



## THE CASE OF THE HOT PROWL BEER RUN

Smash! Another beer bottle crashed to the ground and shattered. "Jeez, " thought Stan. "*Why'd I try to steal 10 of 'em at once.*" He felt around his pockets and in his waistband, groggily trying to take account of what was left of his haul now that he'd been dropping a trail of Dos Xquis and glass shards throughout Agoura Hills.

Don't laugh at the poor guy. You try it. Try stealing 10 beers and a bottle of vodka and stuffing them into your pants; then motating through a second burglary.

*"Oh well, I have 8 left. Now, how does this window screen come off...?"*

Meanwhile, soon-to-be-victim Susan Wright was soundly sawing logs at 0500 hours when she was rudely awakened by strange noises in her kitchen. She lay in bed and nervously listened. *Is it the dog? No, wait, I have no pets. Cockroaches? I don't think the 6-legged kind make that much noise!*

Timidly she got up and went to the head of the stairs, peering into the kitchen, only to see one of the 2-legged kind standing by her refrigerator.

"Get out of here -- I'm calling the cops!" Then straight back to her bedroom to barricade herself and ring up Lost Hills Sheriff's Station.

The scene shifts to Lost Hills Station desk, from which is dispatched the kind of call that gets sporting blood up in 40,000 police agencies in America -- 459N! (burglary in progress)

Now here's one for you. It's 0510 hours. You're rolling on a 459N residence. Informant locked in bedroom cowering. Suspect information --male, nfd, last seen in kitchen. You're 97 (arrived) on the street heading toward the address. You see a guy walking on the

sidewalk. Do you stop to check him out, or do you continue to the scene?!? What factors would you think over in deciding? Let's see-- where are the other units? ETA's? How suspicious does this guy look? How far am I from the location?

Sometimes it just boils down to instinct. The "sixth sense." Intuition.

By now, Stan had taken the homeowner's "advice" and had gotten out of the kitchen. He was walking down Alonso Drive, highly inebriated but free and clear of the house and all suspicion, he thought.

*Oh man, a cop. I'll just act nonchalant... uh oh... he's pulling over...*  
"Hi deputies! How're ya doing?"

Deputies Chris Chavez and Trent Miles, Unit 222 PM's, Lost Hills Sheriff's Station, hailed the pedestrian that they had noticed en route to the call. It was Stan, whom we've met already. Stan tried to reassure Trent and Chris that he lives in the neighborhood (he actually did) and was just out walking. They didn't necessarily disbelieve him, but they didn't have a lot of time to spend on this detention. So, they gave Stan a quick explanation of why they needed him to briefly cooperate and had him hop into the back seat of their car. Then on to the 459 location.

Deputies Mike Treinen and Ruby Kazmirski ended up with the handle on this call. With the assistance of Deputies Miles and Chavez, they searched the frightened victim's house for suspects and found none. Mike and Ruby rescued her from her bedroom "bunker" and got her story. Meanwhile, Chris found the screen that the burglar had pulled off to get through the open kitchen window.

Chris and Trent told the handling crew about the detainee. Great to have a possible suspect! But it would be hard to "make" him on what they had so far. The victim's story -- male, nfd, nothing stolen. The detainee lives in the neighborhood. Walking down the street is no crime. (Wait, you say! Didn't Trent and Chris notice all the Dos Equis sticking out of his pants?!?! No, Stan had ditched his load before they turned onto his street.)

Suddenly, the case broke wide open. The victim's neighbor came out of the night to tell the deputies, "Hey, my house got broken into about 15 minutes ago. My girlfriend and I were asleep when I heard noises downstairs. I looked and saw a beer bottle broken in front of my refrigerator. When I went down, I saw that someone stole about 10 beers and a bottle of vodka."

As this second victim was continuing his story about yet another broken bottle that he'd found on his side walkway, his girlfriend, Donna, ran up and said, "My purse is gone! It was on the kitchen counter -- now it's not!"

By now, a fleet of deputies was available to assist. Several of them searched the second victim's house -- no suspect.

Meanwhile, among those responding was Deputy Ed McDonald, who noticed a little pile of beer bottles along with a vodka bottle in front of an *open* residence door several doors down from the two burglarized houses.

Is the burglar inside? Are we one step behind him? Is the 925 (suspicious person) detainee the wrong guy? Or might he be capering with a partner? Up to now, this story has been sort of "fun and games," for the deputies anyway. Is it going to change? What are we going to find in this house? An armed suspect? An injured victim? A hostage?

"Hello in there. Anyone home? We're coming in."

Deputies Treinen, Chavez, and Miles along with Deputies John Yip, Christopher Hammond, and Adam Yancy methodically swept through the house. It was Chris Chavez who happened across the door that mattered most. *Hmm, a messy bedroom, walls plastered with pictures of naked girls. Evidently a guy's room...*

So, it's a guy's room? So what?

*Then what's that lady's purse doing on the bed?* Chris also noticed that the stuff that had been inside the purse was rudely scattered around the bedspread.

Now, what's behind this next door? Mike and Chris knocked and were greeted by a sleepy adult male, who had managed to be oblivious to the deputies' original loud advisement and their entire house search.

Mike and Chris explained that they'd found his door wide open and that two other houses nearby had just been burg'd. Mike asked, "Say, whose room is the one down the hall with the 'art work'?"

"My son's -- Stan."

The rest of the event was anti-climactic for the deputies. (Though not for the victims, who got all their stuff back except for two beer bottles!)

Still, there was one more neat twist. As Deputies Treinen and Kazmirski sat in the radio car wrapping up the work at the scene prior to booking, Stan's dad came out to the car and, unhampered by Miranda vs. Arizona, exclaimed to his handcuffed son in the back seat... "Why did you do it?"

Mike and Ruby smiled as Stan obliged with a de facto confession: "Because you don't give me enough money, my life sucks and you don't care!"

That, and the fact that Donna's CDL fell out of his pant leg during the booking search, sealed his fate.

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And so ends a story with a moral...

**If you can't "pack" your booze, don't caper; you'll lose!**