LAST CALL

A True Story of Love, Lust, and Murder in Queer New York

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A NOTE TO READERS

This book, a work of nonfiction, is the result of three years of reporting. I conducted repeated interviews with selected family members, friends, and associates of the victims, as well as dozens of law enforcement officials. In order to flesh out the contours of each homicide investigation, I relied on trial transcripts; hundreds of stories culled from newspapers and magazines; the personal notes of investigators; and assorted files that were generously shared. It is with the aid of such documents and interviews that I could faithfully reproduce dialogue.

Some names have been withheld, and, where noted, some names and locations have been changed to preserve anonymity.

1

JOHN DOE

May 5, 1991

Ten minutes short of three o'clock on a moderately warm Sunday afternoon, a turnpike maintenance worker was emptying the green barrels at a rest area in Lancaster County on the westbound side of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. He was looking for aluminum cans to sort, when he pulled hard on a plastic trash bag that he simply couldn't lift. A strong five foot six, he'd never had a problem emptying the barrels in his six years on the job. *What's in this bag that I can't lift?*

Annoyed, he rooted around for a stick, and opened the bag. "But every time I opened one bag there was another bag," he recalled years later.

Another poke, another bag. Another poke, another bag. Another poke, another bag.

He assumed it was a deer carcass. Now he realized it was, in all likelihood, something more sinister.

When he finally got the last bag opened—eight in total—he couldn't make out what it was.

"It looked like a loaf of bread," he says. "But then I saw freckles."

Grabbing a radio, he called his supervisors, who notified the Pennsylvania State Police.

The maintenance worker had been an emergency medical technician

years before, so he was unfazed by the remains. Later on, though, after he transported the body to the morgue in Lancaster—an unorthodox turn of events, as no one else on scene drove a truck—he shivered with unease when it was suggested he take an AIDS test. He hadn't come into contact with blood.

It was a time of heightened, often irrational caution; only a few years earlier, William Masters and Virginia Johnson warned that AIDS could be transmitted via a toilet seat. Eleven hundred and fifty six Pennsylvanians died of the disease the year before. In February, Jean White, whose teenage son Ryan had died after becoming infected during a blood transfusion, addressed an audience at nearby Elizabethtown College. "People need to be educated about AIDS, to understand the disease and how it is transmitted," wrote the editors of the local paper. "AIDS is a frightening disease. But with education and awareness, people can learn how to take precautions against AIDS and to treat those who are HIV positive as real people, not as monsters."

Queer Pennsylvanians—trans Pennsylvanians, disproportionately—were the targets. It was believed that AIDS dripped off the walls of the Tally-Ho Tavern on Lancaster's West Orange Street. The city's queer bookstore, the Closet, would be bombed twice that summer; the second time—after the proprietor had been shot at—four sticks of dynamite leveled the store, blowing a hole straight through the back wall. The rainbow flag in the window was partially incinerated.

State police are assigned to cases large and small, pressing and inconsequential, in jurisdictions that lack their own police departments. Such was the case in Rapho Township. The criminal investigations unit, considered the elite members of the troop, handled everything from criminal mischief to murder. It was a one-stop shop.

Jay Musser, a tall, fresh-faced officer with bangs cut straight across his forehead, was off-duty that Sunday afternoon. He arrived at the rest

area at milepost 265.2 to find his colleagues already at work. He'd been a trooper for ten years and was part-time SWAT, which meant, his boss would say with admiration, he wasn't prone to negotiation. Musser was a member of Troop J, charged with Southeastern Pennsylvania's Lancaster and Chester counties, and this was his territory. It was a lonely, forgettable stretch of road. The last incident that raised an eyebrow occurred thirteen years earlier when the white Lincoln ferrying Governor Milton Shapp—and driven, as it happened, by a trooper—was logged doing nineteen miles an hour over the speed limit.

A dead, naked man with visible chest and back wounds, found in a trash barrel on the turnpike about thirty feet back from the road, was a significant event in these parts.

A few years earlier, Musser was subject to a modicum of press coverage for his involvement in the case of the Amish Hat Bandit. As recounted by the Associated Press: a middle-aged man from Kirkwood, a little farming town, claimed that two assailants, one carrying a gun, broke into his and a nearby relative's home and stole nearly twenty of his family's hats, valued at several hundred dollars. The state police were called in. They suspected he had pilfered the hats himself, in part because he wasn't in church when they'd gone missing. But there was little proof. Musser, however, deployed an interrogation method that exploited the man's religiosity.

"You look me straight in the eye," he told the perpetrator, "and swear to *God* that you didn't take them hats, and I'll believe you."

Unable or unwilling to do it, the hat thief confessed.

But the larger Lancaster County had seen worse. In 1990, there were thirteen homicides. Most of those occurred in the city of Lancaster. Beyond those borders, however, things tended to be more peaceful. "Nothing but forest and farmland," as Musser put it. To murder a man and leave him here, at mile marker 265.2, where there was nothing around but road, trees, and sky, was strange. "This ain't like New Jersey, where the mafia is dumping bodies," noted a trooper.

Musser, in seven years on the criminal investigations unit, had seen only one other dead body—a stillborn baby left by the side of the road in Amish country. He tended to compose himself well, not betray his emotions. In later years, he would fall apart only once on account of the job's horrors, when a young boy who resembled Musser's son hanged himself on Thanksgiving Day.

The rest area was little more than a barren strip on the edge of dense woods. The sight was gruesome: an emaciated man who, in addition to chest and back wounds, had his penis severed and shoved into his mouth. In times of absurdity, we sometimes resort to the ridiculous and banal, and Musser, as he surveyed the wound, was no different. *It was,* the trooper thought, *missing from where it was supposed to be*.

Musser felt intuitively the attack had been personal and deliberate and premeditated. It was not spur-of-the-moment.

The savagery of the corpse was belied by the victim's facial expression. He almost looked calm. Peaceful. In fact, once removed from the bags and laid out on his side on the gravel, in a fetal position with his left hand clenched, he appeared to be sleeping. It looked this way because he had not been there long. Dead bodies tend to smell bad after a while, and this one, which showed no evidence of decomposition, didn't. It was a fresh body.

Harnish, clean-shaven and trim, wearing a suit that drew no attention to itself—a pen nestled in the breast pocket—arrived on the scene a little after 5:00 P.M. He oversaw the troop's criminal investigations unit of ten troopers and two corporals. The longtime local, who raised Christmas trees in his off-hours, was watchful, considerate. He expected his troopers to wear a tie and jacket, and would carefully fold his own and place it in the back seat before getting behind the wheel. This adherence to custom was a holdover from when he got to the academy in 1965. It was a prim and proper time, Harnish would say, when he could not recognize marijuana by either sight or smell.

The precise cause of death was a mystery, as was the man's identity.

Neither Musser nor the other criminal investigators could find any personal possessions.

Who was *this guy?*

At Harnish's behest, the dead man in the green barrel was quickly fingerprinted. But the five-foot-four corpse, barely one hundred pounds, didn't leave much for the troopers to work with. In several areas there was lividity, or postmortem settling of the blood, which suggested the body had been moved more than once. A lack of rigidity, often referred to as rigor mortis, meant death occurred no more than thirty-six hours prior to discovery. There were three bruises on the scalp, all fresh, indicating they were no more than a day old. There were similar, suspicious injuries elsewhere: a particularly large bruise on the forearm, just beyond the bend of the elbow, and one on the shin.

The stab wound in the back, between the inner margin of the right shoulder blade and the spine, was more consequential. But it was the abdomen that suffered the most severe trauma. There was a gaping, oval wound most likely made by something sharp. Just above that was another stab wound, roughly a half inch in length, oriented, a medical examiner observed, "in an eleven to five o'clock line as one looks at a watch." The skin, the muscle, the omentum, and the mesentery—a fatty sheath that holds the intestines to the body wall—were all perforated. These were the wounds that killed.

Another wound showed only a negligible amount of hemorrhaging: the severed penis, blessedly, was a postmortem injury.

The man's diminutive size initially led state police astray, to a racetrack. "We have to think of jockeys," Harnish told a crime-desk reporter. He took the possibility of the dead man being a jockey seriously enough that his squad contacted Penn National, a mile away from where the body was found. Racetrack management reported that none of its forty riders were missing. There were other blind alleys: troopers from the Bowmansville barracks visited turnpike tollbooths and truck stops to inquire about suspicious people who might've passed through.

Meanwhile, the state police's latent fingerprint examiner was given the eight trash bags. Using cyanoacrylate fuming, known colloquially as superglue, he developed twenty-eight fingerprints and three palm prints. The fingerprints were put into the state's database, but there were no matches. The prints were then sent to New York, Virginia, and New Jersey. These searches, too, yielded nothing.

Tips came in, some of which were heartbreaking. A Lancaster woman wondered if the dead man was her son, missing a month. A New Jersey sergeant inquired if the body was, perhaps, a man who hadn't been seen since December. Or the Pennsylvania man who'd gone missing. "Slight build, in 30's but looks 50," Harnish wrote in elegant cursive. "Tattoos on fingers." It wasn't his John Doe. But maybe it was a thirtysomething who had vanished three months ago? No—in that case, the upper teeth were missing. A call to the morgue confirmed that Troop J's body had all his natural teeth and expensive dental work.

Other tips were intriguing dead ends. A woman driving east on the turnpike glanced in her rearview mirror and saw a man walking by the barrel. He appeared to be in his early twenties and had dark hair. Another call came in suggesting that, owing to the placement of the severed penis, their unknown man had been the victim of organized crime. The mob, after all, was known to do something similar to enemies. On any given case, Harnish estimated, more than half of the tips don't go anywhere. Musser, for his part, didn't often find them useful. They frequently came from people who just wanted to be part of the investigation.

State police placed posters with a composite sketch of the John Doe on the side of tollbooths. The payoff was immediate: the image looked familiar to members of First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, a National Guard unit.

The group, headed to a gathering at Fort Indiantown Gap, believed that the dead man was one of their own. They were even more certain when, upon arriving at "the Gap," their friend was absent.

Suspicions were soon confirmed.

Five days later, at mile marker 303.1 along the Chester County stretch of the turnpike, a truck driver stumbled on two fifty-five-gallon trash containers. Among the effects were several pairs of socks—argyle, pink, blue—a corduroy hat, two pairs of boxer shorts, Brooks Brothers charcoal slacks, a brown belt, a T-shirt with THE BLACK DOG, MARTHA'S VINEYARD printed on the back, and traveler's checks in fifty-dollar denominations.

There also was a parking ticket issued in Philadelphia, two pieces of paper with names and phone numbers, nineteen Mellon Bank checks with numerous deposit slips, and an identification card that confirmed membership in First Troop. The personal effects would prove useful to piecing together the man's life, but they weren't necessary for identification. National Guard dental records were a match.

John Doe was Peter Stickney Anderson, fifty-four, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

2

THE BANKER

During the initial examination of Peter Anderson's body and personal effects, a trooper found a note in his briefcase with the name of a woman. The woman reported seeing Peter the Tuesday or Thursday before he died, at the Blue Parrot, a piano bar on Philadelphia's Drury Lane. This would prove to be one of many queer establishments visited by Harnish and Musser during their two-week investigation.

Harnish and Musser made the rounds, interviewing patrons and employees of Raffles, Woody's, and 247, all bars clustered near Center City. With each visit, the troopers got a better sense of Peter's social circle and routine. It was apparent that, of all the establishments, his favorite was the Blue Parrot.

Hidden down a back alley, the Blue Parrot didn't look like a typical piano bar. With the dark wood walls and late-nineteenth-century prints of ducks, it looked, recalled one regular, "like a gentlemen's lounge at a hunting lodge." As patrons walked in, the bar was to their left along the wall. The drinks were reasonable—a bourbon manhattan was five dollars. Three quarters of the drinkers on any given night were regulars, many of whom were active in the city's theater scene.

The big Friday and Saturday draw was Michael Ogborn, a composer and lyricist then in his late twenties, who played the piano and sang American standards in a tenor. To the regulars of the Blue Parrot, the experience of

singing with Ogborn was akin to church. A beloved, oft-remembered bit from his set was a snarky tribute to dead divas, including Karen Carpenter. It was preceded by chants from the audience: *Dig. Her. Up! Dig. Her. Up!*

Peter Anderson was a regular. Even amid a packed and rowdy house, his vices were clear to see. He drank heavily and had plenty of company. "There were a lot of people around Michael Ogborn who were about to be going to AA, and I was one of them," chuckled a patron years later.

The Blue Parrot's clientele skewed middle-aged, and the vanilla nature of the place was perfect for Peter. This was no den of hustlers and leather men. It was not, recalled a bartender, "a meat market." It was just a place to go for music and company and maybe to meet someone. It was a place where Peter could, if only for a few hours a day, several days a week, be himself.

A second phone number found in Peter's jacket led troopers to an acquaintance from Church of the Holy Trinity, an episcopal house of worship on the northwest corner of Rittenhouse Square. The congregation, starchy and reserved, was largely upper-class and upper-middle-class. Each Sunday, there was glorious singing. It was not a place for fire breathing. The acquaintance didn't know Peter intimately (twice they'd had dinner, and Peter seemed lovely but deeply sad), yet he was knowledgeable enough to inform troopers about the victim's personal life—there was a second wife, from whom he was separated, and he had been a portfolio manager at Mellon Bank. Once they learned this, Harnish and Musser began calling the case Banker in the Barrel.

The authorities continued to build a profile of Peter: he was born on March 14, 1937, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Betsey Brooke and Giles Anderson, a salesman. His mother graduated from Wellesley College, his father from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. They married four years before Peter's birth and raised their son in Pittsburgh. A sister was born in 1940.

At eighteen, Peter departed for Trinity College, five hundred miles away in Hartford, Connecticut. In his yearbook photo, under which is

noted his degree in government, Peter looks serene and kind in a jacket and tie. The yearbook entry also mentions his membership in a number of clubs: Canterbury, Sports Car, Young Republicans, Corinthian Yacht Club. In May 1959, the student newspaper where he was on staff, *The Trinity Tripod,* documented the yachters' fifth-place finish behind Harvard: "Tom Ludlow and Howdy McIlvaine acted as skipper with Peter Anderson and Paul Goodman as crew."

Trinity College during the latter years of the Eisenhower administration was, by reputation, an unruly place. Two days before a football game, students destroyed the goalposts of rival Amherst, whose student paper accused Trinity of theft. The *Tripod,* rather than deny the allegations, groused that "the Trinity gentleman seems to be headed into oblivion." The unsigned editorial continued: "Trinity has been known for some time as one of the worst behaved colleges in the east. It is apparent that the student body, which is ultimately responsible for condoning these actions by silence, does not wish to alter this impression. It is time that both the student body and the administration stopped coddling these offenders."

Peter's fraternity, Psi Upsilon, wasn't felonious, but it wasn't academically minded either. These were smart, unathletic young men whose intelligence rarely translated into hard work or good grades. "Once I got into college, I just slacked off," says Dixon Harris, a contemporary of Peter's who was eventually recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency. Another former member describes his fraternity brothers as "high-living private school boys." W. Croft Jennings, an English major a year behind Peter, likened the fraternity to *Animal House*. The two weren't terribly close, but the Psi Upsilon bond was such that Peter attended Jennings's wedding at the First Presbyterian Church in New Canaan, Connecticut, where he and other brothers served as ushers.

On the weekends, girls from Smith, Mount Holyoke, and Vassar visited. While the rest of the brothers caroused downstairs, Peter was up in his room writing. There were no suspicions he was gay, and for good

reason: the possibility would not have crossed anyone's mind. Trinity students didn't admit to such yearnings. What stuck with Jennings, decades after Peter's death, was how much he liked him. And, as with everyone who met Peter, Jennings took note of his size and tendency to dress well, describing him as a "dapper little person."

A girlfriend of a fraternity brother remembered Peter's loneliness: "He just wanted to be a part of the boys. He was more like a mascot." There was a deep sadness about him, and a palpable eagerness to be not only liked, but moneyed. "He wanted to appear to the manner born."

As detectives were investigating Anderson's death, a break in the case came from several tips, which led them to Tony Brooks. Brooks, twenty-six, a partner in a management consulting firm, was now running for a seat on the Philadelphia City Council. He was considered an excellent candidate—if only, wrote the *Philadelphia Daily News,* "a little less grizzled than prime time would require."

In his younger days, Brooks dreamed of politics and the priesthood. But fear of being outed as a gay man had been a deterrent. When he was in his twenties, Brooks's mother asked why he no longer dated girls, and he told her the truth. This led to a year of broken relations with his mother, and Brooks was devastated. To cope with his desires, and society's presumed demands, he went to the gym and put muscle on his six-foot-two-inch frame, believing that no one would equate a brawny man with homosexuality. He even got engaged to a woman. In that light, it wasn't really a surprise that, as he ran for the open council seat in 1991, he was in the closet to Philadelphia at large.

Brooks told the troopers he and Peter drove to Manhattan together on May 3 to attend a fundraising dinner. They'd left Philadelphia at three o'clock and arrived at five. Peter came along, in part, because Bill Green, a New York representative Peter knew, would be there. Brooks, as far as the troopers could discern, was the last person to see Peter alive.

* * *

On May 11, 1991, a coterie of troopers, including Harnish and Musser, visited Peter's apartment at 2020 Walnut Street, a thirty-two-story condo building better known as Wanamaker House. A few years earlier and with great fanfare, the Wanamaker was converted from a rental building to a condominium. An ad in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* boasted of "discriminating" tenants who enjoyed a twenty-four-hour doorman, a health club, and indoor parking. One-bedrooms went to market for about $100,000. From its roof, residents could enjoy a view of Center City, home to a lot of industry but also the Gayborhood, the nickname for an area with many gay- and lesbian-friendly businesses.

The Wanamaker was two blocks off Rittenhouse Square, a public park that predated the creation of the United States. By the early 1800s, the park had become the domain of the rich. James Harper, a merchant and brick manufacturer, built the first townhouse on the north side of the square in 1840, at 1811 Walnut Street. Over the next ninety years, the barons flocked: Alexander Cassatt, president of the Philadelphia Railroad and brother of Mary; William Weightman, a chemical manufacturer and one of the largest landowners in the country; and the founder of the city's first department store, John Wanamaker, who also served as postmaster general under President Benjamin Harrison.

Since even before World War II, the square was a locus for gay men and lesbians: a cruisy expanse where folks of all different backgrounds could find each other. Rittenhouse was a formative place—it was where queer Philadelphians first encountered a community. As a Rittenhouse regular put it to Marc Stein, author of the seminal history *City of Sisterly and Brotherly Loves*: "When I met those people, it was equivalent to coming out, to understanding that there was a gay life."

By the 1950s, Rittenhouse Square was a necessary proxy for bars. Elsewhere, it was too risky for men to dance or be seen touching each other. Philadelphia's beefy, grease-haired future police commissioner, Frank

Rizzo, did not hide his disdain. Of his political enemies, he once said, "Just wait after November, you'll have a front row seat because I'm going to make Attila the Hun look like a faggot." Rizzo was famous for raiding establishments that were friendly to queer people. In the late fifties, when Rizzo had achieved the rank of inspector, that meant coffee shops. One of his obsessions was Humoresque Coffee Shop, a few blocks west of Rittenhouse on Sansom Street. Over an eight-month stretch between 1958 and 1959, Rizzo's men busted the place twenty-five times. The shop's owner sued for damages and requested an injunction against the inspector. The judge sided with the cops, declaring there was no doubt that Humoresque was "so operated as to constitute a public nuisance." Furthermore, he said—correctly—the shop was "a gathering place for homosexuals."

And so it was that the queer community was driven outdoors. On any given night, Rittenhouse was a seven-acre open-air club enjoyed by hundreds. Inevitably, such meeting spots, which had been adopted out of necessity, couldn't just be allowed to exist, and there was a tug-of-war over who, precisely, could stake a claim to Rittenhouse. In 1966, a *Philadelphia Inquirer* columnist summed up the dispute in blunt terms: "The just-plain-folks want it to be a quiet, leafy glade of proper people, properly dressed. And the young kids want it as a turned-on meeting place. And the homosexuals want it to drag and swish in."

A member of First Troop accompanied the investigators as they conducted the search of Peter's apartment. The one-bedroom wasn't well kept. Their first impression, recalled a trooper, is that it was obvious the occupant was a bachelor. "It wasn't trashed," he said, "but it could've used a little housekeeping." What stuck out in his memory was the bathtub filled with magazines. *Where,* he wondered, *did Peter bathe?*

The search, which ended after a few hours, provided evidence of a recent male houseguest. A jar of K-Y gel on the nightstand raised an

eyebrow among the straitlaced investigators. They identified him and tracked the man to his own apartment, which he shared with a girlfriend. There was blood on the ceiling—residue from shooting heroin—but no indication the couple was involved in the killing.

Two days later, Jay Musser and a partner took a trip to New York, hoping to learn about Peter's final night. The troopers checked in with the local precinct and then headed to the apartment of Robby Browne, who had hosted the fundraiser for Tony Brooks's political campaign. A Manhattan real estate agent, Browne sold high-end residential property, including the sale a year earlier of Geraldo Rivera's penthouse. The troopers reasoned that whoever murdered Peter may have passed through Browne's grand Upper West Side apartment overlooking Central Park.

It was Browne's first fundraiser, but queer-related causes had been near to his heart since 1985, when his brother, a graduate of Andover and Yale and a pilot during the Vietnam War, died of AIDS. Nobody gave a damn about his brother. Browne wondered, *Does he not count?*

Browne had gone to Harvard Business School, where homosexuality was not embraced. He acted accordingly. When he put personal ads in *The Boston Phoenix,* he pretended to be bisexual because "of course you couldn't be gay." Eventually, Browne found a boyfriend. But then AIDS hit. Browne "freaked out and shut down." He later said celibacy kept him alive. The disease had since decimated Browne's social circle; in his later years, he was left with almost no contemporaries.

Spurred by the death of his brother, Browne made an effort to be around queer people and to support them. He went to a party in the Hamptons and began to make friends. Soon, it became impossible to live a lie. He became an activist, serving on the respective boards of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation and the Gay Games, and got involved in politics. Browne first met Tony Brooks at Fire Island Pines, a hamlet that a visitor once astutely analogized to a gay Brigadoon. The Pines, Browne reflected, was the only place he experienced freedom, "or what a straight person feels every day of their life."

When Brooks—charismatic and startlingly handsome—wanted to run for office in Philadelphia, Browne was impressed. He agreed to hold a fundraiser in Manhattan. Forty or so men and women, beautifully dressed and mostly Log Cabin Republicans, milled around Browne's home on May 3, 1991.

Within a decade, half the attendees of the fundraiser were dead from AIDS-related complications.

As the guests talked and drank, Peter Anderson stood by the entrance, nudging new arrivals to donate. In walked a man he hadn't seen in nearly twenty years: Anthony Hoyt.

It's not clear what Peter was thinking, but Hoyt remembers his own reaction: *Oh. My. God.*

On the New York trip, the troopers drilled Browne and Hoyt with questions, trying to piece together Peter's last night alive. Browne was asked to produce his garbage bags, as the investigators believed there was a chance the murderer had attended the fundraiser and left with them.

Of the two men, the focus was on Hoyt. He had left the fundraiser with Peter. He took a polygraph test and passed. As far as troopers knew, Hoyt was an executive in magazine publishing who, decades earlier, had roomed with Peter.

This was the truth. But not the entire truth. It would be a long time before Hoyt told anyone what had happened all those years ago, and how important he and Peter had been to each other.

Around 1961, after graduating from Trinity College, Peter moved to Manhattan. There he met a tall, skinny, clean-cut man named Tony in a bar. There was a room available in his apartment on East Eighty-first Street, Hoyt told him. It was a doorman building, but the apartment, a two-bedroom that already held two men, was not finely appointed. Peter needed a place to live and moved right in.

Peter had already begun his career in finance, at Bank of New York,

while Hoyt worked for the advertising agency Fuller & Smith & Ross, on the Air France account. The rent, six hundred dollars a month, was split equally among the three.

Even in his later years, after other memories had gone hazy, Hoyt retained a piercing clarity when he talked about his love for Peter: "Peter and I had sort of a romance. *More* than sort of a romance—we had *quite* a romance." Peter was charming and caring and sensitive. "A good guy," Hoyt would say, with a healthy wistfulness. And who could forget Peter's nattiness? "He always wore a bow tie, and I'll remember that always."

It never came off, he joked, even in the shower.

Tony and Peter went to bars on Third Avenue in the evening, and sometimes entertained at home. Croft Jennings, Peter's fraternity brother, remembered a party at the apartment, mostly because the host didn't serve dinner until midnight. Peter, he marveled, "hadn't a clue as to what he was doing."

Peter and Hoyt were firmly in the closet. Neither had had any same-sex experience. But a physical relationship soon began. Hoyt is certain a lot of alcohol was consumed, as it took courage to stop pretending. Even with a six-inch height disparity, their bodies just fit together.

"The time," Hoyt said, "was so different." Just ten years earlier, the U.S. State Department was purged of gays and lesbians, whom Senator Joseph McCarthy deemed a threat to national security. All told, thousands of federal employees were fired. But the terror wasn't just on a federal level. There was a 1923 state law under which it was a criminal act for a man to even *ask* another man for sex, so New York City police in the 1930s sent their best-looking officers undercover into gay bars. Once a target suggested they leave the bar for a more intimate setting, an arrest was made. Tens of thousands of men were entrapped in this fashion until the late 1960s, when gay activists pressed Mayor John Lindsay to end the practice. "If it had been today—in today's society—we could've been partners," Hoyt reflects. "But in those days, you weren't gay. Gay was

not good." He and Peter hid their relationship from everyone they knew, including their own friends.

Hoyt got married to a woman in the mid-1960s and moved out. But he and Peter stayed in touch. One night, Hoyt was in Manhattan. It was late, and not wanting to trek home to Long Island, he needed a place to stay. So he called Peter. *Come on over.* Peter, still unmarried, lived on the Upper East Side. Hoyt stayed over quite a few times after that.

After working for the ad agency, Hoyt was hired by Time Inc. as a salesperson. Five years later, now divorced, he moved to California to run *New York*'s West Coast sales office. Clay Felker, the magazine's editor, asked him to help launch another publication, called *New West*—essentially a California version of *New York*. The first issue, which hit the newsstands in 1976, was promising—Joan Didion, Tom Wolfe, and Joe Eszterhas graced its pages. But it didn't last. "There wasn't an audience for that magazine, at that particular point, without putting a lot of money into it and developing an audience for it. We just didn't have the resources to keep it going," says Milton Glaser, the magazine's famed design director. "Tony seemed to be an adequate but not extraordinary personality. He did as well as one could hope for."

Until Hoyt moved out, he was an avid skier and had a season pass to Stratton. There he met Edith "Edie" Blake, a Martha's Vineyard fixture and a columnist for Edgartown's *Vineyard Gazette*. Edie, who would remain physically vigorous into her nineties, also had a season pass. She had a home on Seventy-second Street, off Madison Avenue in Manhattan, so it made sense that she and Hoyt, who lived fifteen minutes away, should carpool.

One trip, Hoyt brought his roommates along.

Peter, Edie decided, was "sort of funny," and teased him. "He took to me like he thought I was high society, or important," she recalled. She

introduced Peter to her daughter, Edith "Sandy" Blake, when she returned home from school.

From then on, they skied as a group. Peter was in her life, Edie felt, for better or worse.

One night in 1969, Edie went to a party at Peter's. A guest asked why he hadn't gotten married. "Oh," Peter replied, "I'm waiting for a woman who can give me a wedding at the St. James and a reception at the Colony Club." As Peter said the words, he eyed the elder Blake, who took an uncharitable read of his thinking: *He's a social climber, and a marriage to Sandy would give him entrée to high society, in both New York and the Vineyard.*

Peter proposed the next day.

In 1970, Peter and Sandy married. *The New York Times* reported on the engagement and then the wedding, which took place in New York at St. James Episcopal Church. A photo of the bride ran in the paper, along with a notice:

> Mrs. Anderson is the daughter of Mrs. Edith G. Blake of Edgartown, Mass., and of Robert H. Blake, who is with the municipal department of the Chemical Bank New York Trust Company. Her husband is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Giles W. Anderson of Greenwich, Conn. His father is vice president of the Union division of Miles Laboratories.
>
> The bride attended Poggio Imperiale and Le Fleuron in Florence, Italy, and graduated from Vernon Court Junior College in Newport, R. I. She is the granddaughter of Mrs. F. Gordon Brown and the late Philip Graham, who was an architect here; and of the late Robert H. Blake, who was general manager of the Cunard line here.
>
> Her husband, who is with the investment company of Drexel Harriman Ripley, Inc., was graduated from Trinity.

Edie says she opposed the marriage, and told her daughter so, repeatedly: "Because honestly, I thought he was what we used to call a pansy."

After the wedding, Peter and Sandy settled in Dedham, Massachusetts, forty-five minutes outside Boston. He was now an institutional stockbroker for Laird, Bissell and Meeds.

Sandy isn't wistful about the marriage. She remembers Peter going to work, then coming home to cook dinner. They socialized with friends. But it was never a union of equals, and it seemed to Sandy that Edie was right—that Peter was using her to get ahead. "He thought of me as his possession, and that's where it all went wrong. He collected antiques, and I was just one of his antiques."

For as long as she knew him, Sandy recalled, Peter had a complex about being short. He was never tall enough for his satisfaction. His friends were frequently above six feet, so he would add three inches to his height as compensation. When he was buried "in the tiniest little coffin you'd ever seen, that broke my heart more than anything, because he just wanted to be big."

The marriage lasted nearly a decade. Edie was pleased by its dissolution: "Sandy met someone who was a real man, and that was the end of that."

After the divorce, Sandy found out from an acquaintance that Peter was attracted to men.

"Peter," she said to her ex-husband, "I hear you're gay."

He said nothing, and just stared.

Even after the split and Sandy's remarriage, Peter still visited Edie. He loved the Vineyard. Standing on the wharf, he snapped photos of his former mother-in-law as she sailed.

In 1979, Peter remarried, this time to Cynthia Reid, for whom it was also a second marriage. They had a son together. The couple led an outwardly traditional social life. They went to parties. They belonged to clubs. But they were, to some degree, living separate lives. Peter was presumed to be gay but friends didn't bring it up. "You don't talk about who's cheating on their wives," one said.

Peter had been hired by Philadelphia's Girard Trust Company in

1975, a friend told detectives. (It isn't clear what precipitated the move from Massachusetts to Pennsylvania.)

Founded as Girard Bank on South Third Street in 1811, the bank underwrote most of the War of 1812—to the tune of $8 million—and kept the government solvent for two years. Girard became a trusted establishment. But in 1983, after a long and prosperous run, it was absorbed by Pittsburgh's behemoth Mellon Bank.

Mellon, accustomed to its top position in Pittsburgh, expected Philadelphians to line up outside its doors to have their accounts managed. They did not. In disgust, many bank officers left, as did clients. But Peter, who was personable and charming, stayed and flourished. In 1985, he was elected to the board of the Philadelphia Securities Association.

Peter was notable, or at least notable enough for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*'s society column to report that he and Tony Brooks were seen at "pre-opening night cocktails" for the Friends of Shakespeare in the Park, in advance of the production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He and Brooks had a lot in common: They belonged to the same church. Each was a moderate Republican, squarely in the closet. Not once did they confide in each other about their sexuality, for fear of losing their careers. "He was your classic Main Line gentleman," Brooks told a reporter, referencing the ritzy suburbs of Philadelphia and suggesting that Peter was from old money. "I'm assuming it was very difficult being of his generation and social circle."

Brooks, like Peter, was also a member of First Troop. By 1991, Peter was a staff sergeant and had been a part of the organization for more than a decade. When he first joined up, he was assigned to the mess section. He cooked, and liked to sprinkle alcohol into the mix. "That was probably good for most of the troop, but not all of them," recalled Peter's sergeant.

First Troop, a National Guard unit founded in 1774 as a private militia, met one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer for drills. The troop was still in cold war mode, and sometimes the men trained

with weapons and tanks, as there was always a chance they could be sent overseas.

First Troop appealed to Peter primarily because of his love of history. Its members sometimes traced their ancestry back to the Revolutionary War and earlier. Peter traced his own lineage to Asa Stickney, a private in the Continental Army.

One summer, the troop was training at Fort Pickett in Virginia and traveled to Virginia Beach for a weekend. The first night in town, Peter got dressed up in clothes his compatriots deemed inappropriate and "fancy." He was assaulted. Not badly enough to require hospitalization, but he sustained a black eye.

Peter had staunch beliefs about the military. The year before he died, he read a story in *People* magazine about women on the front lines in the United States Army. What annoyed him, aside from the notion of women in combat, was a photo of an enlisted soldier. In a letter to the editor, he wrote:

> PEOPLE is entitled to promote the idea of female soldiers in the combat arms. However, E-4 Cheryl Purdie should be relegated to a stateside file room forever for violating the most fundamental lesson in weapons training. What on earth is she doing pointing an M16 toward the Panamanian girl with the ice-cream cone? The whole picture looks like an accident waiting to happen.

First Troop compatriots tended to be awed by Peter's wit and intellect. But they also observed in their friend a capacity to consume liquor late into the evening and still miraculously walk upright the next morning. "He was a little fella, but he could drink like a field soldier," said one. Peter was, said another with slightly more precision, "a functioning alcoholic."

The alcoholism worsened around the time the illusion of Peter's heterosexuality began to deteriorate. After a weekend during which Peter's

wife had gone to New York for a horse show, she returned home to evidence of a guest "for sexual purposes, and it was not another woman." On another occasion, when they had been married for a decade, she found in Peter's briefcase a "homosexual magazine."

The toll this hidden life was taking on Peter was clear. In March 1987, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reported that a car on Route 252 had been moving in an erratic manner, and the driver, "Peter S. Anderson, of Philadelphia, was charged with driving under the influence." He was released, but later that year he was fired by Mellon and moved out of the family's home.

Cynthia and Peter separated but remained friendly. "We were still married with no real intentions of being divorced," she would testify. It was, then, not a surprise when she got a call from Peter, saying he was hospitalized. Peter had wasted away to such a degree—forty pounds lighter than on their wedding day—that Cynthia stated "it was perfectly evident to me that he might be HIV positive."

By 1991, Peter was profoundly unhappy. He had inherited $400,000 from an aunt but squandered all but $75,000; he estimated that, too, would be gone in six months. Despite the health concerns (at least one friend expected he would be dead by the year's end), Peter still took part in First Troop events, attending a get-together to mark the death of George Washington. He didn't eat much, and still drank to excess. Friends were embarrassed on Peter's behalf. He'd come to luncheons bearing a flask that he would tip into tomato juice. Once, at a Christmas party, an unconscious Peter was draped in tree decorations.

Months later, on May 1, Peter showed up at the Blue Parrot for the last piano set of the evening. He caught the eye of the manager, who remembered his plaid jacket and bow tie. He downed the usual, either a martini or scotch.

On the afternoon of May 2, Peter and Cynthia spoke for the last time. Peter was going to New York, and they discussed his plans for the trip. He told her where he would stay, and when he would return. Peter

made two promises: one to his wife, that he would return to Philadelphia on Friday night, and one to his son, that they would spend Sunday at a baseball game. The Los Angeles Dodgers would be in town to play the Philadelphia Phillies.

Back in Robby Browne's apartment, troopers began to get a sense of what happened to Peter during the fundraiser on May 3, and what transpired after he left: Peter had been noticeably drunk. Or, as Browne put it, "wasted."

Around nine, Brooks left, and the event began to wind down. Hoyt and Peter, however, didn't want the night to end, and so, an hour later, they decided to keep it going over cocktails.

Peter knew just the place: a bar on East Fifty-eighth called the Townhouse.

As soon as Peter and Tony arrived, around ten o'clock, they headed for the back room, where the piano player was easing into Broadway standards. For Hoyt, the visit stirred up old feelings, but they were tempered by the realization that his friend was in poor shape, mentally and physically. As drunk as Peter was when they left the fundraiser, his condition worsened at the Townhouse, aided by the bar's famous tendency for generous pours.

Late in the evening, the bartender politely but sternly informed Peter he'd had too much to drink; he and his friend were welcome to take their business elsewhere. Peter suggested they retreat to Hoyt's apartment. Sober enough to see where the night might proceed, Hoyt lied. He had guests, he told Peter. Instead, he called the Waldorf Astoria and booked his dear friend a room. Then he lowered Peter into a taxi outside the cozy, elegant piano bar and asked the driver to head nine blocks south and three avenues west.

Upon arrival at the Waldorf, the security supervisor helped Peter out of the cab, took his garment bag, and walked him to the front desk. Peter

wore a bow tie, he would recall, and fumbled for his credit cards. Then Peter got frisky, reaching over to squeeze the security supervisor's buttocks. Unused to such behavior, he told Peter that, while he was welcome as a guest, staff members did not "come with the room."

Why didn't Peter just go upstairs and sleep it off? No one knows. But he never checked in. *Penn Station,* he said, and was escorted back outside. The supervisor's pager buzzed, so he left Peter on Lexington Avenue, holding his garment bag.

Hoyt, decades later, is quite sure Peter simply forgot he had been cut off at the Townhouse and returned for another round.

On May 14, the investigation neared an unsatisfying conclusion. First, Peter's wife called. She declined to identify the body in person. The First Troop member who'd been at the search of Peter's apartment went to the morgue in her stead. The next day, the coroner released Peter's remains. Carl Harnish handed the case off to Jay Musser.

A week later, a memorial service was held at a church in Bryn Mawr, a suburb a dozen miles from downtown Philadelphia. "How could such a brilliant and talented man die such an ignominious death?" asked the reverend. "In days such as these, the silence seems to scream."

Once Jay Musser retired in 1992, the investigation into Peter's death was sent to cold-case purgatory. Leads had been exhausted. Hoyt and Brooks had alibis. Speculation aside, no one could account for Peter's movements after he left the Waldorf. In the end, there were no suspects but quite a few questions: Whose fingerprints were on the bags? Why was Peter's body left at a rest area in Lancaster County? What happened after he left the hotel?

All was quiet until the troopers were contacted by the New Jersey State Police later in 1992.

They were investigating a murder. A Violent Criminal Apprehension Program questionnaire, meant to gather details of a crime, had been sent

to the FBI in an effort to find possible suspects or a related case. ViCAP, as it was colloquially known, was a bureau unit created less than a decade earlier, tasked with compiling information on cases including sexual assault and homicide. Detectives frequently filed ViCAP questionnaires to discern if there were similar crimes in other jurisdictions.

There had been a match.

The New Jersey detectives were startled by the discovery of Peter's case. They, too, had found a man in a barrel. Their victim had been stuffed in garbage bags. He was seen at the Townhouse in the days before his death. Years later, a New Jersey detective was asked for his reaction to finding such a similar case: "There's somebody out there that's extremely dangerous and we gotta stop him."

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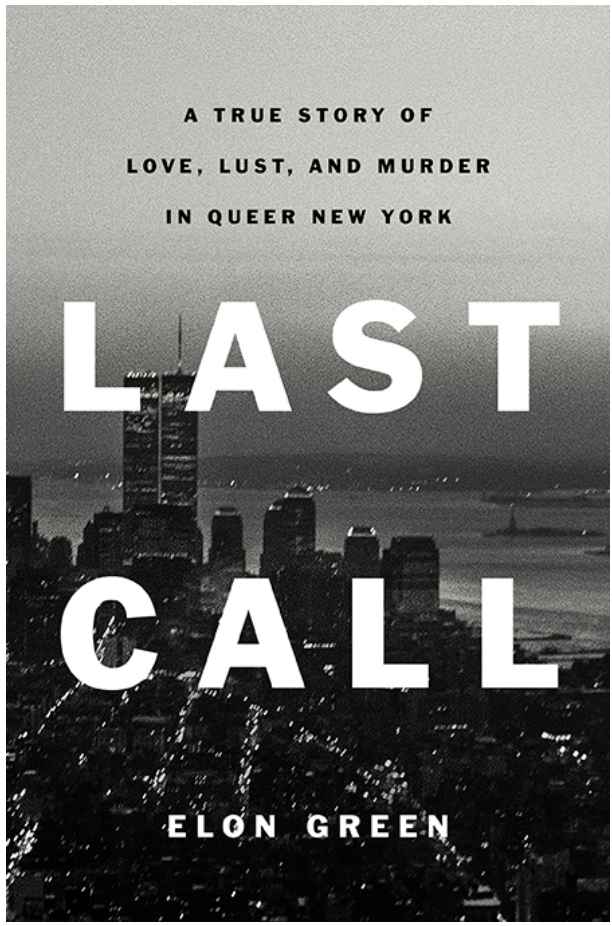

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