

On my way home from work I decided to stop at the supermarket and pick up some breakfast groceries (milk, eggs, etc.) for the following morning. As I pulled my new Alfa Romeo GT into the parking lot, I immediately noticed a young boy on an orange skateboard. He was using the natural slope of the parking lot to build up speed as he headed downward toward the market. At the last minute he would jump off the board and the board would continue on into the bricks of the building. Fearing that the flying skateboard might damage my new car, I decided to use one of the parking spaces farthest from the store.

After locking my car, I noticed that the boy on the skateboard was talking to a young man by the side of the building. My immediate impression was of a father talking to his son. The young man was about 25-30 years old. He was wearing a plaid shirt jacket and jeans. He was also wearing a baseball cap over his shoulder length hair.

As I started walking towards the market entrance, I glanced at an older man sitting in a car. He had backed his car into the parking place now opposite my parking place, but closer to the building. He was facing me as I walked towards his car and the market. He fixed his gaze on mine and continued to stare at me intently. There was something unnerving about this man and I remember thinking that he might be a car thief. He looked to be about 55-65 years of age. He had totally grey hair and looked about 20-30 pounds overweight. He had a very round face.

As I walked by him I glanced back at his car and tried to commit his license number to memory. The numbers were easy, three twos and I made up a quick phrase to try to remember the letters. Unfortunately, to this day, I cannot remember the phrase I used to remember the letter make-up of the license plate. The make of the car was a 1973 Pontiac Le Mans 2/door coupe.

I continued into the store where I did my shopping and came out about 15-20 minutes later. All three persons were gone: the boy, the young man and the older man in the car.

I had not been paying attention at the time to the news about the abduction of kids in the area. Had I done so I may have been more suspicious of the situation involving the boy and the 2 men. As it was, I was only concerned possible damage or theft to my new car. All I had seen was totally forgotten when I got into my Alfa and returned home.

I would only remember these events about two weeks later when my best friend and colleague Steve Bollinger was talking to me about a kidnapping in our area with another designer. It was a little boy named Timmy King. As I listened they mentioned about a boy and a skateboard. At this point I asked if the skateboard was orange in color. They answered yes. I then asked where the kidnapping was supposed to have happened and was told it was the supermarket by Steve's house. This made me recall the evening I was at the market, and I asked if the night in question was the really warm evening about two weeks earlier. He said yes, and asked me if I had seen something?

At this point I told him my story about seeing a young boy with an orange skateboard in the market parking lot. Steve immediately implored me to go to the authorities. I told him that I really could not remember any more than that, and that I could probably add nothing new to what the police already knew.

A few days later my ex-wife called and asked me to sign some papers to complete our divorce. She asked about how I was doing and I said fine, and then told her about maybe seeing the missing Timmy King in the supermarket parking lot on, maybe, the evening he disappeared. Her reaction was the same as Steve's. I still resisted saying I could remember nothing else and would be of no help to the police.

As chance would have it, my ex attended a party that following weekend where she was introduced to a young man. This man turned out to be one of the FBI investigators assigned to missing children cases.

Well, bright and early, the following Monday morning at work, I was paged over the studio PA system. I was asked to come to the corporate security offices. The FBI wanted to talk to me. I looked at Steve and he pleaded innocence. He said he had nothing to do with this.

I left my desk and went to the security offices. There were two agents there and one of them explained that he had met my ex-wife at a party and she had told him about our conversation of the past week, and about what I had witnessed. I explained that what I told my ex was the extent of my recollection. They then asked if I would be willing to go under hypnosis to help with my recall. I replied that I was skeptical, but was willing to help in any way I could.

The hypnosis session was conducted at the University of Michigan campus. In attendance were the two agents, a sketch artist, and the psychiatrist who would hypnotize me. While under hypnosis I remember wondering if I was really hypnotized. I only remember feeling extremely relaxed, but still aware of what was around me. Or so I thought.

When the session ended I had thought maybe only 15-20 minutes had elapsed, but when I looked at my watch I was shocked to see that 4 hours had passed. The agents were very excited about my observations. I was able to confirm the possibility that two men were involved. This information was some that the FBI had only speculated on. From my description the sketch artist was able to get a pretty good likeness of each man. But, the most important information was my identification of the car that the older man was sitting in. It was a 1973 Pontiac Le Mans 2/door coupe.

It turns out they already knew about the make of the car. When the previous victim had been dropped off, the car had backed into a snow bank and left a perfect impression of the car's rear bumper. As for the car's license number, I could only remember the last three numbers: the three 2's. For some reason the phrase I had made to remember the preceding 3 letters was not retrievable. To this day I still cannot remember it. I can only surmise that numbers are stored in a different part of the brain than the phrase would be.

I was able to show the agents the exact spot on the wall where the boy's skateboard had impacted the bricks of the supermarket building. They took small samples of the brick and discovered pieces of the orange neoprene material that the skateboard was made of.

Years later I saw a picture of John Wayne Gacy after he was arrested for his crimes. I felt that this man might have been the older man I saw in the Le Mans that long ago evening. I learned later watching a TV program about his crimes, that he had a younger sidekick that roughly fit the description of the other man I had seen talking to the boy. It is something I have pondered all these years.