

The Skilled Locksmith

By Donna Bishop

As a young boy Billy Smith liked to play with locks. He spent hours locking and unlocking every lock he could find. He discovered that the lock to the front door and the back door could be unlocked and locked with the same key. That discovery led him to try to find every lock that could be unlocked with every key he found in his house.

He found the small key to unlock his father's briefcase. He located the key that locked the middle drawer of his father's desk and was astonished to learn that the same lock also locked all the drawers in the desk. Once he unlocked the middle drawer all the other drawers were unlocked too.

Billy had a box his dad gave him full of padlocks. For fun Billy took all the keys and mixed them up and would try to pick out the right key to match the lock. He got very good at matching the pattern of the key cut with the correct padlock.

As a teenager Billy took a job working in the local hardware store where he worked in the area where locks were sold and also where keys were made. He was trained on different locks. Sometimes keys would be lost and Bill learned how to open locks without a key. This included learning how to use tools to "pick" a lock.

After graduation Bill went to work for a locksmith and dreamed of owning his own business. He was particularly skilled as a locksmith and also a very personable young man. He had built a reputation as a hard-working, trustworthy employee. This was the personality Bill cultivated.

There was the secret life Bill led. Many years earlier he had realized that his ability to enter locked spaces give him access to things that people were trying to protect. At first he unlocked other student's lockers and took small items. With more experience he stole larger items. The items were of no real value to Billy. His thrill was getting past a locked space. He often entered homes and stores just to see if he could.

However Billy entered the jewelry store one night with the intent to steal valuable merchandise. The lock on the back door had been complex but he was pleased with himself as he slipped into the dark storeroom. A motion sensor floodlight blinded him. He fled through the backdoor. Believing he had escaped a close call, he returned to his job swearing he would never again use his locksmith skills illegally.

The police arrived that morning and arrested Billy based on a perfect photograph taken by the camera attached to the floodlight. Breaking and entering with the intent for burglary was a sufficient crime to land Billy in lockup for a long time.