

By David Goldie 11JK

It was just after eleven p.m. at the London Golf and Country Club and Gary Stevens a middle-aged male with a wife and two children was preparing to leave his work for the night. Gary was the secretary there and had just finished preparing the establishment's financial report for the previous year which was due to be presented to the club committee tomorrow evening.

Gary was about to turn the key to lock the safe when he heard shouting coming from the first green which was on top of a hill around 300 metres away. Gary went to the window to see what was going on and in the distance he could make out three characters in the distance all dressed in black. Two of them were standing nearer to him than the third character but facing away whereas the third was farther away but facing towards Gary. The two who were nearer to him were arguing with a third and after a few minutes one of the characters removed an object from his pocket raised his arm and one loud shot was then heard. The character who had been farthest from Gary fell to the ground and was picked up by the remaining two who carried him away and disappeared towards the main road at the other side of the course.

Around 10 minute later Gary ran towards the first green where the incident had taken place. He seen an object lying on the floor towards the right hand side of the green and picked it up. As it was dark Gary pulled an oil lighter from his pocket and lit it. He realised that he had a gun in his hand and that the person who was carried away was probably dead. Gary panicked and threw it into the bushes at the right of the first green and ran back to the clubhouse where he locked up and sat in his car.

Gary was in shock at what he had just seen. He was sure it was a murder. Gary was scared and so decided not to tell anyone what he had seen. This was because he was worried that the killer's may come after him if he mentioned to the police.

When Gary arrived home that night he was still in shock but didn't mention any of the events to his family, as he didn't want to upset or scare them. Within half an hour of arriving home Gary went to bed but found that he could not sleep as he jumped every time he heard a noise from outside. Finally Gary managed to get to sleep at around half past four in the morning but then woke up within half an hour as he was having bad dreams about what was happening.

The next morning Gary arrived for work at his usual time of nine a.m. and he was looking very jaded, as he had got no sleep last night. At around eleven a.m. Gary was visited by police in his office who notified him that a body had been found near to the course boundary by a man walking his dog. He was also told that the police intended on searching the course for evidence as it was believed that the man whose body was found had been murdered on the course during the night and his body then dumped in the bushes where it was found. Gary was also requested to come in for questioning and agreed to do so although not happy about it

When Gary arrived at the police station he was asked if he had seen anything. Gary told the police about the 3 men and the shot but didn't mention the Gun as he thought that this might tie him to the murder. Gary was offered witness protection as he had explained his fears and asked to have a police officer watch over his home. Gary was then allowed to return to work.

When Gary arrived back at work there were ten officers searching the golf course and he was told by the officer in charge of the search that there had been a gun found and that it had been sent away for testing. The officer told him that they were hopeful that they would find a fingerprint or D.N.A on the gun. This worried Gary as he had given his fingerprint's to police on a school trip at the age of seven, and new that the prints found on the gun would match his and that he would be arrested.

As the days passed Gary became more and more nervous he new that he would probably be arrested soon. Four days later Gary was working away as usual in his office when there was a knock at the door. Two policemen entered and one of them told Gary "Gary Stevens, you are under arrest on suspicion of murder, you do not have to say anything but anything you do say may be used against you in a court of law". Gary was shocked and nearly fainted and nearly collapsed before being escorted to the police car in the car park and driven away.

Some of the members of the golf club seen these events unfold and were shocked as they had always seen Gary as a pleasant well behaved character and so could not imagine him as a killer. One member even asked the police if they were sure that they had arrested the right man.

When Gary arrived at the police station he was taken to an interview room and was told to wait for the interviewing officer to arrive. After around ten minutes an officer arrived and introduced himself as superintendent Steve Chalmers. He sat down and switched on a tape recorder. He then proceeded to ask Gary why his fingerprints were on the murder weapon in a deep, slow

voice that echoed around the room. Gary explained that he had found it when he went to investigate the first green and then asked for the interview to postponed until his lawyer arrived. Gary was returned to a cell at the police station and waited for another 2 hours until his lawyer arrived.

Gary's lawyer was called Paul and was a 25-year-old graduate from law school with no prior experience of murder trials, although he had experience in other offences of a similar kind. He was short and fat with black hair and a goatee beard. There was another interview arranged immediately.

Gary and Paul sat on one side of a large desk like table in the interview room with Steve Chalmers the officer sitting on the other side. The room itself was a small dark room with one light and a mirror on one wall. There was a tape recorder in the centre of the desk, which Steve turned on as the interview commenced. Gary was asked about the events on the night of the murder and what part he had to play in these events. Gary then explained that he was locking up and seen the killing. He also explained that he had gone up to investigate and that is how his fingerprints were on the gun. This explanation was treated with doubt from the officer, but this time around an hour had passed and Gary was told that the officer was leaving for the evening and the interview would re-commence at nine a.m. tomorrow morning.

Gary had been returned to his cell and was now eating his dinner, which was typical prison food and tasted rubbish. He ate around half of this and then went to sleep for the night. Surprisingly Gary found that he fell asleep relatively quickly that night although the next morning he awoke to terrible back pains.

The next day nothing happened until around midday when Gary's lawyer arrived and another interview took place. This was the same as the last interview with the same question's being asked although this time there were two officers and they pressured Gary into making a confession. Obviously Gary did not confess, as he was innocent.

Later that day Gary was told by the officer in charge of the investigation that they had found enough evidence to try Gary for the murder and that he would be due to appear in court in three days time. He was told that the proceedings would take place at the Old Bailey in central London. Gary reacted in complete shock and around ten minutes later when he was returned to his cell he broke down in tears. By this time Gary was staring to worry and was not sure if he would ever see his family face to face again which made him feel sick.

On the days leading up to the start of the trial Gary became more and more nervous as every moment passed as although he knew that he was innocent he was not a great believer in the justice system. Paul came to see Gary every day during visiting hours which were from midday to seven p.m. during these visits they planned out Gary's defence and what he would say when he was called to the stand. This seemed to be going great and Paul assured Gary that everything would be fine as long as he told the truth. Although Gary agreed with Paul he was not as confident as he was that everything would be ok.

The day of the trial approached faster than expected and sooner than he knew it Gary was on the stand on the first day of the trial answering questions to a prosecuting lawyer who was very intimidating and although he would not have admitted it scared Gary slightly. The prosecuting lawyer was asking Gary questions about the night of the murder and making every effort possible to make Gary look guilty which although was only to be expected his tenacity shocked Gary.

After the first day of the trial the press had found out and there was a large crowd of reporters at the front of the court and so Gary left through a back entrance in a police van which was to say the least, very uncomfortable. He could hear the shouting of reporters from the other side of the building but wasn't sure if that was anything to do with his case.

Gary was very tired and when he arrived back at the police station where he was being kept he went to sleep within minutes of his arrival in his cell. Gary woke several times during the night as he was dreaming of the moment at which he was convicted of the murder and sentenced. This was his worst nightmare as he loved his family and was already struggling after less than a week with only the daily visit from his wife in which they talked through a small window in the visiting area.

It had been a long night for Gary and when he woke he was tired and he wasn't feeling nerves ahead of court, as he was so tired. This was the final day of proceedings before the jury would retire to make their decision on Gary's innocence or guilt. Gary was now resigned to the fact that he had no control over events and so there was no point in him worrying about what was happening to him as it would only make the experience more uncomfortable for him.

The second day at court went much better for Gary with almost every point made by the prosecution being thrown out by his lawyer as inconclusive. Also Gary's wife agreed to testify and that seemed to go reasonably well with the prosecution getting nowhere in its interview of her. Some of the members of

the golf club also testified by saying that Gary was a good person and they reacted in complete and utter shock when they heard that he had been arrested. The jury was asked to consider it's verdict very carefully and return tomorrow with a verdict if one had been reached by then. Although they were told not to rush into any decisions as this was a serious accusation and their urgency could cost this man life imprisonment.

Gary was escorted out of court and once again left through a back entrance due to the massive press interest at the front of the building. As Gary left he could hear the shouting from the front of the building. The shouting was much louder this time and soon Gary realised that the press had discovered the back entrance through which he had left and that his van was surrounded by press. He was told to hold a jacket over his head to protect his identity from the cameras which would be pointed through the window's of the van in attempt to win a photo that would be worth thousands to press.

After a few minutes of slowly creeping Gary felt the G-Force as the van accelerated and heard the noise of the crown disappear into the distance. Gary assumed that they had finally escaped from the court and the media and were on their way back to Gary's cell in the local police station on the outskirts of the city. When Gary arrived at the police station where he was being held there was also media coverage and so once again he had to be escorted in through a back entrance. By this time it was dark outside and so sneaking Gary in was a lot easier than escaping from the court had been.

That night Gary could not sleep as he was nervous about the verdict and so he spent a lot of his time talking to some of the other inmates who could also not sleep. At around two in the morning there were two inmates awake, one of them being Gary when all of a sudden it went quiet as the both of them had fallen asleep. Gary was shattered as the past two days had been very stressful for him and his family who had been present every day in court.

It was now the day of the verdict and Gary was standing in court alongside his lawyer waiting for the jury to return with a verdict. All of a sudden a door opened and the head of the jury walked down an isle towards the judge's podium. He spoke to the judge for a moment before turning to the gallery. The judge spoke to the jury and asked if a verdict had been reached. To this the speaker for the jury replied "yes". When asked what the verdict of the jury was the speaker turned to the gallery and in a loud slow voice proclaimed. "On the charge of murder, by a majority verdict we find Gary Stevens" a pause that seemed to last an eternity ensued with the speaker finally pronouncing "not guilty". A sigh of relief travelled through the court that was

almost deafening and Gary turned and looked towards his wife with a look that spoke a thousand words.

Later on in the day Gary thanked the jury and headed home. When he arrived home he found his family there with dinner prepared. Gary thanked them for their support and had a celebrated with them.