



## **Darker than Night: The True Story of a Brutal Double Homicide and an 18-Year Long Quest for Justice (St. Martin's True Crime Library)**

*By Tom Henderson*

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In 1985, two 27-year-old friends left their suburban Detroit homes for a hunting trip in rural Michigan. When they did not return, their families and police suspected foul play. For 18 years, no one could prove a thing. Then, a relentless investigator got a witness to talk, and a horrifying story emerged.

### **FOR NEARLY TWO DECADES, THEIR KILLERS WENT FREE.**

In 2003, this bizarre case hit the glare of the criminal justice system, as prosecutors charged two brothers, Raymond and Donald Duvall, with murder. With no bodies ever found, the case hinged on the testimony of one terrified witness who saw a bloody scene unfold—and who was still nearly too frightened to talk.

### **THEN A WITNESS TOLD HER CHILLING STORY**

Now, the truth behind an 18-year-old mystery is revealed against the backdrop of an unusual, electrifyingly dramatic trial. Raymond and Donald Duvall bragged to friends that they killed their victims, chopped up their bodies and fed them to pigs. A Michigan jury soon had evidence of this brutally methodical execution—evidence that would lead a shocked courtroom through the heart of evil and beyond a shadow of a doubt.

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## **Editorial Review**

From the Back Cover

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**WITH 8 PAGES OF DRAMATIC PHOTOS**

#### **About the Author**

Tom Henderson, a native of Michigan, has worked as a news reporter for many years. He has been a columnist for Detroit Free Press and a freelance writer for Detroit News, as well as a senior editor for Corporate Detroit, a monthly business publication. Tom is the author of *A Deadly Affair* and *Blood Justice*.

Jonathan Davis, a three-time recipient and fourteen-time nominee of the Audie Award, has earned accolades for his narration from the New York Times, Publishers Weekly, the American Library Association, Booklist, the Audio Publishers Association, AudioFile magazine, and USA Today.

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#### **Chapter One**

#### **GONE HUNTING**

Deer hunting is a Michigan phenomenon. A seasonal rite of passage for fathers and sons, mothers and daughters. An economic bonanza for business owners who both welcome the hunters' money and despise them for clogging the roads, filling the woods, making it impossible to go out and enjoy a meal or a drink for the last two weeks each November.

Some 800,000 hunters pour into the woods. Caravans of cars from the Midwest fill the interstates. They jam the freeway rest stops. Some own hunting cabins. Some camp in motor homes. Others fill the motels along the state and county roads. Many pitch tents and set up camp where their dads and grandfathers have been pitching tents and setting up camps for decades.

They fill the restaurants and the bars. It's even an economic boon for the farmers, who get to take some measure of revenge for all the corn and grain stolen from them by the marauding deer of summer and fall. Misshapen carrots that can't be sold in supermarkets are wrapped in big plastic bags and sold as deer bait, to be left in clearings or near blinds in hopes of drawing a whitetail close enough for a killing shot. Huge bags of bait are wedged in between pumps at every gas station, or stacked up out front on the grass next to the driveway. Inside the gas stations, many extra cases of beer are laid in for the siege, too, stacked high and narrowing the aisles.

Whitetails love man. They thrive on the edges of his civilization. They sneak into his fields to eat his corn if he's a farmer; if he's a suburbanite, they nibble buds of the lower branches of trees in the spring, trim his lawn in the summer and snag low-hanging or fallen fruit in the fall. In the northern Michigan woods, their population exploded at the end of the 19th century, when the hordes of lumbermen clear-cut tens of thousands of acres of giant white pine, which for a generation supplied the needs of homebuilders across the U.S.

As the pines fell to the ax and were hauled off, aspen saplings by the millions with their tender, juicy leaves, and seemingly endless acres of raspberry and blackberry thickets replaced them, an endless, nutrient-rich cornucopia. As the deer population grew, the new forest that grew with them was shaped by their appetite. Voracious feeders of low vegetation, the deer kept things trimmed on the ground as the new trees grew to form a canopy.

Other species couldn't compete and left or died. By the mid-20th century, the deer were the dominant animal. Where once a sighting of a whitetail was an adrenaline-jolting highlight of the day, something you told folks about later, they became as ubiquitous as squirrels. They spread throughout the state, finding the edges of suburbia to their taste, too.

Eventually there were so many whitetails that the hunters and the bureaucrats who ran the state's Department of Natural Resources stopped talking about them as if they were animals and began to refer to them as if they were rows of corn or soybeans. The kill during hunting season came to be called "the deer harvest."

There were millions of the things. Nearly a million hunters sitting in blinds or stalking through the woods hoping to kill one. In any given year, 300,000 would be successful. Just the rope needed to tie that many big animals to the roof of a car or an SUV was a cottage industry. Add in archery season, and the kill was 500,000 deer.

A bountiful harvest, indeed.

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