

## OFFICER SAPIENZA

### CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Officer Sapienza, 40s-50s. A fat, incompetent small-town police officer who represents everything wrong with the local law enforcement. He's dismissive, lazy, and more interested in spinning wild theories than actually investigating. He carries a notebook but does minimal actual police work. He's condescending to Derek's grieving parents, makes inappropriate jokes about drug addiction and kidnapping, and quickly jumps to absurd conclusions (like Derek self-kidnapping himself or the kids being part of a plot). He's the reason Pete has been able to get away with murder for fifteen years—the police in this town are legendarily bad at their jobs.

### SCENE CONTEXT

Officer Sapienza is at Derek's house "investigating" his disappearance. Derek's parents are desperate and grieving, but Sapienza keeps offering useless speculation instead of real help. When Annie and her friends show up with actual evidence about how Derek was taken through the back forest, Sapienza immediately accuses the kids of being part of a kidnapping plot instead of listening to them. Derek's father, frustrated with his complete incompetence, eventually throws him out of the house. This scene shows why the kids have to solve the case themselves—the authorities are worse than useless.

### OFFICER SAPIENZA

So you say that you only realized  
Derek was missing today in the  
morning?

### OFFICER SAPIENZA

Have you tried calling him lately?  
maybe he woke up in somebody's  
house? Got some action last night  
... you know what I mean?

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### OFFICER SAPIENZA

That's great information, but it's  
not conclusive under my rule book.  
He could've been following a fox he  
saw, or taking drugs and got lost  
in the trip.

DEREK'S MOTHER

My angel doesn't take drugs!!! How dare you!

OFFICER SAPIENZA

You never know with these kids nowadays, no sireee, the things I've seen ma'am. Perfect A students, then they try some meth, some angel dust in a party to try to be cool, 'cause they're perfect A nerds you know? ... And the next you know, in the streets begging for money. Seen it a thousand times.