

PROLOGUE





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1

This is a story about a story.

It's also a story which, despite all my efforts to the contrary, seemed destined to become a major motion picture.

It began a few days before Christmas, but it's not a Christmas story. It's about lost generations and emotional desertion, and about a Los Angeles family with way too much money. So I guess at its heart, it's a story about greed, corruption, and loss.

With those themes, what better place to start than at an office Christmas party? But before we begin, just a few preliminary remarks.

I'm a homicide detective, and as such, I'm carefully schooled in the three concepts mentioned above. I work at an elite LAPD detective division known as Homicide Special. Our unit was reconstituted after the O.J. Simpson case, another L.A. story of greed, corruption, and loss.

After losing that high-profile media trial, it occurred to our command floor managers that maybe it wasn't such a good idea to have homicide detectives carrying blood evidence vials around a crime scene where they could later be accused of planting it.

As a result, Homicide Special was completely reorganized and staffed with our most seasoned detectives. I'm lucky to be assigned there. It's a great gig.

My name is Shane Scully, and for this story I will be your host narrator. It's going to be a fast ride through L.A. with a lot of reckless driving. Look out for abrupt lane changes, freeway shootings, and dangerous hairpin turns. As a police officer, I'm required to advise you to fasten your seat belts.

All set? Then let's go. . . . Cue the opening theme music. Fade slowly up from black, and we'll begin at: