anyone had called on the triple.

With the misguided confidence of an unrequited lover, the lawyer waited for the call that never came.

The reality slowly began to settle in that no mysterious witness was going to suddenly materialize and solve the triple homicide. The DA had just returned from lunch at the Steaming Kettle across the street from the courthouse when his secretary waved and pointed to the phone.

“You got a call, they’re on hold,” she said, smiling. “It’s someone who wants to talk to you about the article in the *Globe*.”

He could see the blinking yellow light flashing on the base of the phone as he entered the office. The radio was playing as he reached for the handset. He simultaneously turned down the volume and thought, *I stopped believing too easily*.

He carefully placed the phone next to his ear. “DA’s office, can I help you?”

“Hi, Mr. Burke? My name is Kathy Leonti.”

It was a young woman’s voice, tentative, soft, and unsure, somehow searching to connect personally with the stranger on the other end of the line.

“I don’t quite know where to start. I read the story about the two kids and the mother that were murdered,” she said haltingly. “And, and, I wonder if I could just talk to you about my sister’s case. She was killed two years ago. Nothing’s happened on it yet. It’s still unsolved.”

The breath he was holding slowly eased out as the lawyer realized the young woman wasn’t calling about the triple.