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Complicated murder or complex suicide?- An unsolved mystery

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Abstract

With advancements in science and technology, crimes which were once unsolvable are today solved with ease, precision and objectivity. This has indirectly influenced the crime conviction rates. However with increasing awareness and literacy amongst people, the methods of committing crime have also evolved from the usual blunt and sharp weapon injuries to more complicated asphyxial and intentional poisoning deaths. Also the false assumption that an unfound dead body of victim results in the end of investigation leads many a culprits who have committed murders either intentionally or in a fit of rage, to execute the disposal of the dead body in a well planned manner. The daily newspapers are filled with dismembered bodies to dead bodies found in gunny bags disposed in places where they are the least expected. Throwing bodies in railway tracks to mimic railway accidents and water bodies to mimic drowning have also been long since known. Simultaneously increase in stress in personal and professional life has proportionally increased the incidences of complex suicides n modern days. The knowledge of various options available to commit suicide and the conviction to die lead many people to commit suicide by more than one method- complex suicide. This paper discusses one such case which remains an unsolved mystery as to whether it is a case of an intelligently disposed murder or a complex suicide. A middle aged adult male was found dead in a water body in a decomposed stage with cut throat injuries a week after he was reported missing. The autopsy findings and circumstantial evidences are almost balanced to suicide and homicide but for a few factors in favor of a planned homicide. What is lacking is the absence of objective evidence pointing towards an intention for either but for speculations and gossip. The case is discussed for its complexity and how the involvement of more than one investigating agency and an over enthusiastic media complicate a medico-legal case.