

The Case of the Chief's Old Partner

By Kara Dusatko

The Cast:

Police Chief	Narrator
Cal A	Becky
Mr. Wilkerson	Judkins

Narrator *Cal Q. Letter* looked up from his book, *The **History** of Irrational Numbers*, and saw *Becky Smart*, the Chief's Daughter, standing in the doorway of Chief Smart's office.

Cal: This is a fascinating book. You know, once I start reading this stuff, I can't seem to stop."

Becky: "I know Cal: I know But if you want my help with the research paper that's due tomorrow, we need to go to the library."

Cal: "Oh, all right." -*He jams the book into a tattered backpack and reaches for a coat.*

Chief Smart: *Charging through the door-* "Kids, I need your help. Hurry, **hurry**. The patrol car is parked out front."

Narrator: *Riding in the Chiefs cruiser, Cal and Becky sat patiently waiting for the Chief to tell them where they were going. But the Chief said nothing. He drove silently, his eyes riveted to the road.*

Becky: *After a silence-* "Dad, what's going on here? You come racing into your office and whisk us away, practically shoving us down the stairs and into your patrol car; and then you say absolutely nothing. What gives?"

Chief: "I'm sorry. Beck I guess my mind is on poor old **Wally** Wilkerson." Becky and Cal; "Who?"

Chief: "My old partner, **Wally** Wilkerson." *The chief pointed to a faded photograph that was attached to the sun visor on the passenger side.* "**Wally's** in the first row, the third one from the left. He was a veteran cop when I was a rookie. **Wally** retired from the force about 15 years ago, and now he works as a security guard at that ritzy high-rise building over in Mercer."

Cal: "Is he in some sort of trouble?"

Chief; "He sure is. Two hundred thousand dollars were stolen from the security box in the vault that Wally was supposed to be guarding. Of course, everybody is furious with Wally."

Narrator: *When the three friends arrived at the high-rise building in Mercer, they found Mr. Wilkerson in the ground floor lobby, surrounded by a crowd of people.*

Mr. Wilkerson: "Like I told you earlier, Judkins, the elevator man, phoned me and told me there was trouble in the basement. When I stepped off the elevator there, I got clubbed on the head from behind."

Judkins: "Oh come on, old-timer, you're just trying to cover up for falling asleep on the job. I never called you. Besides, I've seen you asleep on the job twice this past week."

Mr. Wilkerson: *Shaking his fist at Judkins-* "Dam you, Judkins, that's a lie and you know it."

Chief: "Come on, Wally. Let's go somewhere and talk."

Narrator: *A few minutes later, Cal, Becky, the Chief, and Mr. Wilkerson were sitting on a bench in the ground floor lobby.*

Mr. Wilkerson: "I'll stake my reputation as an ex-cop that Judkins did it. That creep has been stalking out the vault for the past two weeks and in the meantime has been trying to make me look bad whenever he's had the opportunity. I'm sure it was all part of his plan to plant in people's minds that I was an incompetent old goof and then conk me over the noggin so he could get to the vault."

Mr. Wilkerson hands the three detectives the robbery report- "Judkins says that he was working in his elevator when the money was stolen. But nobody remembers seeing him at the elevator that he claims to have been in."

Narrator: After listening to Mr. Wilkerson, the detectives met Judkins at the elevator he operated. A slick talker, Judkins maintained that he was working his shift as elevator usher when the theft took place.

Chief: "I've got other people's statements here, Judkins. And no one recalls seeing you working this elevator between 9:00 and 9:15."

Judkins: "That's because no one ever remembers the elevator usher."
Reaching/or a worksheet on the elevator wall- "Take a look at this. I arrived at 9:00 a.m., taking my station at the ground floor. The robbery occurred at 9:10. This is a running tally of what I did during the time the robbery took place. You can clearly see that with all of this going up and down and down and up, I was busy working here in this elevator at 9:10."

Chief: *Grabbing the worksheet, he read the following-* "+6, -4, +5, -8, +2, +4, -7, +2, +2, -7, +5, +3, -5, +3, +2, +7, -4, +8, -2, -3, +4, -4, +9, -8, +5" - *Giving the sheet to Becky and Cal-* "There's more, too. Certainly enough to keep Mr. Judkins busy all morning, just like he said."

Becky: "Mr. Judkins. How many floors are there in this building?"

Judkins: *Eyes narrowing suspiciously-* "There's a basement, a ground floor, and then floors 1 through 15."

Narrator: *Cal fumbled for his math notebook and began calculating. After a few minutes, he was finished. He tore out the piece of paper and handed it to the Chief.*

Chief: "What does all of this mean?"

Cal: "It means Mr. Judkins has been lying. He must have hurriedly written this false tally report after robbing the vault. If you look closely, you'll see that in his rush to provide an alibi, Mr. Judkins made a huge mistake."

What was Judkins' mistake?