



LEAPS OF THOUGHT

## Excerpts from Three Boys Missing

"Gale Street was in a middle-class neighborhood of Chicago named Jefferson Park. An area of single-family homes with carefully hedged lawns and tree-lined streets, it was a community where many of the city's police and fire department employees lived. City employees were required to live within its limits. Those who could afford it lived in Jefferson Park. It had a reputation for having the lowest crime rate in the city, occasional burglaries, some stolen autos, problems with juvenile delinquents, but very few homicides."

\* \* \*

"I began to feel personally involved in the interview. This guy was really worried. He didn't seem like a lot of the parents who reported their kids missing. Very often, after a kid had been out all night, the parents would finally come into the station the next day and make out a report. Most of the time the parents would find out that the kid had stayed overnight with a friend. Things usually turned out all right.

Police officers know that if a kid had a background of trouble, his parents sometimes got used to it. They'd been through it before. Some parents even had a bad attitude when they finally reported their son or daughter missing, like it was the police department's job to know where the kid was or why he hadn't come home.

Peterson hadn't waited all night to do something. He called the station, went out looking for the kids with the other father, and drove all the way downtown and back. Now here he was at the police station, so nervous and tense that he had unknowingly destroyed two paper cups."

\* \* \*

"This is never easy, I thought to myself. Every time Frank and I had to question a family member, especially a parent, about a missing child, or about a person who had been killed in an accident, or shot by some jerk in a hold-up, I noticed that my stomach would tense up and everything inside me seemed to freeze.

"I knew I wasn't supposed to get emotionally involved, but I always reacted in the same way in these situations. I believed that "emotionally involved" didn't mean you had to be some kind of robot and not have feelings for a fellow human being's tragedies. In order to help control my personal reactions, I found that if I just thought about being someplace else or that someone else was talking instead of me, that seemed to help."

\* \* \*

"Men, we've got a triple homicide." He sighed and sat down into his chair. His disappointment at the news was obvious. "The naked bodies of three boys have been found in a parking lot in Robinson's Woods.

"The room was completely silent. We were stunned. As police officers, we felt we knew the worst that people can do to each other. Clearly, we were wrong.

"My eyes began to blur, as tears rolled down my face. And, like everyone else in the room, I sat motionless in my chair. Finally, I looked at Frank. He too was crying. In fact, there was not a dry-eye in the room."

\* \* \*

"But this investigation was much different. The entire city was horrified. The boys could be anybody's sons. Innocent children on their way home from a movie on a Sunday afternoon, when out of nowhere someone grabs and kills them."

\* \* \*



LEAPS OF THOUGHT

## Excerpts from Three Boys Missing

"There's nothing at Kenneth and Montrose. You guys know where that is. The boys made a visit to both the Monte Cristo and the Drake bowling alleys already, and they walked west to Kimball Avenue where Bloomfield picked them up, and he dropped them off several blocks west on Kenneth Avenue.

"It didn't make sense. At least not now, but that's how most investigations go. If you do the work, at all the pieces you can find, sometimes they fall together and make up a bigger piece – or even the whole picture. You have to keep every bit of information, make decisions about them then make decisions about them again after you have more information."

\* \* \*

"Hundreds of individuals with records of arrests for sex crimes were questioned, particularly those who had been confined to mental institutions or who had been released from prison prior to the murders.

"Individual follow-up of hundreds of phone tips and reports, as well as several undercover investigations throughout the city, resulted in the arrest of numerous sex offenders. Some were charged with disorderly conduct or public indecency."

\* \* \*

"Each time the investigation identified an individual who appeared to be a promising suspect the same procedure was used. Background checks were run; extensive interviews were conducted of family members, friends, acquaintances, neighbors and employers. Each interview covered the same ground: where was the suspect during the time the boys were first reported missing; where were they during the following 48 hours."

"Then each suspect was interrogated again. Finally, every individual detectives suspected of having any knowledge of the crime or who could reasonably be deemed a suspect was questioned at length through use of several polygraph examinations."

\* \* \*

"But this was a case unlike any he had ever had. Finding those responsible for the triple homicide had turned the city upside down. Every law enforcement agency on every level of government had expended thousands and thousands of man-hours and resources in an attempt to solve the crime. Yet not one suspect had been charged."