**/30**

**Please write 10 notations (ex. T-T, T-S, T-W, definitions…etc) 20 marks**

**Waiting for a Witness**

**Source: cbc.ca, January 13, 2019**

*Nearly two decades after a promising Toronto high school basketball star was gunned down, police are still waiting for someone to come forward and identify the shooter*

Someone called around midnight saying they had heard gunshots.

It was a sticky, hot night in early summer 2001, but quiet, recalled Peter Sloly, who was Toronto's top cop on duty at the time. And the site of this possible shooting — in the downtown core, around Sherbourne Street and Bloor Street East — straddled two or three police divisions.

Cops rolled in from different divisions, "buzzing around, trying to locate whatever they could," said Sloly.

"But not a lot of success."

That intersection is an odd part of town. North of Bloor, there's wealthy, verdant Rosedale; south, the crowded, high concrete towers of St. James Town, then overrun with gangs and crime. The perpetually busy Yonge Street is just a few blocks west. East, the land falls away into the Don Valley, a deep stretch of trees, rail lines and traffic jams. There were, and still are, lots of places something bad could happen without being seen.

Sloly himself went out to look, prowling the area in a cruiser, trying to "confirm or invalidate" the call. Was there any sign, anywhere, that someone had fired a gun and, if so, had anyone been hit?

"We don't want to drive away without being certain one way or the other," he said.

He ended up on Rosedale Valley Road; two lanes with trees and other greenery high on both sides that just happens to link one of the city's wealthiest neighbourhoods with one of its busiest expressways. There's even a wooden foot bridge overhead that connects Rosedale with Bloor Street.

Sloly pulled over, stopped and collected his thoughts. That's when the first drops landed on his windshield.

At first, he thought the humid night was turning to rain. Then, he realized, no, that's blood. There was blood dripping on his car, coming down from the foot bridge.

He radioed in that there might be someone hurt up there.

"And it turns out that this was, in fact, a crime scene."

**'Back in 10 minutes'**

Earlier that evening, just a few blocks away, Audette Shephard was at home in the St. James Town apartment she shared with her 19-year-old son, Justin.

He was there with his girlfriend, Latanya Langford, who by that time was impatient for their Friday night to get underway. After being together for about 10 months, they were finally going on a proper date to the movies. Then, Justin got a phone call.

"I heard his phone ring," Audette recalled.

He came into her room a moment later.

"He said, 'Mom, I’ll be back in 10 minutes.’"

Langford didn't know where he was going, but she wanted to come along.

"He was agitated. He's like, 'No, you're staying here. I'll be right back,'" Langford recalled.
Justin left. His mom and girlfriend waited: 10 minutes, then 15, 25.

Audette tried calling him — no answer. Langford called people in the neighbourhood — no one had seen him. They got in Audette's car and drove by his usual haunts. “Had anyone seen Sheep?” they asked, using Justin’s nickname.

"It was horrible because, where did he go?" said Langford. "Where did he disappear to? Who called him? Why isn't he calling me back?"

Eventually, they gave up and headed home, hoping he'd resurface the next day. That morning, Langford called the police, planning to pose as Justin's sister, so they would tell her whether he'd been picked up.

The police said they were coming to her. Langford didn't like the sound of that. When police pay a visit, she said, "It's usually for a bad — something bad."

Soon after, Langford got a call from Audette, who was just getting out of church. They'd agreed to touch base in the morning, to see if the other had heard anything, and it sounded like Langford wasn't sure what to tell her.

"She said that — that someone got killed at the bridge," Audette recalled. "And she says the police are coming."

Audette got into her car. A news report repeated what Langford had just told her: someone had been shot on the Rosedale foot bridge.

"I was just bawling. I said, 'Not my child. Not my child,'" she said.

"I just kept saying … ‘It's not him. It's not him.’"

**Grown 'rougher'**
Justin Shephard was pronounced dead at St. Michael's Hospital in the wee hours of June 23, 2001. He had been shot twice in the head.

It was reportedly one of three fatal shootings in the city that weekend — all the victims were young men — and its 19th homicide of the year. The number would reach 59 by the end of the year, according to police statistics, about average for the late '90s and early '00s and far from the record-setting 89 killings a decade earlier, which was broken in 2018.

The photo released by investigators at the time shows a young black man with cornrows, a faint goatee and wide-set eyes. He's not smiling. Audette says her son had grown "rougher" since they moved into the neighbourhood, from suburban Mississauga in the late '90s.

Though the case would go on to generate a lot of press, the initial reports were brief. CBC reported that Justin had died just a few days before he would have graduated high school, and his vice-principal said he was shocked and saddened. A homicide detective said Justin was known to police — he had a record from his youth — and added that, at the time, there was no information linking the case to gangs or drugs.

Audette called for witnesses, perpetrators, anyone with "any kind of a conscience ... any kind of love in your heart," to come forward.

And that was it. Except for the basketball. If there was an angle to the story in the early days, it wasn't that Justin was bright and well liked or that there was a lack of leads in the case. It was that Justin had landed a prestigious basketball scholarship at a preparatory school in Maryland and was widely thought to be bound for the NBA. There, he probably would have crossed paths with his older, six-foot, 11-inch tall half-brother, Jamaal Magloire, then the centre for the Charlotte Hornets.

Magloire and Justin shared a father, who by this time had split from Audette. Magloire was undergoing shoulder surgery when word of the shooting arrived. His team broke it to him when he woke up from surgery. He dropped everything and came home with his arm in a sling.

"I envisioned, you know, him being a professional athlete," he said of Justin. "I envisioned him going to college and being a star."

Justin was smaller but fast and nimble, Magloire said, "a lot better than I was at that age."

On the day of Justin's funeral — it was a big event, hundreds of people turned up — the school in Maryland called Audette. They wanted to know why Justin hadn't checked in. She told them she had just buried him.

**Bad company**
The investigation did not go well. There seemed to have been only a few, faint leads, most notably that Justin had been seen, after leaving the apartment, at a nearby Jamaican restaurant with three young men. They were joking and laughing over patties and soda, according to a woman who worked there and spoke to investigators.

Other people reported seeing a vehicle parked near the bridge around the time of the shooting. A man had come running, jumped in, and it tore off, going the wrong way down a one-way street. It might have been beige, or not, maybe an SUV or a van or something smaller.

But no one from the neighbourhood would talk to police, including the three young men seen with Justin — whom CBC is not naming because their knowledge of, or involvement in the killing has never been proven.

Langford says she knows the three and that they were a constant presence in Justin's life — "always up to no good," though she says she's not sure if they were involved with gangs or drugs.

"You know bad company from bad company," she said.

She said she was "disgusted" by their refusal to talk to police.

"If you know something, why aren’t you saying anything? If that’s your friend, what happened?"

The police put up a $50,000 reward for information, which Magloire matched. Still nothing. Magloire even tried to get his own answers, canvassing the area, hoping people would be more likely to talk to him than to the police. He was wrong.

**The Code**
Asked point blank by CBC if his good friend Justin was caught up in gangs or drugs, Carlton Cohen wouldn’t say.

But Cohen, a former gang leader who now works with troubled and special-needs kids, says he knows the three who were with Justin that night and says they have been involved with street crime.

"They’re serious," he said. "All those three names are serious people."

Cohen says he was in "the game" for years. He got out eventually, but he remembers those days — "in the limelight" — as an infinite loop of parties, basketball and making money.

"Lot of hustling … We wake up; we come to the block; we play basketball; we go party; we comes back; we make money. That was life," he said.

Cohen was in prison at the time of Justin’s death but says he did his best to find out what he and the others had been up to and what happened on the bridge.

"I heard that they went to meet on the bridge to do some type of transaction … between weapons and drugs" he said.

But he also admits the information he gathered is "all speculation, all accusation."

One thing he is certain of, though, is why no one, least of all the three young men who were with Justin, will tell police what happened.

"You can't talk," he said of "the code" that exists within St. James Town and some other neighbourhoods.

"That's the code, and it is serious. Because if they know that you snitch, they are coming for you.” Cohen said he has felt that pressure to stay quiet himself. On Nov. 4, 2008, he was at home — not far from St. James Town — watching Barack Obama win the U.S. presidency. Someone knocked on his door and put three bullets through it when he came to answer. One went into his torso. Cohen said he remembers calling his mom and 911 — in that order — and then hearing a nurse at St. Michael’s Hospital say they were losing him.

He says he eventually learned who had shot him but didn’t tell police. At the time, he admits, he wanted revenge, although he says he has since found religion and forgiven his assailant.

"Things happen on the street. Things happen."

**Pick one Question to answer /10**

**1. What is “The Code” mentioned in the article? Would you break the “code”?**

**2. Pick a passage from the article and respond to it.**

**3. Discuss a “move” made by the writer in this piece that you think is good/interesting. Explain.**