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54/11/08 Corrigan Resumes Cross-Examination

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Dr. Sem Poinel

When Adelson described how he was seated at the top of Marilyn’s head, Dr. Sem closed his eyes, and a small red line extended beneath his chin, rubbing him against the look of the witness. This occurrence, times in the course of the prosecution, was noted by Deputy Corrigan, who performed the July autopsy on murdered Marilyn Shappard.

Q. As a county official, your testimony in this case is supposed to be unbiased and unrehearsed, isn’t it?

A. Yes.

Q. I don’t know what you mean by unrehearsed. My testimony is unbiased and verifiable.

Q. Since you left this conference on Friday, have you discussed the case with the prosecution?

A. Yes, Saturday morning I met Mauro, Danowski, and Corrigan.

Q. How long was that meeting?

A. One hour.

Q. During the meeting, did you talk with them about this morning?

A. Yes.

Q. Corrigan sparred with Dr. Adelson on the performance of his autopsy or as it related to the brain and the hemorrhages that were reported in the autopsy report. At several points Adelson confronted Corrigan, expressed (for a yes or no answer, said that he just couldn’t answer the question and put the theory that way.

Dr. Lighter Touch

As a pathologist, I do the microscopic examination of the brain, and as necessary to the testimony last week and read the scrapings from Marilyn Shappard’s fingernails. I can’t say that I am an expert on the nails.

Q. Did you examine Marilyn Sheppard’s fingernails?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you say that scrapings from Marilyn Shappard’s fingernails were submitted to a microscopic examination?

A. Yes. Scraps were given to another person in this examination.

Q. Didn’t you try to discover if there was skin or blood that might have come from scratches inflicted by Marilyn Shappard on the man who attacked her?

A. That is not part of my work to do this. It was done by others.

Q. You handed Adelson a photostatic copy of the laboratory finding.

Q. Is there anything in this report that makes any mention of the fact that Marilyn Shappard’s fingernails?

A. Yes. The report says that there were no significant fractures found in the fingernails.

Q. But you did not make the examination?

A: No.

Q. Wouldn’t your thought be very important for you to find out if the nails had any skin or blood under them?

A: Certainly.

Q. Then why weren’t you notified of Marilyn Shappard’s fingernails?

A: Yes. You report says that there were no significant fractures found in the fingernails.

Q. But you did not make the examination?

A: No.

Q. Would your thought be very important for you to find out if the nails had any skin or blood under them?

A: Certainly.

Q. Then why didn’t you notify Dr. Adelson of the report?

A: Yes. You report says that there were no significant fractures found in the fingernails.

Q. But you did not make the examination?

A: No.

Q. Would your thought be very important for you to find out if the nails had any skin or blood under them?

A: Yes. You report says that there were no significant fractures found in the fingernails.

Q. But you did not make the examination?

A: No.

Q. Would your thought be very important for you to find out if the nails had any skin or blood under them?

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Q. But you did not make the examination?

A: No.

Q. Would your thought be very important for you to find out if the nails had any skin or blood under them?

A: Yes. You report says that there were no significant fractures found in the fingernails.
Q.: You were asked why you did not make an analysis of the stomach to determine if poison was present and you said you had not. Is there any reason why you should make that test?

Objection by defense. Adelson turned to the judge and said it was a broad question and requires clarification. The judge said “Go ahead.”

A.: As a result of our examination we determined that she had sustained a number of violent blows, resulting in sufficient injury to cause death. It also showed she was alive when struck because of the hemorrages.

**Draws Objection**

(Objection by Corrigan: “What has that to do with it?” Adelson answered, “I’ll show you the reason for not examining for poison.” The judge overruled the objection.)

A.: (Continued) In our autopsy, when we came to the stomach, we found no damage in the stomach itself and nothing had been swallowed and therefore it was not necessary to examine for poison. In addition to the use of our eyes, we also use our noses, and I sniffed, (if you will pardon the expression), the contents of the stomach and found no traces of poisons which, through experience, I can recognize by odor. In addition, there were no needle marks on the body to indicate that poison had been injected hypodermically. No chemical analysis was necessary. She died because she was beaten to death.

Mahon brought out that the coroner’s “body log” stated that Marilyn Sheppard was found dead on her bed at about 5:30 a.m. by her husband.

The records stated, among other details, the “Dr. Gerber pronounced her dead on the scene.”