

# TRUTH THROUGH FICTION

## THE DRIVE-BY AT ASHMUN AND WEBSTER

by Pete Gagliardi

*This is a fictional story designed to serve solely as the contextual backdrop for advocating the adoption of best practices for the timely and comprehensive collection of Crime Gun Intelligence and the thorough investigation of every crime involving the use of a firearm to seek justice for the victims of gun violence, resolution for their loved ones and peace for their neighbors..*

It was the summer of 2019; I was taken into a holding cage on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the New Haven Police Department. Sitting there on that old oak bench bolted to the floor, I could almost smell the smells, hear the sounds and see the sights associated with every violent act that I was ever a party to.

I'm still young -- and while I may have many bursts of fire left inside me, I will not cry foul should they be suppressed here. I will say in my defense, that I did not choose the path that led me here. Indeed, many who know me believe that *I don't have a mind of my own*. Notwithstanding, I belong here -- "off the street".

It started just before sunrise that morning. Me and a couple of guys from the crew that I was hanging with were headed home from the Water Street Diner. It's where everybody goes for "breakfast" after the bars close. I admit I was pretty loaded, but I had no choice but to go along for the ride.

The driver had no sooner drifted over the center line and the next thing I remember was seeing the alternating flashes of blue and red light ricocheting around the interior of our car. The lights were immediately followed by a short "whup-whup" from an electronic siren. It would signal the start of my backward slide toward a complete breakdown.

Instead of just pulling over, the guy driving stood on the gas. The wheels broke traction, the car lurched forward. The needles on the speedometer and the "tach" slowed and seemed to struggle only as they approached their upper limits. In and out of traffic we weaved, taking corners on two wheels trying to shake the "rollers".

Soon, I was on the floor of the backseat where the G-forces did not seem not as bad.

The number of chase cars increased as the seconds ticked off. Their red and blues lights washed across the storefronts that lined our route. Their large display windows seemed to magnify and diffuse the lights in all directions like a giant disco ball. Don't get me wrong, I'm no disco dancer, although I admit my old crew and I watched a movie about it once on TV.

The speeds at which we were operating required the driver to have the reflexes of a mongoose and the foresight of a champion chess player. The sirens and flashing lights were working against him, overwhelming the auditory and visual cortexes of his brain. A bad decision on the driver's part was about to get much worse.

He took the next corner much too fast and the tires lost their grip where the rubber meets the road. We hit the big Elm hard -- the air bags deployed as shattered glass rained throughout the interior of the car. Then my door swung open.

Bodies in motion tend to stay in motion and out that door I flew. The driver and the guy riding shotgun bailed out and disappeared into the darkness around the oil tank farm at Water and East Streets.

I landed on my butt in some scrub brush. Above me the traffic on Interstates 95 and 91 crisscrossed through a maze of overpasses and cloverleafs. I was unable to move. It was just before dawn.

I'll be a *son of a gun*, it took a short time for the K-9 Team from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) to arrive and find me hiding under that brush.

No really, I'm pretty much a son of a gun. The parts list for John Browning's original Browning Hi-Power Pistol is embedded in the strands of my DNA.

I guess it's about time that I introduce myself, my name is Kolc 7, I am a 9mm Luger, pistol. I am 5 inches tall, weigh 32 ounces unloaded and I am 7.8 inches long. My description and my serial number K02188 were used to document my importation when I immigrated to the United States legally from Hungary at the beginning of 2017.

Every one of us guns has a story to tell and just like people, we hold some of the story inside us -- and some of it outside on our "sleeves" as well.

Unlike people, I can't tell my story alone. A human must apply a set of various processes that can extract the story from me -- as I don't have a mind of my own.

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### ***This is My Story***

The ATF Agent who recovered me was wearing nitrile gloves. In two quick motions that seemed like one, she dropped my magazine and racked my slide to clear a chambered round. She called out to one of the New Haven Detectives that yes -- I was indeed loaded.

I was under her control now and wondered if she had any idea of the crazy and tragic story I held. She and her colleagues would have to work for it. They had better make sure that in the process -- *they tag all the bases*.

Here's how the ATF, the New Haven Detectives and the State Forensic Lab were able to unlock the story that I held.

First, they ran my personal identifiers through the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) to check my lost or stolen status and enter me as recovered. There was no record of me ever being stolen. That didn't seem right to me. I hope they try harder and dig a bit deeper.

Next, they conducted a crime gun trace through the ATF eTrace system that is made available to law enforcement partners across the United States and in other countries as well. ATF has the authority and resources to trace the transactional history of a gun from the point of manufacture or importation to at least the first retail sale by a federally licensed dealer.

ATF learned that, I was created in Hungary and imported into the United States in early 2017. ATF traced my movements from Kolc USA in Largo, Florida, to a gun shop in Williston, Vermont, where a Burlington man in his mid-forties purchased me in the spring of 2017. Like many of my counterparts, I got around and my path crossed many jurisdictions.

When the ATF agents contacted my first retail purchaser, he told them that I had been stolen from the glove box of his pick-up truck where he always kept me. It never ceases to amaze us guns that humans don't view theft as the probable consequence of leaving us unattended in a motor vehicle.

Hey folks -- *"ya gotta"* keep your piece to keep the peace.

He had owned me just about a year, when he noticed me gone. He made the discovery as he opened his glove box to replace his expired 2017 Motor Vehicle Registration with his 2018 renewal.

He suspected that the 18-year-old son of his next-door neighbor had taken me to support his drug habit. He said that he didn't really pursue that theory because he felt sorry for the parents because the kid was always in some kind of trouble with the law.

I can make no judgments on the actions of a man not wanting to start trouble by accusing his neighbors of crimes. I don't have a mind of my own.

My first purchaser told the agents that he did report the theft to the police but told them that he did not keep a record of the serial number. Ah-ha -- now I know why there was no record of the theft in NCIC.

The "Coppers" still don't know how I got to Connecticut, but it's all "mice-nuts" anyway, at least compared to the rest of my story.

### ***It's a "Crime Gun" Story Now***

I wonder how successful this particular law enforcement team has been at extracting the stories that every crime gun holds?

Uh-oh someone's coming, I hear keys jingling. Some guy is opening the cage door. Me? You want me? Hey, step off -- put me down! I just got here a couple of hours ago. Where are we going?

I was put in an unmarked car. Not sure if it belonged to the New Haven "rollers" or the ATF. The signs indicated we were northbound on Interstate 91. We left the interstate at Exit 17 and followed Route 691 to Lewis Ave.

We had arrived at the *State of Connecticut Forensic Laboratory*.

There was no holding cage for me this time. I heard them say that they would put me on the “fast track” -- a series of forensic exams one right after another. These folks are serious about extracting my crime gun story and doing it quickly. I have no choice but to go with the flow. I don’t have a mind of my own.

### ***The Forensic Fast Track***

First, they scanned every nook and cranny of my body with beams of various colored lights. They were looking for Trace Evidence like blood, hairs and fibers. That kind of stuff was always getting trapped between my moving parts and snagged by the rough surfaces of my frame. A lot of this stuff belonged to my owners; some could have even belonged to those who held me only for a short time. Yes, some may even belong to the people that my possessors harmed. This exam took about 10 minutes.

As soon as they finished going over me with a “fine-tooth comb”, they hung me up in some type of fish tank looking thing. Inside the tank was a small dish containing a dab of *Super Glue*. A heating element under the dish helped transform the glue into wisps of *cianoacrylate fumes*. They removed my magazine and hung it beside me.

If latent fingerprints were present on me or my magazine, the fumes would adhere to any moisture deposited by human friction ridge skin and turn the ridges white so they could be readily seen and photographed. This took about 15 to 20 minutes.

No sooner had I gotten out of that fish tank; a technician began swabbing my body parts for DNA. Interestingly enough, the most probable areas to obtain workable DNA were also the least probable for finding readable latent fingerprints. The DNA swabbing was concentrated in areas such as the trigger, the backstrap and grips, the serrations on the rear of the slide, and the magazine. This took about 5 minutes.

After the DNA swabbing, I was taken into the ballistics unit’s firing range to obtain test fired samples for processing through the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN).

The crime gun intelligence collected from the previous checks and tests such as NCIC, eTrace, Latent Fingerprints and DNA would tend to help identify “who” may have been among the cast of characters who handled me. However, the NIBIN check is the one test that can help determine “what” crimes I may have been involved in.

Should NIBIN help link me to a murder, it will most likely mean “all hands-on deck” to finalize and pursue the results of the all of the other tests and intelligence collected to determine “who” was involved. Conversely, should NIBIN fail to link me to any crime, the data

collected thus far may simply be “banked” as crime gun intelligence which may prove somehow useful in the future. I knew I had been used for bad things. Maybe the NIBIN check would expose it all and that will in some way help to mitigate all the wrongs that people have done with me. Although I am racked with guilt and shame, confession is not something that I can do for myself. I don’t have a mind of my own.

I had been in police custody for just over 24 hours when I found myself back in that holding cage at the New Haven PD. While en-route, I heard the agents and detectives talking about the NIBIN results. It was like they had a magic rearview mirror, that let them see the trail of mayhem and murder left behind by the people who manipulated me and my trigger.

NIBIN uncovered the fact that over the period of a year or so following my theft from Vermont, I was used in almost two dozen shootings across the State of Connecticut and a few reaching into Massachusetts and Rhode Island as well. Many were just shots fired incidents. Some involved people who were injured -- some with serious wounds. Some involved property damage.

I try not to think about people dying. On one hand, I am ashamed and remorseful. On the other, I am able to live with it knowing that it was all the dastardly work of my trigger-pullers. I don’t have a mind of my own.

There was one case, that they seemed particularly interested in -- a “drive-by” at Ashmun and Webster Streets in New Haven.

### ***The Drive-by at Ashmun and Webster***

Today, Ashmun and Webster Streets are lined with townhouse and duplex style family residences built in early 2000. Back in the day, the intersection formed one of the major cross-roads of the massive and notorious Elm Haven Public Housing project developed in the 1940’s and 50’s and razed in the mid 1990’s as drugs, crime and violence washed over and swamped the area. But I digress.

In the fall of 2018, I was riding in the center console of a dodge charger with two of the crew who maintained me in their arsenal of weapons, when they pulled an impromptu drive-by shooting. It just so happened that my crew spotted three members of the Canal Street Crips, a rival gang stepping off the curb to cross the rather narrow intersection at Ashmun and Webster. They were simply targets of opportunity.

I don’t think any of them even got hit. The car I was in was moving fast and when the three “20-somethings” spotted our car they began to run. When the guy riding “shotgun” pulled me out of the console and held me out the window. He struggled to steady me. Unsure of which

of the three moving targets to sight in on, he just fired wildly in their general direction. He got about six shots off in rapid succession before we were out of range and the intended targets had disappeared into the night.

We got the hell out of there. The only thing left behind was the “brass” I spit out. The drafts of air from the passing cars and trucks sent the fired cartridge cases rolling “helter-skelter” across the intersection.

Until now, I always considered that drive-by a non-event --a “swing and a miss”.

I had been involved in a lot of shootings in my short life, but the way that the agents and detectives were talking about this one caught and held my attention. Something about this one seemed different.

### ***NIBIN: Crime Gun Intelligence***

When presented with the NIBIN results, one of the detectives said hey – that’s the drive-by homicide. Whoa what -- a drive-by homicide? What homicide are they talking about?

I listened more intently – they were speaking softly now, and I was straining to hear. The detectives told the agents that during the drive-by at Ashmun and Webster, one of the bullets struck the second-floor exterior wall of the townhouse on the North West Corner of the intersection. That bullet I fired -- no the trigger-puller fired -- punched through the wall and killed a nine-month-old baby boy who was asleep peacefully in his crib.

I’m tired of this. Many other Kolcs -- are never fired at people only paper targets. Many other Kolcs -- are used to serve and protect. I’m done with this, whatever the cops do with me now -- I don’t care. I don’t have a mind of my own.

The voices of the agents and detectives grew louder and louder again the more they talked about the drive-by at Ashmun and Webster. They were getting pumped and vowed to leave no stone unturned in searching for the people responsible for that evil act.

The big bosses christened the effort an ATF Crime Gun Intelligence (CGI) Task Force case. No sooner had they done that, I found myself hanging on a hook in the ATF evidence vault at the Federal Building on Court Street in New Haven, with an ATF property tag attached to my trigger guard. My days were numbered now.

Funny thing, in the days and weeks that followed while I hung from that hook on the wall there, I could overhear the ongoing discussions the investigators were having about this case. They really need to do something about that.

The CGI Task Force was staffed as follows: One ATF Supervisory Special Agent, three ATF Special Agents, one FBI Special Agent, one HSI Special Agent, and two ATF Intelligence Analysts, plus three New Haven PD Plainclothes Officers specially designated as Federal Task Force Officers.

When the task force agents got their hands on the NIBIN report, I knew my fate was sealed. From that point on I’d

***The technology points operators to potential matches, linking crimes, guns and suspects, at speeds well beyond human capability.***

be named in every report and record as the gun that fired the bullet - that went through the house – that killed the baby asleep in his crib.

It was my birthmarks, my own internal ballistic markings that exposed me. Simple physics really, the manufacturing tools that made me left marks on the surfaces of some of my major working parts. These marks transfer onto the surfaces of the bullets and cartridge cases that I discharge.

The IBISTRAX HD3D Technology used in NIBIN, captures 3D images of those markings, converts them to electronic signatures and compares them to the signatures of the other fired pieces of evidence from crime scenes and from test fired samples from other guns recovered during police investigations. The technology points operators to potential matches, linking crimes, guns and suspects, at speeds well beyond human capability.

Energized by the NIBIN lead, the Task Force set out to identify and apprehend the person who pulled my trigger and sent that bullet on its fatal trajectory.

CGI can be somewhat unpredictable. Sometimes all it takes is a single test or query like a NIBIN check to help solve a case. Sometimes it takes every tool in the crime solving tool box – like a series of stepping stones to make one’s way across a rushing brook. The trick is, you never know what it’s going to take -- one piece of CGI or many. You’ve got to be prepared for when it’s many.

### ***The CGI Task Force Takes Action***

One of the first moves that the Task Force agents made was to interview the drug addicted son of my first purchaser’s neighbor in Vermont.

Kids that wind up addicted to one form of drug or another today include: good kids, bad kids and everything kind of kid in between. They come from squared away families and dysfunctional families alike. The agents

hoped that the one they were on their way to talk to was a good one and that his family was squared away.

The agents appealed to the young man's sense of decency and compassion by mentioning that they were on the trail of a baby killer – it was the “ice breaker” that would get them what they came for.

The young man told the agents that he traded me to a guy named “The Butcher” -- a drug dealer from Lawrence, Massachusetts for a hundred bucks and a bundle of dime bags of heroin. The guys from Lawrence would come up to Burlington each week functioning as the supply side of the drug fueled epidemic that was killing the Green Mountain Boys -- and Girls too.

### ***The Butcher***

A telephone call made by one of the CGI Task Force Officers (TFO) to the Lawrence PD narcotics unit identified The Butcher as Dwayne Robinette well known to law enforcement in that area. He had recently been released from the Billerica House of Correction where he had served six months on a domestic violence “beef” with twelve more months left to serve on probation. He was fastidious about making his telephonic probation reports. It made him easy to find.

Dwyane The Butcher didn't want nor need any more trouble at this point in his life and the only thing the Task Force guys were interested in now was how he disposed of me -- the Kolc 7 he picked-up in Vermont. The Butcher told the agents that he and his guys would “re-up” their “products” in New York and would pass through New Haven on the way. He said he liked the New Haven pizza and this one particular “Gentlemen's Club” over in the Fair Haven Section of the City. It was there in the summer of 2018, that he said he sold me to one of the dancers who worked there for \$250 and a free pass to the VIP room. All he could say was that she was short with long dark hair and pretty - a “*Tiny Dancer*”.

And there you go; the table had been set. The agents and The Butcher got what they wanted, and each walked away the better for it. At least for now.

### ***Forensic Follow-up***

On the way back to New Haven, the CGI Task Force agents met with the Forensic team again at the Connecticut State Police Lab to discuss the status of the DNA swabbing, the Latent Fingerprint exams and the visual examinations for Trace Evidence rather than wait for a final comprehensive report which could have been weeks away from being prepared. The Lab provided them with an interim briefing on the examinations completed up to that point.

I wasn't there but I overheard the officers briefing the Task Force supervisor from their written notes when they returned to the Federal Building.

**DNA:** “*The current status: In process.*”

**Latent Fingerprints:** “*A readable latent fingerprint believed to be an “Ulnar Loop” was found on the Kolc 7 magazine. A search of the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) and the Next Generation Identification (NGI) system revealed a match from the civil repository section to a young woman named Vendetta Venable who had applied to be a School Bus Driver in New Haven, Connecticut, a couple of years ago and was legally required to be fingerprinted as part of the application process.*”

**Trace Evidence:** “*Still to be tested hairs and fibers were found and collected from along the slide rails and in the crevices surrounding the trigger housing and the hammer. A dried blood stain was found on the underside of the Kolc 7's slide at the very rear just below the serrated area. A DNA profile was extracted from the stain and searched through CODIS. The search produced a CODIS hit to a young man named Scott Rankin, a convicted felon and registered sex offender.*”

Hanging on that hook in the property vault, I continued to learn all kinds of neat stuff about how the Task Force worked and what they were uncovering.

Each week the Task Force held its regular “Unsolved Shootings Review”. Members of the CGI Task Force which included the Federal Agents, TFO's and Intelligence Analysts, were also joined by the Assistant Director of the Connecticut State Forensic Lab, an Assistant State's Attorney from the States Attorney's Office and an Assistant U.S. Attorney from the United States Attorney's Office.

### ***The Tiny Dancer and Her Boyfriend***

The intelligence analysts provided briefings on the local intelligence workups they had prepared for Scott Rankin and Vendetta Venable. They included the normal personal history information and arrest and conviction information.

“Rankin had past arrests and convictions for drug dealing and burglary. He also had a Sexual Assault on a Minor conviction which resulted in his registration as a sex offender and explained why his DNA profile was in CODIS.”

“Venable had a few misdemeanor arrests for disorderly conduct, breach of peace and possession with intent to use drug paraphernalia which were all dismissed or “nolled”. The TFO's opined that she received leniency on those misdemeanors because she was a single mother raising two young children. She was short with long dark hair and pretty – a *Tiny Dancer*.

One of the most interesting points presented about Rankin was his association with a local street gang called Farnham Fairhaven or F2 for short. Farnham was the name of the housing project that they all hailed from located in the Fairhaven section of New Haven. The F2 were well documented and well-deserved enemies of the Canal St. Crips. Another interesting piece of intelligence the analysts found, was that Rankin's Facebook page listed Vendetta Venable as one of his friends.

### ***Where Art Thou Vendetta?***

Vendetta, Vendetta where art thou Vendetta -- and why are your fingerprints on the magazine of the gun that killed the sleeping baby in its crib?

The Task Force Agents actually found Vendetta working at *"The Corset Factory Gentlemen's Club and Steakhouse"* in Fairhaven. The club was located in a historic factory complex, that once produced undergarments. Converted to commercial and residential use, it fit the description of the place that Dwyane "The Butcher" had described.

The pieces of the puzzle were starting to fall into place and the rate of speed at which they were falling seemed to increase with each new piece.

### ***Flip it Flip it Good***

At first, Vendetta tried to shake the officers off her tail. She was adamant that she did not know anyone named The Butcher and never bought a gun. In general, she said that she had no idea at all about what they were asking about.

It is probably a scientific fact, the first story a guilty person tells police is a lie. This case was too important to the TFO's and agents to play "cat and mouse" with Vendetta.

The agents had come prepared, they allowed Vendetta the token opportunity to lie and then served her with the Grand Jury Subpoena, that the Assistant U.S. Attorney working with them on the unsolved shootings review team had obtained for them. With a smile and a kind word they told her that she could go and . . . tell that story to the Federal Grand Jury.

Like Aspirin, a Grand Jury subpoena can help fix what's ailing a reluctant witness. One subpoena served in the morning, can motivate the witness to recount every detail of the real story even if it takes all afternoon. This is because most people hate to be compelled to attend any legal proceeding. They will usually take the path of least resistance and tell you what you want to know -- when you want to know it. Sometimes, they delay a day or so to seek legal counsel, but even then, they usually come around.

It's hard to lie to 18 people you don't know. They can ask you any questions they desire, and they can indict you for any federal crime including perjury.

Vendetta booked off work that day and provided a written statement of what really happened concerning her exchanges with The Butcher.

She said that during the Summer of 2018, her boyfriend Scott Rankin told her that he wanted to buy a gun "without paper" because he was a convicted felon and could not pass a formal background check. He asked her to keep her eyes and ears open for him.

Vendetta corroborated The Butcher's recollection of the transaction at the Gentlemen's Club in New Haven and more.

She added that she really was afraid of guns and had asked The Butcher to unload it for her. He released the loaded magazine and handed it to her and then he cleared the cartridge in the chamber and held on to that himself. Vendetta said she put the gun and the magazine in an empty McDonald's bag that she had pulled out of the trash can located in the dancer's dressing room. She then called her boyfriend Scott Rankin, to meet her at the rear door of the club where along with a hug and a kiss, she passed him the bag.

The hook was set, Vendetta was securely on the Task Force's line. She would become an active CI/witness and a recording star as well.

The plan was to serve Vendetta and her boyfriend Scott Rankin with Grand Jury Subpoenas. Vendetta would call her boyfriend and tell him that the "Feds" had information that she sold a gun to a felon that was used to kill a baby. She was to tell Rankin that the police said that they knew much more of the story and that the people involved would be going to prison for a long time. She was to tell her boyfriend that she was "freaking-out" at the thought of going to prison and being separated from her children. She was to demand that they not speak by telephone and that he come to her apartment and explain what the hell was going on.

### ***Lights, Cameras, Action***

The ATF Tactical Operations Officers (TOOs) would "wire-up" Vendetta's living room for video and sound. One flip of a hidden switch and she would turn her apartment into a sound stage that rivaled any on network TV.

Rankin swallowed the bait. He showed up at Vendetta's apartment and she flipped the switch. The TOOs had installed a transmitter as well and several of the Task Force agents were listening in real time -- staged strategically outside on the streets around Vendetta's



apartment ready to respond quickly if they thought she was in danger. She was on their team now.

When the meeting between Vendetta and Rankin ended, the Task Force Agents returned to the office. I overheard the briefing they gave to their Supervisor and other colleagues.

“In an effort to reassure her that she was not in legal jeopardy, Rankin admitted that he was there that night at Ashmun and Webster. He said that he was driving, and that Buddy Stanton was riding “shotgun”. He said that, Buddy spotted three Crips from Canal Street. Rankin said that he told Buddy to grab the pistol from the console which he did and began shooting out the window but didn’t hit anyone.”

“Rankin tried to convince Vendetta, that because the gun she had bought for him was not left behind at the scene that night, it could not have been associated with the drive-by in any way. Rankin, grabbed Vendetta by the shoulders, looked into her eyes and said: *“Vendetta, look there’s nothing to worry about -- all the cops have is some “brass” in the gutter.”*

As more pieces of the puzzle fell into place -- faster and faster the remaining pieces fell.

### ***Justice - Resolution - Peace***

The cases would be charged in the Superior Court of New Haven County. Vendetta was listed as an un-indicted co-conspirator. Rankin agreed to testify against Buddy Stanton and plead to aiding 1<sup>st</sup> degree Manslaughter with a Firearm. His cooperation would be brought to the attention of the Court for any consideration it may deem appropriate.

Buddy Stanton initially pleaded not guilty to Murder with Special Circumstances (a victim under 16) as it carries a mandatory Life sentence.

I overheard the Task Force agents discussing a supplemental Lab report they received a couple of weeks after Buddy Stanton’s arraignment. One of the agents called out to others across the room. “Hey, remember those miscellaneous hairs and fibers the lab found? The hairs belong to Buddy Stanton.”

The agents laughed when talking about Buddy’s method of concealed carry -- down low inside his Jockey Shorts.

Facing new evidence, Buddy agreed to plead guilty to plain Murder. It could give him a shot at parole one day.

It’s been over six months since the takedown of Scott Rankin and Buddy Stanton. From time to time, I would

overhear some of the officers talking about the case as I hung on my hook in the property room. Mostly they would inquire as to the disposition of the cases against the two baby killers.

Let me bring you up-to-date, I’ve got to be brief though as I’m running out of time here.

Scott Rankin is about six months into a 10-year sentence. The Judge gave him credit for his cooperation in the case and for agreeing to give testimony against Buddy Stanton.

Stanton in turn has just completed the first six months of his twenty-five to life bid. He must serve at least 25 years.

### ***“See ya Later Alligator”***

And me? I’m with two ATF agents at a scrap metal yard on Universal Drive in North Haven just over the New Haven line.

Today is my execution day. It comes pursuant to a Destruction Order issued by the Court.

Any second now, I am about to be placed under a large scrap metal cutting machine categorized as an *“Alligator Style Hydraulic Shear”*. With the capacity to apply hundreds of tons of pressure, it will slice through my body like a hot knife through butter. The agents will then execute an ATF Form indicating that I have been destroyed and all my parts thereof properly disposed of.

Looking back over my lifecycle, many would say that I deserved nothing less. That said, some others may disagree on the grounds that – I don’t have a mind of my own.

### ***The Reason Why***

The real story here rests with the many victims of violent crimes such as this. For example, the Family of the child killed in the drive-by at Ashmun and Webster, still grieves their tragic loss and will continue to do so until the day they leave this world themselves.

While “closure” is something that will elude them forever, they at least need and deserve “resolution”.

The law enforcers, forensic experts and prosecutors who collaborated in this case worked as a team with compassion, skill and dedication.

Today, they and others like them remain steadfast in their quest to seek justice for every victim of a violent crime, resolution for their families and peace for their neighbors.

What better reasons -- for what better purpose?

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