

Neighbor Who Got Threat Letters Was at Arrest Site

By RONALD SMOTHERS

Special to The New York Times

WHITE PLAINS, Aug. 11—Craig Glassman was still reeling at the irony of it all, and a little stunned at how he, the Westchester County Sheriff's office and the Yonkers Police Department had apparently stumbled into the yearlong search for the .44-caliber killer.

When it ended last night, Mr. Glassman, a 29-year-old Westchester County auxiliary deputy sheriff, was there and aided the New York City police in their arrest of David Berkowitz, the man they suspect is the "Son of Sam."

"It's the most bizarre story you've ever heard," said Mr. Glassman, who lived in the same apartment building and had suspected that Mr. Berkowitz was responsible for four, rambling, frequently obscene and always-threatening letters that he had received since June.

The last letters came on Aug. 6, just after someone had set a fire in front of Mr. Glassman's door. It was after that he and the Yonkers police began "watching the comings and goings" of his quiet, uncommunicative neighbor, whom he had never met.

In the letters to Mr. Glassman, the writer's world is one people with "demors," "Satan" and apocalyptic references to the "streets running red with blood at the judgment."

Roles Often Switched

Mr. Glassman emerges as the "master" and the writer as the "slave," but the paragraph, written in a nearly illegible scrawl on blue-lined notebook paper. Mr. Glassman was at one point "Craig, darling," at another point, a force that the letter writer wrote drove me into the night to do your bidding.

"True, I am the killer, but Craig, the killings are your command," he wrote in one of the letters received in the mail on Aug. 6. "I shall see you standing naked at the judgment seat. . . Upon your condemnation the world shall rise in jubilation. The terrible, wicked Craig is dead, they shall shout."

Thomas Delaney, the Westchester County Sheriff, speaking at a news conference with Mr. Glassman today, said neither of them knew why the letter writer had chosen Mr. Glassman, an unsalaried corporal in the auxiliary Emergency Services Unit of the sheriff's office who is a registered nurse at Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx.

"Maybe he saw Craig as a symbol of authority," Mr. Delaney said, noting that Mr. Glassman often wore the forest green uniform of the Sheriff's Department. "Maybe he thought Craig was sent there to spy on him."

The first letter, Mr. Glassman said, arrived June 7, just three months after he

and his wife, Marguerite, a social worker, moved into their studio apartment on the sixth floor, just below Mr. Berkowitz's. The suspect had lived in his \$230.50-a-month studio apartment since April 1976.

Dog's Shooting Under Inquiry

Another letter arrived June 13, and Mr. Glassman said he had not really worried until last Saturday, when someone started a fire outside his door and dumped about "20 .22-caliber" shells into the fire. He also received two more letters, one addressed to "my master" and signed "your brother in White Plains, God help and keep the dead." The other opened simply with "Craig," and was signed with either the word "Dimmelschmerz" or "Himmelschmerz."

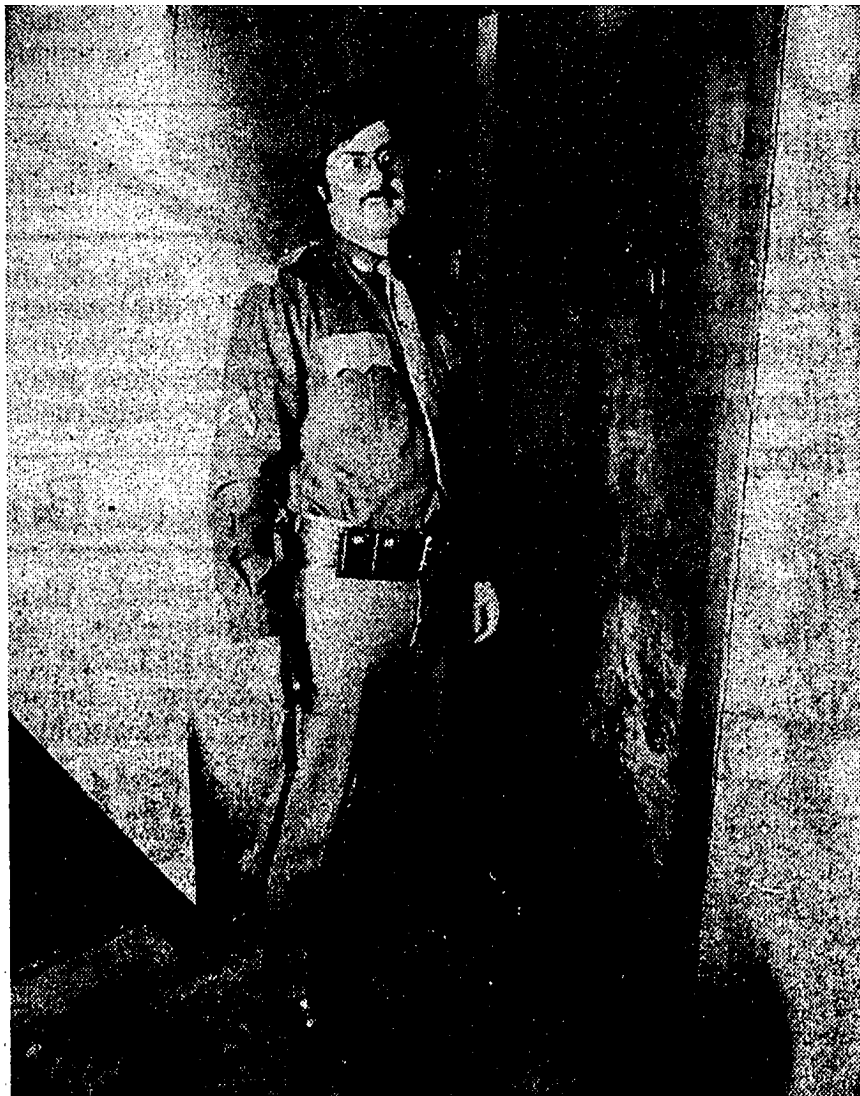
The arson was reported to the Yonkers police, who were investigating Mr. Berkowitz's possible connection to other letters sent to area residents and the April

27 shooting of a dog in the neighborhood.

At about 8 P.M. Wednesday, Mr. Glassman went outside the building to check on the suspect's car, he said. He saw a duffle bag with what appeared to be the butt of a rifle sticking out.

Then "about 10 men came up and asked me if I was David Berkowitz," said Mr. Glassman. When he identified himself to the New York City detectives who had been staking out the apartment and explained his interest in the suspect, they waited for a warrant to enter the apartment.

"I never really thought he was 'Son of Sam,'" said Mr. Glassman, a native of Ardsley who just last Friday graduated from the St. John's Hospital Nursing School in Yonkers. "There were so many people being investigated, he didn't look like the composite. It was just luck that I was there, a strange set of circumstances."



The New York Times/Chester Higgins Jr.

Craig Glassman outside his apartment in the building where David Berkowitz also lived. The door and floor were damaged in a fire that he suspects was set by Mr. Berkowitz. He also received threatening letters.