

For some reason, Betty Ann expected the morgue to have gray walls. These were light yellow, almost cheery. She expected some kind of viewing window. Instead, the detective from Raleigh and a guy in a lab coat escorted her through double doors. They entered a room with a wall of stainless steel lockers. She wondered how they kept the bodies cold.

She remembered the meat locker in town. There, everything was covered with frost. Here there was no frost. How did they do that? It didn't smell the same, either.

Where's all the refrigeration equipment? Maybe it is on the roof. That's where a lot of air conditioning units go. She imagined they were heavy. How would you design a building to carry the extra load?

Betty Ann managed difficult times by focusing on minute details. It was her way of avoiding the really big things as long as she could. But now she was running out of time.

"No hurry. Just tell me when you're ready," the attendant said.