

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:05,200

In the backwoods of Virginia, there is a document containing a secret code.

2

00:00:05,200 --> 00:00:06,200

Take a look at here.

3

00:00:06,200 --> 00:00:07,200

What's that little lock?

4

00:00:07,200 --> 00:00:08,200

It's like peaks and valleys.

5

00:00:08,200 --> 00:00:09,200

Exactly.

6

00:00:09,200 --> 00:00:10,200

Mounds.

7

00:00:10,200 --> 00:00:12,080

That leads to a legendary treasure.

8

00:00:12,080 --> 00:00:14,680

People have been looking for this treasure now for a long time.

9

00:00:14,680 --> 00:00:16,680

Oh my God!

10

00:00:16,680 --> 00:00:19,280

But can it be found?

11

00:00:19,280 --> 00:00:21,480

Guys, look at this!

12

00:00:21,480 --> 00:00:22,480

Look at that!

13

00:00:22,480 --> 00:00:23,480

1788, is that right?

14

00:00:23,480 --> 00:00:24,480

Hey Josh, I got something.

15

00:00:24,480 --> 00:00:25,480

Look at this.

16

00:00:25,480 --> 00:00:26,480

Yep, I see it!

17

00:00:26,480 --> 00:00:27,480

Right up there!

18

00:00:27,480 --> 00:00:30,080

I'm getting more and more confident as we go.

19

00:00:30,080 --> 00:00:32,080

I mean, look at this place.

20

00:00:32,080 --> 00:00:35,080

Definitely getting her up there.

21

00:00:35,080 --> 00:00:38,080

Oh, we got to sleep on rock one or right, be careful!

22

00:00:38,080 --> 00:00:39,080

Hang on boys!

23

00:00:39,080 --> 00:00:56,840

What if I told you there's a buried treasure out there worth more than \$65 million?

24

00:00:56,840 --> 00:01:16,160

The story begins in 1817 with a Virginia adventurer named Thomas Beale, who led an

25

00:01:16,160 --> 00:01:21,480

expedition out west that discovered huge quantities of gold and silver.

26

00:01:21,480 --> 00:01:26,700

Beale transported the 8,000 pound haul to a secret hiding spot back in Virginia, worried

27

00:01:26,700 --> 00:01:28,840

that the money could fall into the wrong hands.

28

00:01:28,840 --> 00:01:34,220

He crafted three coded documents that contain the names of his teammates, a description of

29

00:01:34,220 --> 00:01:39,780

the contents, and most importantly, the exact location of the treasure.

30

00:01:39,780 --> 00:01:44,580

Beale locked the papers in an iron box and gave them to a local innkeeper, with instructions

31

00:01:44,580 --> 00:01:47,980

to open the container only if he didn't return.

32

00:01:47,980 --> 00:01:50,380

Beale was never seen or heard from again.

33

00:01:51,060 --> 00:01:57,820

In time, the box is open, and a publisher named James Ward reveals the three coded documents

34

00:01:57,820 --> 00:02:00,820

in a pamphlet called The Beale Papers.

35

00:02:00,820 --> 00:02:03,420

It's a great story, if it's true.

36

00:02:03,420 --> 00:02:08,220

Some skeptics claim the entire tale is an elaborate hoax, but dedicated treasure hunters

37

00:02:08,220 --> 00:02:13,980

are using newly discovered historic maps, powerful metal detectors, and even aircraft

38

00:02:13,980 --> 00:02:16,500

in hopes of solving the mystery.

39

00:02:16,500 --> 00:02:21,260

There may be four tons of gold and silver just waiting to be found in the mountains

40

00:02:21,260 --> 00:02:22,260

of Virginia.

41

00:02:22,260 --> 00:02:24,740

So let's go find it.

42

00:02:28,740 --> 00:02:34,740

My name is Josh Gates, with a degree in archaeology and a passion for exploration.

43

00:02:34,740 --> 00:02:39,740

I have a tendency to end up in some very strange situations.

44

00:02:39,740 --> 00:02:43,860

There has got to be a better way to make a living.

45

00:02:43,860 --> 00:02:48,220

My travels have taken me to the ends of the earth as I investigate the greatest legends

46

00:02:48,220 --> 00:02:49,220

in history.

47

00:02:49,220 --> 00:02:51,220

We're going to try, let's go.

48

00:02:51,220 --> 00:02:52,900

This is Expedition Unknown.

49

00:02:59,540 --> 00:03:03,980

The only thing I love more than looking for a mysterious buried treasure is a road trip.

50

00:03:03,980 --> 00:03:09,820

So from New York, I'm driving 400 miles to central Virginia to kick off my investigation.

51

00:03:09,820 --> 00:03:14,060

With seven hours in the car, I have plenty of time to contemplate where I'm headed.

52

00:03:14,060 --> 00:03:23,580

Of course, Virginia, as everybody knows, their official state motto is the old, the old tobacco

53

00:03:23,580 --> 00:03:24,580

state.

54

00:03:24,580 --> 00:03:25,580

That's not right.

55

00:03:25,580 --> 00:03:28,300

Can somebody look up the state motto of Virginia?

56

00:03:28,300 --> 00:03:30,660

State motto, thus always to tyrants.

57

00:03:30,660 --> 00:03:32,820

Thus always to tyrants.

58

00:03:32,820 --> 00:03:34,460

That is a bummer of a state motto.

59

00:03:34,460 --> 00:03:38,980

That's probably why they went with Virginia's For Lovers, a little more upbeat.

60

00:03:38,980 --> 00:03:44,100

State motto's aside, by the time I reach the heart of Appalachia, I'm absolutely smitten.

61

00:03:48,100 --> 00:03:52,420

Since I'm here to solve a 200 year old puzzle, I'm taking a moment to stop off at one of

62

00:03:52,420 --> 00:03:58,180

the most mysterious and secret spots in all of Virginia.

63

00:03:58,180 --> 00:03:59,180

Foamhenge.

64

00:03:59,180 --> 00:04:08,380

Just so we're clear, that Stonehenge, made out of foam in Virginia.

65

00:04:08,380 --> 00:04:09,900

Now who cares?

66

00:04:09,900 --> 00:04:10,900

Why?

67

00:04:10,900 --> 00:04:12,900

There's no reason.

68

00:04:12,900 --> 00:04:16,900

Look at it.

69

00:04:16,900 --> 00:04:23,700

It's beautiful.

70

00:04:23,700 --> 00:04:25,060

Okay it's cold and rainy.

71

00:04:25,060 --> 00:04:26,660

Let's go.

72

00:04:26,660 --> 00:04:28,980

Hope Foamhenge is water resistant.

73

00:04:28,980 --> 00:04:34,380

Now that I've seen one of man's most curious creations, I feel inspired to start the hunt.

74

00:04:34,940 --> 00:04:42,540

A few miles down the road, I arrive in Lynchburg, the place the legend was born.

75

00:04:42,540 --> 00:04:47,900

This is beautiful Lynchburg, Virginia, one of the great cities of the American South.

76

00:04:47,900 --> 00:04:49,900

Lynchburg's past runs deep.

77

00:04:49,900 --> 00:04:54,660

Thanks to tobacco and manufacturing, it was once one of the richest cities in America,

78

00:04:54,660 --> 00:04:59,180

and the only Confederate stronghold to not fall to Union troops in the Civil War.

79

00:04:59,180 --> 00:05:04,300

And right here in 1885, James Ward published the Beale Papers.

80

00:05:04,300 --> 00:05:08,660

In many ways, the Beale legend begins right behind me.

81

00:05:08,660 --> 00:05:12,780

This building at the corner of Church in Seventh, a couple hundred years ago, was the Washington

82

00:05:12,780 --> 00:05:13,780

Inn.

83

00:05:13,780 --> 00:05:18,300

And in January of 1820, a strange man named Thomas Jefferson Beale, purportedly gave the

84

00:05:18,300 --> 00:05:23,180

owner, Mr. Morris, an iron box containing the Beale Papers.

85

00:05:23,180 --> 00:05:28,580

According to the pamphlet, the patient innkeeper waited 23 years before opening the box.

86

00:05:28,580 --> 00:05:34,540

Inside, he found three separate documents purportedly encoded with the location, contents, and

87

00:05:34,540 --> 00:05:36,340

rightful owners of the treasure.

88

00:05:36,340 --> 00:05:37,340

The only problem?

89

00:05:37,340 --> 00:05:40,660

They're made up entirely of numbers.

90

00:05:40,660 --> 00:05:45,780

The story says that the innkeeper passed the papers on to a friend, who, decades later,

91

00:05:45,780 --> 00:05:48,780

managed to translate the second of the three documents.

92

00:05:48,780 --> 00:05:49,820

Here's how.

93

00:05:49,820 --> 00:05:56,020

The documents are book codes, secret messages encrypted by using other documents as keys.

94

00:05:56,020 --> 00:06:00,820

In the case of the second cipher, the pamphlet says Beale encoded it using the most influential

95

00:06:00,820 --> 00:06:05,460

piece of writing in American history, the Declaration of Independence.

96

00:06:05,460 --> 00:06:08,780

He numbered the first letter of every word in the declaration.

97

00:06:08,780 --> 00:06:12,180

By doing this, he formed a coded alphabet.

98

00:06:12,180 --> 00:06:17,300

Beale then used those numbers as substitutes for letters to encrypt his secret ciphers.

99

00:06:17,300 --> 00:06:22,340

When using the declaration as a key, the numbers unlock a tantalizing message.

100

00:06:22,340 --> 00:06:24,580

It details the contents of the stash.

101

00:06:24,580 --> 00:06:27,100

It describes the conditions in which it was hidden.

102

00:06:27,100 --> 00:06:33,340

And critically, it tells you where to look.

103

00:06:33,340 --> 00:06:36,500

And just like that, we've got a treasure hunt on our hands.

104

00:06:36,500 --> 00:06:43,100

From Lynchburg, it turns out I'm only about 30 miles from the heart of the Beale legend.

105

00:06:43,100 --> 00:06:47,660

Bedford is an unassuming little town, a snapshot of the American South and not the sort of

106

00:06:47,660 --> 00:06:51,540

place you'd expect to find millions of dollars of buried treasure.

107

00:06:51,540 --> 00:06:57,020

So at the local Bedford winery, they're certainly doing what they can to cash in on the story.

108

00:06:57,020 --> 00:07:00,980

It's a 60 million dollar gold treasure wine right there.

109

00:07:00,980 --> 00:07:01,980

Here we go.

110

00:07:01,980 --> 00:07:03,620

Beale Treasure Wine.

111

00:07:03,620 --> 00:07:04,620

That's correct.

112

00:07:04,620 --> 00:07:05,620

Look at that.

113

00:07:05,620 --> 00:07:07,180

And so does this map actually lead to the treasure?

114

00:07:07,180 --> 00:07:08,180

Oh, it certainly does.

115

00:07:08,180 --> 00:07:09,580

Don't you see the shovel right there?

116

00:07:09,580 --> 00:07:10,580

I do.

117

00:07:10,580 --> 00:07:11,580

I don't see any gold yet though.

118

00:07:11,580 --> 00:07:12,580

I don't know if that's the right spot.

119

00:07:12,580 --> 00:07:13,580

Well, you've got to keep digging.

120

00:07:13,580 --> 00:07:15,260

You have to keep digging.

121

00:07:15,260 --> 00:07:16,260

Or keep drinking.

122

00:07:16,260 --> 00:07:17,260

Well, one or the other.

123

00:07:17,260 --> 00:07:18,500

I love it.

124

00:07:18,500 --> 00:07:22,060

If drinking this wine will help me strike it rich, who am I to argue?

125

00:07:22,060 --> 00:07:25,660

Okay, this'll do it.

126

00:07:25,660 --> 00:07:26,660

Perfect.

127

00:07:26,660 --> 00:07:29,780

Let's get out of here.

128

00:07:29,780 --> 00:07:33,220

In the event that I can't drink my way to the treasure, it's probably a better bet to

129

00:07:33,220 --> 00:07:38,140

follow the clues in the decoded cipher, which leads me to the epicenter of all Beale Treasure

130

00:07:38,140 --> 00:07:39,640

hunts.

131

00:07:39,640 --> 00:07:45,260

So by the side of the highway here in Bedford, this building behind me here, this was Buford's

132

00:07:45,260 --> 00:07:46,260

Tavern.

133

00:07:46,260 --> 00:07:49,860

A few places mentioned by name in the legend that's still standing today.

134

00:07:49,860 --> 00:07:54,740

You know, according to the story, four miles from Buford, the treasure's buried.

135

00:07:54,740 --> 00:07:59,380

If the treasure truly is four miles from Buford's Tavern, that means there's an eight mile

136

00:07:59,380 --> 00:08:01,420

diameter to the search zone.

137

00:08:01,420 --> 00:08:05,540

To help me narrow it down, I'm off to meet Mike Evans, a respected Beale Treasure Hunter

138

00:08:05,540 --> 00:08:07,620

with a unique new theory.

139

00:08:07,620 --> 00:08:11,180

When I arrive at our scheduled location, Mike's nowhere in sight.

140

00:08:11,180 --> 00:08:15,300

But that's probably just because I'm not looking up.

141

00:08:15,300 --> 00:08:19,100

I'll say one thing.

142

00:08:19,100 --> 00:08:21,100

Guy knows how to make an entrance.

143

00:08:21,100 --> 00:08:22,100

Hey Mike.

144

00:08:22,100 --> 00:08:23,100

Yeah.

145

00:08:23,100 --> 00:08:24,100

How are you?

146

00:08:24,100 --> 00:08:25,100

How you doing Josh?

147

00:08:25,100 --> 00:08:26,100

I'm good.

148

00:08:26,100 --> 00:08:27,100

Nice to meet you.

149

00:08:27,100 --> 00:08:28,100

I hear you're the man in the know when it comes to the Beale Treasure.

150

00:08:28,100 --> 00:08:30,300

Well, we've got some leads and we're looking feverishly for them.

151

00:08:30,300 --> 00:08:31,500

Well, I'm eager to hear about it.

152

00:08:31,500 --> 00:08:32,500

What's the plan?

153

00:08:32,500 --> 00:08:34,100

Let's get in the plane and I'll tell you about it.

154

00:08:34,100 --> 00:08:35,820

Okay, you got it.

155

00:08:35,820 --> 00:08:36,820

Cuts right to the chase.

156

00:08:36,820 --> 00:08:37,820

That's right.

157

00:08:38,820 --> 00:08:44,540

While I'd be a bit more comfortable cruising down this runway in a John Deere mower rather

158

00:08:44,540 --> 00:08:48,340

than a twin engine airplane, I'm eager to hear Mike's theory.

159

00:08:48,340 --> 00:08:51,220

All right, Mike, you got me up in the air.

160

00:08:51,220 --> 00:08:52,220

Now where are we headed?

161

00:08:52,220 --> 00:08:56,100

The treasure was buried supposedly within four miles of view for 10.

162

00:08:56,100 --> 00:08:58,660

So we're going to get in that four mile circle.

163

00:08:58,660 --> 00:09:00,940

So how do we narrow that four mile radius down?

164

00:09:00,940 --> 00:09:05,380

Well, a lot of people have been looking for this treasure up on these mountain peaks and

165

00:09:05,380 --> 00:09:06,380

it's really hard to reach places.

166

00:09:06,380 --> 00:09:11,260

And you got to remember this story tells us there was a lot of weight to the silver and

167

00:09:11,260 --> 00:09:12,260

the gold.

168

00:09:12,260 --> 00:09:17,100

They would have used the old state trails across one area to another.

169

00:09:17,100 --> 00:09:21,260

Mike believes Beale must have hidden the treasure not far off a beaten track.

170

00:09:21,260 --> 00:09:23,500

In other words, near a road.

171

00:09:23,500 --> 00:09:27,460

He thinks that by honing in on these long forgotten trails, he can narrow the focus

172

00:09:27,460 --> 00:09:28,460

of the search.

173

00:09:28,460 --> 00:09:32,260

Well, you think we can pick up pieces of these from the air?

174

00:09:32,260 --> 00:09:34,780

We're going to try to find some of those old roads.

175

00:09:34,780 --> 00:09:37,620

We're going to tag them up on GPS and then we're going to get down there on the ground

176

00:09:37,620 --> 00:09:38,620

and we're going to try to find them.

177

00:09:38,620 --> 00:09:41,460

All right, so we're getting into the four mile radius now.

178

00:09:41,460 --> 00:09:42,460

Right.

179

00:09:42,460 --> 00:09:43,460

Okay, so ice peel.

180

00:09:43,460 --> 00:09:44,460

Ice peel.

181

00:09:44,460 --> 00:09:46,860

We're looking for little bits of pieces of roads.

182

00:09:46,860 --> 00:09:47,860

Got it.

183

00:09:47,860 --> 00:09:51,980

Mike's historic maps outline Bedford's overgrown 19th century wagon trails.

184

00:09:51,980 --> 00:09:57,900

But with almost 200 years of forest growth, the trick is spotting them.

185

00:09:57,900 --> 00:10:01,340

Hey, Josh, I got something.

186

00:10:01,340 --> 00:10:02,340

Look at this.

187

00:10:02,340 --> 00:10:03,340

Yep, I see it.

188

00:10:03,340 --> 00:10:04,340

Right out there.

189

00:10:05,260 --> 00:10:07,060

Looks like an old trail line through the woods.

190

00:10:07,060 --> 00:10:09,660

That's probably one of the roads that they use.

191

00:10:09,660 --> 00:10:10,660

Copy that.

192

00:10:10,660 --> 00:10:12,060

I'm tagging in on GPS.

193

00:10:12,060 --> 00:10:13,060

All right.

194

00:10:13,060 --> 00:10:14,060

Check it out.

195

00:10:14,060 --> 00:10:15,060

Check it out.

196

00:10:15,060 --> 00:10:16,060

I'm going to take off.

197

00:10:16,060 --> 00:10:17,060

Great.

198

00:10:17,060 --> 00:10:18,060

Take off.

199

00:10:18,060 --> 00:10:19,060

There we go.

200

00:10:19,060 --> 00:10:20,060

Got it.

201

00:10:20,060 --> 00:10:21,060

Good job.

202

00:10:21,060 --> 00:10:22,060

I got it.

203

00:10:22,060 --> 00:10:23,060

Yeah.

204

00:10:23,060 --> 00:10:24,060

I'm going to do the same thing.

205

00:10:24,060 --> 00:10:25,060

I'm going to take off.

206

00:10:25,060 --> 00:10:26,060

That's all right.

207

00:10:26,060 --> 00:10:27,060

There's the road.

208

00:10:27,060 --> 00:10:28,060

I'm going to get down.

209

00:10:28,060 --> 00:10:29,060

I'm going to take off.

210

00:10:29,060 --> 00:10:30,060

I'm going to take off.

211

00:10:30,060 --> 00:10:31,060

The water is the same road.

212

00:10:31,060 --> 00:10:32,060

I'm going to get down.

213

00:10:32,060 --> 00:10:33,060

You got it.

214

00:10:33,060 --> 00:10:34,060

We got it.

215

00:10:34,060 --> 00:10:37,500

We have a view that this thing may be near waterfall.

216

00:10:37,500 --> 00:10:39,460

And how reliable is that lead, do you think?

217

00:10:39,460 --> 00:10:42,100

One of the field papers was partially decoded

218

00:10:42,100 --> 00:10:44,300

and it made mention of a waterfall.

219

00:10:44,300 --> 00:10:47,540

If we cross-referenced these roads with a waterfall,

220

00:10:47,540 --> 00:10:48,900

that may be the spot.

221

00:10:48,900 --> 00:10:50,400

Okay, I got it. Eyes peeled.

222

00:10:50,400 --> 00:10:51,500

Eyes peeled.

223

00:10:51,500 --> 00:10:54,340

No one has ever cracked the first or third cipher,

224

00:10:54,340 --> 00:10:56,840

but some researchers believe that the first code

225

00:10:56,840 --> 00:10:59,140

may contain the word waterfall.

226

00:10:59,140 --> 00:11:02,440

Our plan is to search the old roads we've tagged on GPS

227

00:11:02,520 --> 00:11:04,720

and look for any signs of waterfalls,

228

00:11:04,720 --> 00:11:07,520

which could end up being the bullseye for the treasure.

229

00:11:07,520 --> 00:11:10,280

We've got about six or seven spots targeted now.

230

00:11:10,280 --> 00:11:11,720

All within that four-mile radius,

231

00:11:11,720 --> 00:11:14,480

actually all kind of leading up toward the same ridge.

232

00:11:14,480 --> 00:11:15,980

Bobby, let's get this thing back on the ground.

233

00:11:15,980 --> 00:11:17,480

We're gonna go in and investigate.

234

00:11:17,480 --> 00:11:18,520

There I am.

235

00:11:18,520 --> 00:11:25,320

MUSIC

236

00:11:25,320 --> 00:11:26,820

Now we've got a treasure to find.

237

00:11:26,820 --> 00:11:28,020

Let's go do it.

238

00:11:29,220 --> 00:11:31,240

Back on the ground, we rendezvous with Mike's

239

00:11:31,280 --> 00:11:32,880

treasure hunting partner, Steve,

240

00:11:32,880 --> 00:11:34,580

who's busy prepping their gear.

241

00:11:34,580 --> 00:11:35,840

Nice to meet you, Josh.

242

00:11:35,840 --> 00:11:36,880

Fellow treasure hunter.

243

00:11:36,880 --> 00:11:38,480

I am. Try to be.

244

00:11:38,480 --> 00:11:40,240

All right, what's the plan here? What are we doing?

245

00:11:40,240 --> 00:11:42,420

Steve and I brought some metal detectors.

246

00:11:42,420 --> 00:11:43,620

We're gonna take these ATVs,

247

00:11:43,620 --> 00:11:45,220

and we're gonna go as far as the road will take us

248

00:11:45,220 --> 00:11:46,720

and see what we can find.

249

00:11:46,720 --> 00:11:48,020

I like it.

250

00:11:48,020 --> 00:11:50,620

MUSIC

251

00:11:50,620 --> 00:11:53,020

With daylight fading and a lot of ground to cover,

252

00:11:53,020 --> 00:11:55,520

we hit the gas and begin the hunt.

253

00:11:55,520 --> 00:11:58,620

MUSIC

254

00:11:58,820 --> 00:11:59,820

Yeah!

255

00:11:59,820 --> 00:12:01,620

MUSIC

256

00:12:01,620 --> 00:12:03,120

You got one of these back home?

257

00:12:03,120 --> 00:12:04,120

I don't.

258

00:12:04,120 --> 00:12:05,620

Hey, bud.

259

00:12:05,620 --> 00:12:07,620

I'm not sure if we're going to find the treasure,

260

00:12:07,620 --> 00:12:09,620

but I'll be damned if I'm gonna pass up the chance

261

00:12:09,620 --> 00:12:11,620

to do some serious off-road driving.

262

00:12:11,620 --> 00:12:13,620

There you go. Get into it.

263

00:12:13,620 --> 00:12:15,620

MUSIC

264

00:12:15,620 --> 00:12:18,620

MUSIC

265

00:12:18,620 --> 00:12:21,620

MUSIC

266

00:12:21,620 --> 00:12:24,620

MUSIC

267

00:12:24,620 --> 00:12:27,620

After four-wheeling deep into Virginia's back country,

268

00:12:27,620 --> 00:12:29,620

we're cruising in on the coordinates,

269

00:12:29,620 --> 00:12:31,620

but we've also run out of light.

270

00:12:31,620 --> 00:12:32,620

MUSIC

271

00:12:32,620 --> 00:12:34,620

No choice but to make camp for the night.

272

00:12:34,620 --> 00:12:36,620

MUSIC

273

00:12:36,620 --> 00:12:39,620

MUSIC

274

00:12:39,620 --> 00:12:41,620

Let's do it, boys.

275

00:12:41,620 --> 00:12:43,620

MUSIC

276

00:12:43,620 --> 00:12:48,620

In no time at all, we've got a warm, crackling fire.

277

00:12:48,620 --> 00:12:50,620

Why are people so into the Beale story?

278

00:12:50,620 --> 00:12:53,620

There's so much history that keeps people going.

279

00:12:53,620 --> 00:12:55,620

It seems like it becomes an obsession for people, though.

280

00:12:55,620 --> 00:12:56,620

It really does.

281

00:12:56,620 --> 00:12:59,620

I think it's gonna be found what the paper number two said.

282

00:12:59,620 --> 00:13:02,620

I believe it's gonna be found within four miles of Buford's Inn.

283

00:13:02,620 --> 00:13:04,620

I think we're in the right area.

284

00:13:04,620 --> 00:13:06,620

Sure. I hear that.

285

00:13:06,620 --> 00:13:08,620

As the night draws on, the temperature drops,

286

00:13:08,620 --> 00:13:11,620

but Mike's brought something along to take off the chill in the air.

287

00:13:11,620 --> 00:13:13,620

A little homemade moonshine.

288

00:13:13,620 --> 00:13:16,620

Whoa. Am I going to go blind if I drink this?

289

00:13:16,620 --> 00:13:18,620

Probably not. Immediately.

290

00:13:18,620 --> 00:13:20,620

MUSIC

291

00:13:20,620 --> 00:13:22,620

Bottoms up, boys.

292

00:13:22,620 --> 00:13:25,620

MUSIC

293

00:13:25,620 --> 00:13:27,620

Oh, Oklahoma.

294

00:13:27,620 --> 00:13:30,620

Now, will this help us find the treasure?

295

00:13:30,620 --> 00:13:33,620

I make us sleep in tomorrow and forget about the treasure.

296

00:13:33,620 --> 00:13:36,620

Did anybody bring food? What do we have today?

297

00:13:36,620 --> 00:13:38,620

What are we eating for dinner out here?

298

00:13:38,620 --> 00:13:40,620

We have to go hunting right now?

299

00:13:40,620 --> 00:13:43,620

I did see some eyes flashing back here earlier.

300

00:13:43,620 --> 00:13:45,620

Is that the eyes flashing in the back?

301

00:13:45,620 --> 00:13:47,620

Oh, that's nice to hear. That's great.

302

00:13:47,620 --> 00:13:49,620

Can't wait to sleep out here tonight.

303

00:13:49,620 --> 00:13:52,620

Maybe it's the 190-proof gasoline that I'm drinking,

304

00:13:52,620 --> 00:13:56,620

but I'm suddenly starting to see the appeal of this whole treasure hunting thing.

305

00:13:56,620 --> 00:13:58,620

That's a good tune.

306

00:13:58,620 --> 00:14:00,620

Oh, we're in a good moonshine.

307

00:14:00,620 --> 00:14:02,620

It's totally true.

308

00:14:02,620 --> 00:14:07,620

MUSIC

309

00:14:07,620 --> 00:14:09,620

A new day in the wilderness of Virginia.

310

00:14:09,620 --> 00:14:13,620

We're getting back to work, and I'm working off a legit hangover.

311

00:14:13,620 --> 00:14:15,620

You ready? Let's go.

312

00:14:16,620 --> 00:14:20,620

Thomas Beale likely transported the treasure using wagons

313

00:14:20,620 --> 00:14:22,620

and may have stashed it near a waterfall.

314

00:14:22,620 --> 00:14:25,620

So we're following a river that runs beside an overgrown road,

315

00:14:25,620 --> 00:14:27,620

which we tagged on GPS.

316

00:14:29,620 --> 00:14:32,620

Shovel's ready, guys. Any time you need it, I have it.

317

00:14:32,620 --> 00:14:34,620

Hey, Josh, why don't you give us a shot?

318

00:14:34,620 --> 00:14:35,620

You want me to run that for a bit?

319

00:14:35,620 --> 00:14:36,620

Yeah.

320

00:14:36,620 --> 00:14:38,620

That means you have to dig if we find anything.

321

00:14:38,620 --> 00:14:39,620

You won't find nothing.

322

00:14:39,620 --> 00:14:42,620

You won't find nothing. I like your confidence.

323

00:14:42,620 --> 00:14:44,620

All right, here we go.

324

00:14:44,620 --> 00:14:46,620

Let's dig something.

325

00:14:46,620 --> 00:14:49,620

And just like that, I've been promoted from head shoveler

326

00:14:49,620 --> 00:14:51,620

to second metal detector.

327

00:14:51,620 --> 00:14:54,620

While I'm not exactly an expert at working this thing,

328

00:14:54,620 --> 00:14:57,620

I do benefit from having a bit of dumb luck.

329

00:14:57,620 --> 00:15:00,620

Hold on. Hey, Steve, I got a real steady hit right in here.

330

00:15:00,620 --> 00:15:02,620

Here, all the way over to here.

331

00:15:02,620 --> 00:15:04,620

That's the strongest point.

332

00:15:10,620 --> 00:15:12,620

Oh, right there. Stop, stop, stop.

333

00:15:16,620 --> 00:15:17,620

See that?

334

00:15:17,620 --> 00:15:18,620

Oh.

335

00:15:19,620 --> 00:15:20,620

Corscheon.

336

00:15:20,620 --> 00:15:21,620

Oh, cold.

337

00:15:21,620 --> 00:15:24,620

I'm in Bedford County, Virginia, looking for the legendary Beale

338

00:15:24,620 --> 00:15:26,620

Treasure. After hours of searching, we finally got a hit.

339

00:15:26,620 --> 00:15:29,620

Hold on. Hey, Steve, I got a real steady hit right in here.

340

00:15:30,620 --> 00:15:32,620

Here, all the way over to here. That's the strongest point.

341

00:15:32,620 --> 00:15:33,620

Okay.

342

00:15:39,620 --> 00:15:41,620

Oh, right there. Stop, stop, stop.

343

00:15:41,620 --> 00:15:42,620

See that?

344

00:15:42,620 --> 00:15:43,620

Oh.

345

00:15:44,620 --> 00:15:46,620

Horseshoe. Oh, cool.

346

00:15:46,620 --> 00:15:47,620

Look at that.

347

00:15:47,620 --> 00:15:48,620

Hey, that's nice.

348

00:15:48,620 --> 00:15:50,620

That's nice, old horseshoe.

349

00:15:50,620 --> 00:15:51,620

That is so cool.

350

00:15:51,620 --> 00:15:53,620

It's well over 100 years old.

351

00:15:53,620 --> 00:15:54,620

Over 100 years old?

352

00:15:54,620 --> 00:15:56,620

Yeah, look how deep the pits are on.

353

00:15:56,620 --> 00:16:01,620

I'm thinking this is probably around mid-1700s to 1800s.

354

00:16:01,620 --> 00:16:02,620

That is incredible.

355

00:16:02,620 --> 00:16:05,620

And again, also kind of a good sign for us.

356

00:16:05,620 --> 00:16:06,620

Yeah, yeah.

357

00:16:06,620 --> 00:16:07,620

Right?

358

00:16:07,620 --> 00:16:08,620

Hey, we're riding horses.

359

00:16:08,620 --> 00:16:09,620

They were riding horses, right?

360

00:16:09,620 --> 00:16:11,620

So this could be from the Beale Time period.

361

00:16:11,620 --> 00:16:12,620

Could be.

362

00:16:12,620 --> 00:16:14,620

Next up, Box of Gold.

363

00:16:14,620 --> 00:16:16,620

All right, here we go.

364

00:16:19,620 --> 00:16:22,620

Since Mike believes the hiding spot may be near a waterfall,

365

00:16:22,620 --> 00:16:25,620

we keep moving upstream to continue the search.

366

00:16:26,620 --> 00:16:28,620

Guys, look at this. Look at that.

367

00:16:30,620 --> 00:16:32,620

Looks like an old spillway or an old dam.

368

00:16:32,620 --> 00:16:34,620

Now, it's kind of stuff we're looking for.

369

00:16:35,620 --> 00:16:37,620

Any guess how old this thing is?

370

00:16:37,620 --> 00:16:39,620

It could be from the period, that's for sure.

371

00:16:39,620 --> 00:16:41,620

Water could have been coming over that in high water,

372

00:16:41,620 --> 00:16:43,620

and that could have been Beale's reference right there.

373

00:16:43,620 --> 00:16:44,620

All right, you guys scan the banks here.

374

00:16:44,620 --> 00:16:46,620

I'm going to check out the spillway over there.

375

00:16:48,620 --> 00:16:50,620

This could be a huge break,

376

00:16:50,620 --> 00:16:53,620

and the spillway warrants closer examination.

377

00:16:53,620 --> 00:16:55,620

Make that careful examination.

378

00:17:00,620 --> 00:17:02,620

That would be a life-deserving.

379

00:17:03,620 --> 00:17:05,620

Please, I don't want to have to come in and get you.

380

00:17:05,620 --> 00:17:07,620

No!

381

00:17:08,620 --> 00:17:10,620

Hold on, Steve, hold on.

382

00:17:10,620 --> 00:17:11,620

What happened?

383

00:17:11,620 --> 00:17:12,620

Quick scan.

384

00:17:12,620 --> 00:17:14,620

Are you all right?

385

00:17:14,620 --> 00:17:16,620

I'm all right, I'm just stuck.

386

00:17:16,620 --> 00:17:18,620

Just don't move around in it too much. Hold on.

387

00:17:18,620 --> 00:17:20,620

Oh, f***, yeah.

388

00:17:20,620 --> 00:17:22,620

Just get my foot under. I got a rock under me right here.

389

00:17:22,620 --> 00:17:24,620

You ready? Here we go.

390

00:17:24,620 --> 00:17:26,620

Up, up, up. You got it? You got it?

391

00:17:26,620 --> 00:17:27,620

Yeah, I got it.

392

00:17:27,620 --> 00:17:28,620

Good.

393

00:17:31,620 --> 00:17:32,620

Quick scan. All right?

394

00:17:32,620 --> 00:17:33,620

I ain't kidding.

395

00:17:33,620 --> 00:17:35,620

Nobody walk over here.

396

00:17:35,620 --> 00:17:37,620

Okay, here we go. Let me get out of here.

397

00:17:43,620 --> 00:17:45,620

After freeing Steve, we get right back to work

398

00:17:45,620 --> 00:17:47,620

searching our potential hotspot.

399

00:17:55,620 --> 00:17:56,620

A jar, fly.

400

00:17:56,620 --> 00:17:57,620

Come here.

401

00:17:58,620 --> 00:17:59,620

Find something?

402

00:18:01,620 --> 00:18:02,620

Right there?

403

00:18:03,620 --> 00:18:05,620

Right, right there.

404

00:18:09,620 --> 00:18:11,620

Oh, I get it hidden here.

405

00:18:14,620 --> 00:18:16,620

Hold on guys, there's something down here.

406

00:18:18,620 --> 00:18:19,620

Oh, that's all.

407

00:18:19,620 --> 00:18:20,620

Oh, coin.

408

00:18:20,620 --> 00:18:21,620

There it is.

409

00:18:21,620 --> 00:18:24,620

Coin, look at that. That is a coin, boys.

410

00:18:24,620 --> 00:18:28,620

Look at that, it says 1788, is that right?

411

00:18:28,620 --> 00:18:30,620

I see it.

412

00:18:31,620 --> 00:18:33,620

That look like a thinned up thing, is that right?

413

00:18:33,620 --> 00:18:34,620

1788.

414

00:18:34,620 --> 00:18:35,620

1788.

415

00:18:35,620 --> 00:18:36,620

Are you kidding me?

416

00:18:36,620 --> 00:18:38,620

That's a six pence.

417

00:18:38,620 --> 00:18:39,620

That's incredible.

418

00:18:39,620 --> 00:18:41,620

That is a coin.

419

00:18:42,620 --> 00:18:43,620

Dave.

420

00:18:43,620 --> 00:18:44,620

From the 1700s.

421

00:18:44,620 --> 00:18:45,620

1700s.

422

00:18:45,620 --> 00:18:46,620

How cool is that?

423

00:18:46,620 --> 00:18:47,620

You found it.

424

00:18:48,620 --> 00:18:50,620

I don't know if it's the Beale treasure,

425

00:18:50,620 --> 00:18:51,620

but that is treasure right there.

426

00:18:51,620 --> 00:18:52,620

That is treasure.

427

00:18:52,620 --> 00:18:53,620

That is treasure.

428

00:18:53,620 --> 00:18:54,620

It's a treasure in itself.

429

00:18:54,620 --> 00:18:56,620

It's a little bit of treasure, but it's treasure.

430

00:18:56,620 --> 00:18:59,620

This antique coin is a rare find and valuable,

431

00:18:59,620 --> 00:19:01,620

so we continue to scour the area.

432

00:19:05,620 --> 00:19:06,620

But after hours of looking,

433

00:19:06,620 --> 00:19:08,620

we don't turn up any additional loot.

434

00:19:08,620 --> 00:19:10,620

All right, here we go.

435

00:19:10,620 --> 00:19:12,620

It isn't the hole the guys are hoping for,

436

00:19:12,620 --> 00:19:15,620

but as we begin the long hike home, they're undeterred.

437

00:19:15,620 --> 00:19:17,620

I think if there is a treasure,

438

00:19:17,620 --> 00:19:19,620

and I think there is a treasure,

439

00:19:19,620 --> 00:19:20,620

that you can find.

440

00:19:20,620 --> 00:19:23,620

And I think that you're going to have to do the leg work to do it.

441

00:19:23,620 --> 00:19:26,620

While I'm impressed with Mike and Steve's confidence,

442

00:19:26,620 --> 00:19:28,620

there's no shortage of other theories

443

00:19:28,620 --> 00:19:30,620

as to where the treasure could be hidden.

444

00:19:30,620 --> 00:19:32,620

Back in downtown Bedford,

445

00:19:32,620 --> 00:19:34,620

I head straight to the local museum

446

00:19:34,620 --> 00:19:35,620

to dig deeper into the legend.

447

00:19:35,620 --> 00:19:36,620

Hello.

448

00:19:36,620 --> 00:19:37,620

Hi.

449

00:19:37,620 --> 00:19:38,620

Hi, how are you?

450

00:19:38,620 --> 00:19:39,620

Doing good, how are you?

451

00:19:39,620 --> 00:19:40,620

Good.

452

00:19:40,620 --> 00:19:41,620

My name's Josh.

453

00:19:41,620 --> 00:19:42,620

I'm doing good.

454

00:19:42,620 --> 00:19:43,620

Hi, Jennifer.

455

00:19:43,620 --> 00:19:45,620

We're doing a little research on the Beale treasure.

456

00:19:45,620 --> 00:19:46,620

Okay.

457

00:19:46,620 --> 00:19:47,620

Any chance you have any historical information

458

00:19:47,620 --> 00:19:49,620

or research or articles on this story?

459

00:19:49,620 --> 00:19:50,620

We do.

460

00:19:50,620 --> 00:19:51,620

You do?

461

00:19:51,620 --> 00:19:52,620

Mm-hmm.

462

00:19:52,620 --> 00:19:53,620

Would you like to take a seat?

463

00:19:53,620 --> 00:19:54,620

And I'll see what I can find for you.

464

00:19:54,620 --> 00:19:55,620

Yeah, for sure.

465

00:19:55,620 --> 00:19:56,620

Thank you so much.

466

00:19:56,620 --> 00:19:57,620

You're welcome.

467

00:19:59,620 --> 00:20:00,620

Thank you very much.

468

00:20:00,620 --> 00:20:01,620

Wow.

469

00:20:01,620 --> 00:20:03,620

Got some more for you.

470

00:20:03,620 --> 00:20:04,620

Great.

471

00:20:04,620 --> 00:20:05,620

Thank you.

472

00:20:05,620 --> 00:20:06,620

Seriously?

473

00:20:06,620 --> 00:20:08,620

And here's some books on the community.

474

00:20:12,620 --> 00:20:13,620

It's all of it now?

475

00:20:13,620 --> 00:20:14,620

Nope.

476

00:20:14,620 --> 00:20:15,620

That's it.

477

00:20:15,620 --> 00:20:16,620

Great.

478

00:20:16,620 --> 00:20:17,620

Thank you.

479

00:20:17,620 --> 00:20:19,620

With a mountain of records in front of me,

480

00:20:19,620 --> 00:20:22,620

I dive into over a century of Beale Treasure history.

481

00:20:22,620 --> 00:20:25,620

It turns out that for every Beale Treasure hunter out there,

482

00:20:25,620 --> 00:20:29,620

there's also a naysayer who claims the whole thing could be a hoax.

483

00:20:29,620 --> 00:20:33,620

One outlandish theory even states it's a work of fiction by Edgar Allan Poe.

484

00:20:33,620 --> 00:20:36,620

However, the most popular theory is that James Ward,

485

00:20:36,620 --> 00:20:38,620

the publisher of the Beale Papers,

486

00:20:38,620 --> 00:20:42,620

concocted the whole story to make money selling it.

487

00:20:42,620 --> 00:20:47,620

In the archives, I find information that could bolster that claim.

488

00:20:47,620 --> 00:20:50,620

It turns out Ward was a member of the Freemasons,

489

00:20:50,620 --> 00:20:55,620

a secretive organization that often communicates using codes.

490

00:20:55,620 --> 00:20:57,620

To follow up on this lead,

491

00:20:57,620 --> 00:21:00,620

I catch the next train out of town.

492

00:21:00,620 --> 00:21:02,620

It's 320 miles to Philadelphia,

493

00:21:02,620 --> 00:21:06,620

where I've arranged a meeting at the most prominent Freemason chapter

494

00:21:06,620 --> 00:21:08,620

in the region to find out more.

495

00:21:08,620 --> 00:21:11,620

Okay, let's see if we can find a seat and some more over here.

496

00:21:14,620 --> 00:21:15,620

Somebody here?

497

00:21:15,620 --> 00:21:16,620

Yeah, sorry.

498

00:21:16,620 --> 00:21:20,620

Unfortunately for me, though, I have chosen the busiest train in America.

499

00:21:20,620 --> 00:21:22,620

I couldn't actually find a seat in the train,

500

00:21:22,620 --> 00:21:24,620

so I'm just going to hang out here by the condiments.

501

00:21:24,620 --> 00:21:27,620

Really relishing this moment.

502

00:21:27,620 --> 00:21:30,620

I'll be here all week.

503

00:21:30,620 --> 00:21:32,620

This is us.

504

00:21:34,620 --> 00:21:36,620

Upon arrival in Philadelphia,

505

00:21:36,620 --> 00:21:40,620

I head directly to the stunning Grand Masonic Lodge.

506

00:21:40,620 --> 00:21:43,620

The Freemasons date back to 17th century England,

507

00:21:43,620 --> 00:21:46,620

and codes are central to their seldom seen rituals.

508

00:21:53,620 --> 00:21:57,620

I hope to gain access to one of the most secretive societies in the world.

509

00:21:59,620 --> 00:22:03,620

I've been given explicit instructions on how to enter the temple.

510

00:22:14,620 --> 00:22:17,620

I'm in Philadelphia at the Grand Masonic Lodge,

511

00:22:17,620 --> 00:22:20,620

where I'm hoping to find out if the legendary Beale Treasure

512

00:22:20,620 --> 00:22:22,620

might be nothing more than a hoax.

513

00:22:25,620 --> 00:22:29,620

I've been given explicit instructions to knock three times on this door

514

00:22:29,620 --> 00:22:32,620

to gain entry into this usually off-limits temple.

515

00:22:34,620 --> 00:22:37,620

I've been given explicit instructions to knock three times on this door

516

00:22:37,620 --> 00:22:40,620

to gain entry into this usually off-limits temple.

517

00:22:43,620 --> 00:22:46,620

I've been given explicit instructions to knock three times on this door

518

00:22:46,620 --> 00:22:49,620

to gain entry into this usually off-limits temple.

519

00:23:00,620 --> 00:23:02,620

Wow, this is amazing.

520

00:23:04,620 --> 00:23:05,620

Welcome.

521

00:23:05,620 --> 00:23:07,620

Thank you. I wasn't sure what was going to happen there.

522

00:23:07,620 --> 00:23:10,620

What a welcome. Absolutely incredible room.

523

00:23:10,620 --> 00:23:12,620

Well, thank you. This is Egyptian Hall.

524

00:23:12,620 --> 00:23:15,620

This is one of the seven lodge rooms that are located here

525

00:23:15,620 --> 00:23:17,620

in the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.

526

00:23:17,620 --> 00:23:19,620

It is a stunner, and it's amazing.

527

00:23:19,620 --> 00:23:22,620

I'm here because we're doing some research on the Beale Ciphers,

528

00:23:22,620 --> 00:23:25,620

which has a lot to do with symbols and with codes.

529

00:23:25,620 --> 00:23:28,620

That's true, and this is probably the most symbolic room in the entire building,

530

00:23:28,620 --> 00:23:30,620

because the hieroglyphics you see, the artwork,

531

00:23:30,620 --> 00:23:33,620

are actually copied off of real temples in Egypt.

532

00:23:33,620 --> 00:23:34,620

It's amazing.

533

00:23:35,620 --> 00:23:38,620

With rare access to this notoriously secretive society,

534

00:23:38,620 --> 00:23:41,620

I have the chance to explore the spectacular temple.

535

00:23:41,620 --> 00:23:44,620

The painting you see on the wall and throughout the building

536

00:23:44,620 --> 00:23:48,620

all depict previous Grand Masters of Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.

537

00:23:49,620 --> 00:23:50,620

Incredible.

538

00:23:51,620 --> 00:23:55,620

Each room is as extravagant as it is mysterious,

539

00:23:55,620 --> 00:23:59,620

with the walls covered in symbols that span history and mythology.

540

00:23:59,620 --> 00:24:02,620

These codes are a virtual secret language

541

00:24:02,620 --> 00:24:06,620

perfected over hundreds of years and generations of members.

542

00:24:06,620 --> 00:24:09,620

This is amazing. I feel like I'm in Hogwarts here.

543

00:24:09,620 --> 00:24:10,620

It's incredible.

544

00:24:11,620 --> 00:24:15,620

So James Ward, who published the Beale Papers,

545

00:24:15,620 --> 00:24:17,620

I've heard was a Mason.

546

00:24:17,620 --> 00:24:21,620

That's true. He was a member of Lodge 51 in Richmond, Virginia.

547

00:24:21,620 --> 00:24:24,620

Masonry was very popular during Ward's time

548

00:24:24,620 --> 00:24:26,620

and the time that the Beale Papers were published, right?

549

00:24:26,620 --> 00:24:28,620

Extremely popular in the latter half of the 19th century.

550

00:24:28,620 --> 00:24:30,620

The fact that Ward was a Mason

551

00:24:30,620 --> 00:24:33,620

means that he could have crafted the Beale Code himself.

552

00:24:33,620 --> 00:24:35,620

George Washington, Ben Franklin,

553

00:24:35,620 --> 00:24:39,620

and a full third of the signers of the Constitution were Masons.

554

00:24:39,620 --> 00:24:43,620

So maybe the fact that Ward was a Mason isn't so strange after all.

555

00:24:43,620 --> 00:24:45,620

And what about Beale himself? Was he a Mason?

556

00:24:45,620 --> 00:24:47,620

So there's always that possibility.

557

00:24:47,620 --> 00:24:52,620

Early 19th century documents are frequently in error

558

00:24:52,620 --> 00:24:54,620

or just simply incomplete because of the ravages of time.

559

00:24:54,620 --> 00:24:58,620

Right. What's your advice for a newbie treasure hunter like me

560

00:24:58,620 --> 00:25:02,620

that's trying to decrypt a 100-plus-year-old cipher?

561

00:25:02,620 --> 00:25:05,620

I would suggest look at things through a different perspective,

562

00:25:05,620 --> 00:25:09,620

put yourself out of the box and see where those who have gone before you have failed

563

00:25:09,620 --> 00:25:11,620

and try to learn from their mistakes.

564

00:25:11,620 --> 00:25:13,620

Keep that in mind too. An open mind.

565

00:25:13,620 --> 00:25:15,620

I think that's good advice.

566

00:25:15,620 --> 00:25:17,620

I'm eager to get back to the hunt,

567

00:25:17,620 --> 00:25:19,620

but before leaving there's one question I have to ask.

568

00:25:19,620 --> 00:25:21,620

Which room are you guys keeping all the treasures in?

569

00:25:21,620 --> 00:25:23,620

The one on the tower of the United Islands.

570

00:25:23,620 --> 00:25:25,620

Oh, perfect. All right.

571

00:25:27,620 --> 00:25:30,620

The revelation that the mysterious Beale might have been a Mason

572

00:25:30,620 --> 00:25:33,620

has me believing that the treasure could still be out there.

573

00:25:33,620 --> 00:25:35,620

So I buy a ticket back to Bedford County.

574

00:25:35,620 --> 00:25:37,620

Thanks very much. Here we go.

575

00:25:37,620 --> 00:25:42,620

While in Philadelphia I received a call from a treasure hunter named Justin Kennedy

576

00:25:42,620 --> 00:25:46,620

who believes he's found a rare document that leads to the Beale fortune.

577

00:25:46,620 --> 00:25:48,620

I don't know how solid his lead is,

578

00:25:48,620 --> 00:25:52,620

but he's asked me to join him in a spot that's slightly outside of town.

579

00:25:52,620 --> 00:25:56,620

A guy wants to meet on a lonely road up in the woods.

580

00:25:56,620 --> 00:25:57,620

Nothing weird about that.

581

00:25:57,620 --> 00:26:01,620

Certainly not the opening to dozens of horror films.

582

00:26:01,620 --> 00:26:03,620

I'm sure it'll be fun.

583

00:26:05,620 --> 00:26:07,620

I'm hoping you're Justin.

584

00:26:07,620 --> 00:26:08,620

Yep. And Josh.

585

00:26:08,620 --> 00:26:09,620

Nice to meet you man.

586

00:26:09,620 --> 00:26:10,620

I'm Justin Kennedy.

587

00:26:10,620 --> 00:26:11,620

How are you Justin? Yes, pleasure.

588

00:26:11,620 --> 00:26:12,620

You ready to do some treasure hunting?

589

00:26:12,620 --> 00:26:13,620

I am ready.

590

00:26:13,620 --> 00:26:14,620

Let's go this way.

591

00:26:14,620 --> 00:26:15,620

That's where we're going?

592

00:26:15,620 --> 00:26:16,620

Yes sir.

593

00:26:16,620 --> 00:26:17,620

Let's go.

594

00:26:17,620 --> 00:26:22,620

All right, so how does a guy get involved in becoming a Beale treasure hunter?

595

00:26:22,620 --> 00:26:26,620

A friend of mine's dad bought an old iron box at a flea market.

596

00:26:27,620 --> 00:26:30,620

In the early 90s he got broke hauling off some craft.

597

00:26:30,620 --> 00:26:31,620

Uh huh.

598

00:26:31,620 --> 00:26:35,620

And when it broke, it exposed a false bottom.

599

00:26:35,620 --> 00:26:37,620

So we went over there to pick our mess up,

600

00:26:37,620 --> 00:26:40,620

noticed a piece of paper sticking out, pulled it out,

601

00:26:40,620 --> 00:26:43,620

and it was a Declaration of Independence.

602

00:26:43,620 --> 00:26:47,620

There are hundreds of early printed versions of the Declaration of Independence,

603

00:26:47,620 --> 00:26:50,620

and Justin believes he's found one of them.

604

00:26:50,620 --> 00:26:53,620

And how did finding that document get you into the treasure hunting?

605

00:26:53,620 --> 00:26:56,620

Well I placed a blacklight on it and discovered the initials TJB.

606

00:26:56,620 --> 00:26:57,620

Thomas Jefferson Beale.

607

00:26:57,620 --> 00:26:59,620

Thomas Jefferson Beale, sure.

608

00:26:59,620 --> 00:27:01,620

Also I believe the document is a map.

609

00:27:01,620 --> 00:27:02,620

A map to the treasure?

610

00:27:02,620 --> 00:27:03,620

Yeah, do you want to see it?

611

00:27:03,620 --> 00:27:04,620

You have the original?

612

00:27:04,620 --> 00:27:06,620

No, but I got a perfect copy of it.

613

00:27:06,620 --> 00:27:09,620

I was going to say I was just going to mug you and take that and get out of here.

614

00:27:09,620 --> 00:27:11,620

No, I wouldn't bring an original out here.

615

00:27:11,620 --> 00:27:14,620

While Justin's printing of the Declaration could be extremely valuable,

616

00:27:14,620 --> 00:27:17,620

he has an even bigger payday in his sights.

617

00:27:17,620 --> 00:27:20,620

If it really is a treasure map from Thomas Beale himself,

618

00:27:20,620 --> 00:27:23,620

he could be on the verge of finding millions.

619

00:27:23,620 --> 00:27:25,620

Look at that.

620

00:27:25,620 --> 00:27:27,620

That is the Declaration of Independence.

621

00:27:27,620 --> 00:27:28,620

Yes, sir.

622

00:27:28,620 --> 00:27:29,620

That's incredible.

623

00:27:29,620 --> 00:27:32,620

I can't believe that you have an original printed version of this too.

624

00:27:32,620 --> 00:27:34,620

Take a look at here at the top.

625

00:27:34,620 --> 00:27:35,620

What was that little like?

626

00:27:35,620 --> 00:27:36,620

It's like peaks and valleys.

627

00:27:36,620 --> 00:27:37,620

Exactly. Mountains.

628

00:27:37,620 --> 00:27:38,620

You think it's topography?

629

00:27:38,620 --> 00:27:39,620

Yes, sir.

630

00:27:39,620 --> 00:27:42,620

And I had it authenticated and they said it was purposely altered.

631

00:27:42,620 --> 00:27:43,620

Which, why would you do that?

632

00:27:43,620 --> 00:27:44,620

Right.

633

00:27:44,620 --> 00:27:47,620

And if you flip it over and look at the back, there's a river symbol.

634

00:27:47,620 --> 00:27:48,620

That's pretty cool actually.

635

00:27:48,620 --> 00:27:53,620

It's pretty faded out, but that looks like the Egyptian symbol for the river.

636

00:27:53,620 --> 00:27:54,620

Right.

637

00:27:54,620 --> 00:27:55,620

So what's your move now?

638

00:27:55,620 --> 00:27:56,620

How do you prove it?

639

00:27:56,620 --> 00:27:59,620

This is a theory, but I want to take this thing to the river.

640

00:27:59,620 --> 00:28:00,620

I run through Bedford County.

641

00:28:00,620 --> 00:28:05,620

And I want to see if I can line it up with the tops of some of the mountain ranges down the river there

642

00:28:05,620 --> 00:28:06,620

so we can get a perfect match.

643

00:28:06,620 --> 00:28:07,620

Alright.

644

00:28:07,620 --> 00:28:11,620

Justin believes the sculpted top edge of his copy of the Declaration

645

00:28:11,620 --> 00:28:14,620

could align with the mountain ranges in Bedford County.

646

00:28:14,620 --> 00:28:17,620

He also believes that a symbol for water on the back of the document

647

00:28:17,620 --> 00:28:20,620

means that the point will be found along a river.

648

00:28:20,620 --> 00:28:24,620

With parts of the James River and its tributaries within the search area,

649

00:28:24,620 --> 00:28:26,620

that's where we're focusing our efforts.

650

00:28:26,620 --> 00:28:32,620

It all sounds a bit goonies to me, but with a \$65 million fortune up for grabs,

651

00:28:32,620 --> 00:28:34,620

I don't care if we're looking for One-Eyed Willy's pirate ship.

652

00:28:34,620 --> 00:28:36,620

I'm in.

653

00:28:36,620 --> 00:28:41,620

We hike down to the bottom of the canyon where Justin's arranged a raft to take us down the river.

654

00:28:41,620 --> 00:28:45,620

We secure our supplies which include maps, climbing gear, food,

655

00:28:45,620 --> 00:28:48,620

and just about anything else we might need in the backcountry.

656

00:28:51,620 --> 00:28:53,620

Okay, ready? Here we go.

657

00:28:53,620 --> 00:28:57,620

So we're basically looking for the same types of peaks and valleys

658

00:28:57,620 --> 00:28:58,620

we see on the top of that document.

659

00:28:58,620 --> 00:29:00,620

Alright, and it's going to be on the Bedford side.

660

00:29:00,620 --> 00:29:02,620

What's your confidence level?

661

00:29:02,620 --> 00:29:03,620

Pretty confident.

662

00:29:03,620 --> 00:29:04,620

Really?

663

00:29:04,620 --> 00:29:05,620

Yes, sir.

664

00:29:05,620 --> 00:29:06,620

Okay.

665

00:29:06,620 --> 00:29:07,620

I'm ready to do it.

666

00:29:07,620 --> 00:29:08,620

Me too.

667

00:29:08,620 --> 00:29:11,620

All forward, boys. All forward, heart.

668

00:29:11,620 --> 00:29:12,620

Got a lot of weight in this raft.

669

00:29:12,620 --> 00:29:14,620

I should have salads for lunch.

670

00:29:14,620 --> 00:29:15,620

Okay, here we go.

671

00:29:15,620 --> 00:29:16,620

Let's go.

672

00:29:17,620 --> 00:29:22,620

Our raft ride through Bedford County on the icy James River is off to a smooth start.

673

00:29:22,620 --> 00:29:24,620

We got white water up here, guys.

674

00:29:24,620 --> 00:29:28,620

However, it's not long before the river starts to pick up steam.

675

00:29:28,620 --> 00:29:29,620

Definitely getting a wrapper.

676

00:29:29,620 --> 00:29:31,620

Oh, we got a sleeper rock on the right. Be careful.

677

00:29:31,620 --> 00:29:32,620

Here we go.

678

00:29:32,620 --> 00:29:33,620

Hang on, boys.

679

00:29:47,620 --> 00:29:50,620

I'm rafting the James River in Bedford County, Virginia

680

00:29:50,620 --> 00:29:53,620

on a hunt for the legendary Beale Treasure.

681

00:29:53,620 --> 00:29:55,620

Here we go. Hang on, boys.

682

00:29:55,620 --> 00:29:57,620

Alright, everybody, hang on. We're going through.

683

00:30:04,620 --> 00:30:08,620

There's nothing like a plunge into frigid water to make you feel truly alive.

684

00:30:08,620 --> 00:30:09,620

Alright.

685

00:30:09,620 --> 00:30:12,620

And make you wish you'd stayed in bed.

686

00:30:13,620 --> 00:30:14,620

That's cold.

687

00:30:14,620 --> 00:30:16,620

Oh, that guy's cream-heading.

688

00:30:17,620 --> 00:30:18,620

Woo!

689

00:30:18,620 --> 00:30:22,620

With the feeling slowly returning to my extremities, we continue paddling downstream.

690

00:30:25,620 --> 00:30:27,620

Let's pull in over here and check the map.

691

00:30:27,620 --> 00:30:30,620

The river widens enough to give us a view of our surroundings,

692

00:30:30,620 --> 00:30:33,620

and I'm anxious to see if Justin's theory holds water.

693

00:30:33,620 --> 00:30:38,620

He believes his map will line up to a mountain range that will lead us to the treasure.

694

00:30:39,620 --> 00:30:43,620

It's just one large bump in the ridge line. That doesn't match up at all.

695

00:30:43,620 --> 00:30:45,620

Over here.

696

00:30:47,620 --> 00:30:49,620

Here, check that side to see if it works.

697

00:30:51,620 --> 00:30:52,620

That thing will work.

698

00:30:53,620 --> 00:30:54,620

Okay, we're carrying on.

699

00:30:54,620 --> 00:30:55,620

Alright.

700

00:30:55,620 --> 00:30:56,620

Alright, we'll keep looking.

701

00:30:56,620 --> 00:31:00,620

As we continue down the James River, we stop again and again.

702

00:31:00,620 --> 00:31:01,620

That does not line up.

703

00:31:01,620 --> 00:31:05,620

Each time, unsuccessfully lining up the document to the surrounding hills.

704

00:31:05,620 --> 00:31:07,620

That does not line up.

705

00:31:08,620 --> 00:31:10,620

That first ridge lines up, but that's it.

706

00:31:11,620 --> 00:31:12,620

That is not a match.

707

00:31:12,620 --> 00:31:16,620

I don't know about finding treasure, but I've just about memorized the Declaration of Independence.

708

00:31:16,620 --> 00:31:18,620

Rob, this is a pretty common occurrence for you.

709

00:31:18,620 --> 00:31:22,620

A couple of guys with a copy of the Declaration of Independence out on your raft looking for treasure.

710

00:31:22,620 --> 00:31:24,620

And this is the first for us.

711

00:31:24,620 --> 00:31:26,620

He knows we're not sharing it with him, right?

712

00:31:26,620 --> 00:31:27,620

What was that voice?

713

00:31:27,620 --> 00:31:28,620

Nothing.

714

00:31:28,620 --> 00:31:30,620

Nothing, just paddling forward, sir.

715

00:31:30,620 --> 00:31:31,620

Alright.

716

00:31:32,620 --> 00:31:36,620

After a few hours in the raft, the only thing growing faster than the pain in my arms,

717

00:31:36,620 --> 00:31:38,620

is my skepticism in Justin's theory.

718

00:31:38,620 --> 00:31:40,620

Alright, we got another bend in the river here.

719

00:31:40,620 --> 00:31:42,620

Let's pull in and check it out.

720

00:31:42,620 --> 00:31:43,620

Alright.

721

00:31:43,620 --> 00:31:47,620

We're nearly out of Bedford County and running out of territory to explore.

722

00:31:47,620 --> 00:31:48,620

There you go.

723

00:31:48,620 --> 00:31:52,620

And, to be honest, I've lost nearly all hope in Justin's theory.

724

00:31:52,620 --> 00:31:53,620

That's not lining up too good.

725

00:31:53,620 --> 00:31:55,620

There's all sorts of ridges on here.

726

00:31:55,620 --> 00:31:56,620

That looks too flat.

727

00:31:56,620 --> 00:31:57,620

Yeah.

728

00:31:59,620 --> 00:32:01,620

Hey man, check this out.

729

00:32:02,620 --> 00:32:03,620

Woo!

730

00:32:03,620 --> 00:32:04,620

Here we go.

731

00:32:04,620 --> 00:32:06,620

The ridge coming down this way.

732

00:32:06,620 --> 00:32:07,620

Uh-huh.

733

00:32:07,620 --> 00:32:09,620

It got a little hump here.

734

00:32:09,620 --> 00:32:10,620

Uh-huh.

735

00:32:10,620 --> 00:32:11,620

That actually looks like it works.

736

00:32:11,620 --> 00:32:12,620

Here, hold it.

737

00:32:12,620 --> 00:32:13,620

Check it out.

738

00:32:13,620 --> 00:32:19,620

Dude, I gotta tell you, that weirdly matches up.

739

00:32:19,620 --> 00:32:21,620

Let's get a camera behind this to look at this.

740

00:32:21,620 --> 00:32:22,620

That's pretty wild.

741

00:32:22,620 --> 00:32:23,620

Look at that.

742

00:32:23,620 --> 00:32:26,620

That ridge looks like it lines up almost perfectly with that.

743

00:32:26,620 --> 00:32:28,620

That lines up to that, that lines up to that.

744

00:32:28,620 --> 00:32:30,620

It slopes up on that side, slopes down over here.

745

00:32:30,620 --> 00:32:32,620

That's a perfect match right there.

746

00:32:32,620 --> 00:32:34,620

That's how you actually is a perfect match.

747

00:32:34,620 --> 00:32:37,620

I mean, I don't want to say I thought you were nuts.

748

00:32:37,620 --> 00:32:39,620

I thought you were nuts.

749

00:32:39,620 --> 00:32:40,620

Alright, let's get over there.

750

00:32:40,620 --> 00:32:42,620

Let's get over there and check it out.

751

00:32:42,620 --> 00:32:46,620

I mean, now I'm starting to feel like we're about to find a treasure.

752

00:32:46,620 --> 00:32:47,620

Come on, let's go.

753

00:32:47,620 --> 00:32:48,620

Let's do it.

754

00:32:50,620 --> 00:32:52,620

With newfound faith putting a spring in my step,

755

00:32:52,620 --> 00:32:54,620

we head toward the hills,

756

00:32:54,620 --> 00:32:58,620

hopeful to find the next clue in our hunt for the Beale Treasure.

757

00:32:58,620 --> 00:33:00,620

Alright, Justin, assuming we are in the right area,

758

00:33:00,620 --> 00:33:01,620

what are we looking for?

759

00:33:02,620 --> 00:33:04,620

Well, nobody really knows for sure.

760

00:33:04,620 --> 00:33:07,620

Cypher 2 says that the vault is roughly lying in the stone.

761

00:33:07,620 --> 00:33:08,620

Uh-huh.

762

00:33:08,620 --> 00:33:10,620

And the vessels rest on solid stone.

763

00:33:10,620 --> 00:33:12,620

So in your mind, what do you think that area looks like?

764

00:33:12,620 --> 00:33:18,620

I think that it's in a large opening, a large cave, a ravine of some type.

765

00:33:18,620 --> 00:33:19,620

Okay, I got it.

766

00:33:19,620 --> 00:33:20,620

Big hole.

767

00:33:20,620 --> 00:33:21,620

Big hole.

768

00:33:21,620 --> 00:33:22,620

Got it.

769

00:33:24,620 --> 00:33:27,620

We continue to climb up the ridge we spotted from the river,

770

00:33:27,620 --> 00:33:30,620

although I'm not exactly sure what we're looking for.

771

00:33:31,620 --> 00:33:33,620

We're definitely gaining elevation.

772

00:33:37,620 --> 00:33:38,620

Almost to the top.

773

00:33:38,620 --> 00:33:39,620

Oh my god.

774

00:33:39,620 --> 00:33:40,620

Holy s***.

775

00:33:43,620 --> 00:33:45,620

That is huge.

776

00:33:45,620 --> 00:33:47,620

Oh look, it goes way back down there.

777

00:33:47,620 --> 00:33:48,620

You see that?

778

00:33:49,620 --> 00:33:51,620

That is a huge cave.

779

00:33:51,620 --> 00:33:53,620

I mean, the paper just says what?

780

00:33:53,620 --> 00:33:54,620

A vault?

781

00:33:54,620 --> 00:33:55,620

It says underground, right?

782

00:33:55,620 --> 00:33:56,620

Yeah.

783

00:33:56,620 --> 00:33:57,620

That could be a vault.

784

00:33:57,620 --> 00:33:58,620

Yeah, that's a vault.

785

00:33:59,620 --> 00:34:01,620

Let's tell you what, man, I don't know if we're finding treasure,

786

00:34:01,620 --> 00:34:03,620

but your map got us to this.

787

00:34:03,620 --> 00:34:04,620

Yeah.

788

00:34:04,620 --> 00:34:05,620

Okay, so now what?

789

00:34:06,620 --> 00:34:07,620

Let's get down there and check it out.

790

00:34:09,620 --> 00:34:12,620

With a little peer pressure and just a touch of gold fever.

791

00:34:12,620 --> 00:34:13,620

Let's do it.

792

00:34:13,620 --> 00:34:14,620

I hope that's enough rope.

793

00:34:14,620 --> 00:34:15,620

Oh god.

794

00:34:15,620 --> 00:34:19,620

I've agreed to repel down to the massive cave in search of Beale's treasure.

795

00:34:19,620 --> 00:34:20,620

How you doing?

796

00:34:20,620 --> 00:34:22,620

It's steep as s***.

797

00:34:24,620 --> 00:34:27,620

Sometimes I'm not sure whether I love or hate my job.

798

00:34:27,620 --> 00:34:29,620

I'm just hanging from here on out.

799

00:34:30,620 --> 00:34:32,620

Just a complete free fall from here.

800

00:34:35,620 --> 00:34:37,620

I still can't see the back of the cave.

801

00:34:38,620 --> 00:34:39,620

Just hanging down.

802

00:34:41,620 --> 00:34:43,620

You almost there?

803

00:34:45,620 --> 00:34:46,620

Okay, I'm off road.

804

00:34:48,620 --> 00:34:50,620

Cave goes way back, Justin.

805

00:34:52,620 --> 00:34:54,620

I still can't see the back of it even from here.

806

00:34:55,620 --> 00:34:56,620

Made it.

807

00:34:57,620 --> 00:34:58,620

That's something else, huh?

808

00:34:58,620 --> 00:34:59,620

Oh my god.

809

00:34:59,620 --> 00:35:02,620

All right, well, let's see how far back this thing goes, yeah?

810

00:35:02,620 --> 00:35:03,620

Go check it out.

811

00:35:04,620 --> 00:35:05,620

A lot of loose rocks.

812

00:35:06,620 --> 00:35:11,620

Once we've safely reached the bottom, the gigantic scale of the cave finally comes into view.

813

00:35:11,620 --> 00:35:12,620

Look at this place.

814

00:35:14,620 --> 00:35:17,620

Well, I gotta tell you, I'm getting more and more confident as we go.

815

00:35:17,620 --> 00:35:19,620

I mean, look at this place.

816

00:35:22,620 --> 00:35:23,620

Wow.

817

00:35:23,620 --> 00:35:24,620

You claustrophobic?

818

00:35:24,620 --> 00:35:25,620

Are you?

819

00:35:25,620 --> 00:35:26,620

Nope.

820

00:35:28,620 --> 00:35:34,620

The floor of this cave is solid rock, so if the treasure is down here, it may well be in plain view.

821

00:35:34,620 --> 00:35:35,620

Watch your footing in here.

822

00:35:35,620 --> 00:35:37,620

Looks like it drops off a bit down there.

823

00:35:42,620 --> 00:35:43,620

Look at this!

824

00:35:43,620 --> 00:35:44,620

Justin, come here.

825

00:35:44,620 --> 00:35:45,620

Come here, look at this.

826

00:35:45,620 --> 00:35:46,620

What is that?

827

00:35:47,620 --> 00:35:48,620

It's like a nail?

828

00:35:49,620 --> 00:35:50,620

That's a little nail.

829

00:35:52,620 --> 00:35:53,620

It's a big one too.

830

00:35:53,620 --> 00:35:54,620

How old do you think that is?

831

00:35:54,620 --> 00:35:55,620

I'd say like 1800s.

832

00:35:55,620 --> 00:35:58,620

Yeah, I mean at least 100 years old, at least.

833

00:35:58,620 --> 00:36:00,620

They don't make nails like that anymore.

834

00:36:00,620 --> 00:36:03,620

Those old square headed nails.

835

00:36:04,620 --> 00:36:08,620

It's the first thing we've seen down here that's a sign of human presence.

836

00:36:08,620 --> 00:36:10,620

Who knows, there could be a box nearby.

837

00:36:10,620 --> 00:36:11,620

Yeah.

838

00:36:11,620 --> 00:36:12,620

Let's look, come on, let's get into it.

839

00:36:13,620 --> 00:36:17,620

Our discovery gives us enough hope to press deeper into the cave.

840

00:36:17,620 --> 00:36:21,620

As the passages constrict, I'm shaking off a bit of claustrophobia.

841

00:36:21,620 --> 00:36:22,620

This is a little tight.

842

00:36:23,620 --> 00:36:28,620

I feel like a giant baby, squeezing my way out of a limestone birth canal.

843

00:36:30,620 --> 00:36:31,620

Oh my god.

844

00:36:32,620 --> 00:36:34,620

This just gets crazier and crazier.

845

00:36:34,620 --> 00:36:36,620

Oh yeah, that's the money room here.

846

00:36:36,620 --> 00:36:38,620

Look, best place.

847

00:36:39,620 --> 00:36:41,620

That is unbelievable.

848

00:36:41,620 --> 00:36:43,620

I mean this place is so insane.

849

00:36:44,620 --> 00:36:46,620

Look at these huge formations.

850

00:36:46,620 --> 00:36:47,620

That's crazy.

851

00:36:47,620 --> 00:36:48,620

That's crazy.

852

00:36:50,620 --> 00:36:51,620

Okay, let's keep moving.

853

00:36:51,620 --> 00:36:52,620

See something shining.

854

00:36:52,620 --> 00:36:53,620

Something shining?

855

00:36:53,620 --> 00:36:54,620

Yeah.

856

00:36:54,620 --> 00:36:55,620

Oh my god, look at that.

857

00:37:01,620 --> 00:37:05,620

I'm exploring a deep cave in the Virginia backcountry with a local treasure hunter.

858

00:37:05,620 --> 00:37:07,620

Look at this place.

859

00:37:07,620 --> 00:37:09,620

And we may have found something.

860

00:37:09,620 --> 00:37:10,620

Okay, let's keep moving.

861

00:37:10,620 --> 00:37:11,620

See something shining.

862

00:37:11,620 --> 00:37:12,620

See something shining?

863

00:37:12,620 --> 00:37:13,620

Yeah.

864

00:37:13,620 --> 00:37:14,620

What do you see shining?

865

00:37:15,620 --> 00:37:16,620

This is a glass.

866

00:37:16,620 --> 00:37:18,620

Look at the top of the lantern.

867

00:37:18,620 --> 00:37:20,620

Oh my god, look at that.

868

00:37:20,620 --> 00:37:23,620

Six seconds from one of those old glass oil lamps.

869

00:37:23,620 --> 00:37:26,620

If they were using oil lamps down here, they were definitely coming through here.

870

00:37:26,620 --> 00:37:30,620

So the question is, were they coming through here with an oil lamp toting a bottle full of oil?

871

00:37:30,620 --> 00:37:31,620

That is a nail.

872

00:37:31,620 --> 00:37:32,620

That is the question.

873

00:37:32,620 --> 00:37:38,620

The artifacts we found are fascinating clues that other explorers have ventured into these depths.

874

00:37:38,620 --> 00:37:42,620

We hike to the very back of the cave, but don't find any sign of the Beale treasure.

875

00:37:42,620 --> 00:37:46,620

Well, I think it's just about Peter's out here, Justin.

876

00:37:46,620 --> 00:37:48,620

End of the line.

877

00:37:48,620 --> 00:37:50,620

Let's see any other passages or tunnels in here.

878

00:37:50,620 --> 00:37:51,620

Back to the drawing board.

879

00:37:51,620 --> 00:37:53,620

Back to the drawing board, yeah.

880

00:37:53,620 --> 00:37:55,620

Not here, but what a spot.

881

00:37:55,620 --> 00:37:56,620

And the map led us here.

882

00:37:56,620 --> 00:38:00,620

Of course, now that I've come this far with you, if you do find it, I got to cut to the treasure, right?

883

00:38:00,620 --> 00:38:02,620

I might give you a little something something.

884

00:38:02,620 --> 00:38:07,620

But Justin remains confident and vows to return to the area to continue his search.

885

00:38:07,620 --> 00:38:09,620

At what point in treasure hunting do we go get a beer?

886

00:38:10,620 --> 00:38:14,620

As for my search, well, there's something bothering me.

887

00:38:14,620 --> 00:38:18,620

It seems suspicious that the second Beale code was broken hundreds of years ago,

888

00:38:18,620 --> 00:38:22,620

but there's been no progress in deciphering the other two codes.

889

00:38:22,620 --> 00:38:29,620

I'm heading north to Annapolis Junction, Maryland, because if you need a code crack, we're better to go than the NSA.

890

00:38:29,620 --> 00:38:35,620

I've set up a meeting with Todd Matier, a seasoned crypt analyst who's carefully studied the Beale ciphers.

891

00:38:35,620 --> 00:38:39,620

Matier has ripped apart the codes, and I'm eager to hear what he's found.

892

00:38:39,620 --> 00:38:49,620

So what I did is I wrote a computer program that allows you to take the declaration of independence and apply the book cipher to the second Beale papers.

893

00:38:49,620 --> 00:38:54,620

And when you do that, when you plug all that into the computer, what do you get?

894

00:38:54,620 --> 00:38:56,620

Then we get this sequence of characters.

895

00:38:56,620 --> 00:38:59,620

His program reveals a major issue.

896

00:38:59,620 --> 00:39:05,620

It turns out that cipher 2 doesn't actually line up all that well to the Declaration of Independence.

897

00:39:05,620 --> 00:39:09,620

So across the entire second cipher, how many errors are there?

898

00:39:09,620 --> 00:39:15,620

There's about five or six different errors, but only one of the errors will throw off the entire message.

899

00:39:15,620 --> 00:39:19,620

When the author numbered the words in the declaration, he screwed up.

900

00:39:19,620 --> 00:39:24,620

Each mistake like this created ripple effects, making part of the translation unreadable.

901

00:39:24,620 --> 00:39:33,620

So this is a serious problem because the person that created the message and the person who recovered the message would have had to have made the exact same mistakes.

902

00:39:33,620 --> 00:39:39,620

Certainly that casts some doubt here on the ability for him to have cracked this code.

903

00:39:39,620 --> 00:39:40,620

Yes.

904

00:39:40,620 --> 00:39:42,620

But what about the other two ciphers?

905

00:39:42,620 --> 00:39:49,620

Since each code likely has a different key, it's no surprise that the Declaration of Independence doesn't decode ciphers one or three.

906

00:39:49,620 --> 00:39:55,620

But Mr. Matier ran it through his computer program anyway and noticed something very strange.

907

00:39:55,620 --> 00:40:05,620

So if we apply the Declaration of Independence to the first deal cipher, then we get this strange sequence of characters.

908

00:40:05,620 --> 00:40:10,620

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, B.

909

00:40:10,620 --> 00:40:15,620

It's very unlikely that that sequence of characters would have appeared by chance.

910

00:40:15,620 --> 00:40:17,620

It's more than just unlikely.

911

00:40:17,620 --> 00:40:21,620

The odds of this alphabetical sequence of letters appearing by chance are astronomical.

912

00:40:21,620 --> 00:40:23,620

So what does this mean?

913

00:40:23,620 --> 00:40:27,620

Matier believes the author of the ciphers got lazy and made a mistake.

914

00:40:27,620 --> 00:40:31,620

He believes the first and third ciphers were never intended to be solved.

915

00:40:31,620 --> 00:40:35,620

So all the author had to do was fill up both ciphers with random numbers.

916

00:40:35,620 --> 00:40:43,620

But at some point, he just started using the numbers he'd written down from the Declaration of Independence, and he used them in alphabetical order.

917

00:40:43,620 --> 00:40:49,620

Seems like kind of a sad mistake for someone who went through a lot of trouble to really cover his tracks, right?

918

00:40:49,620 --> 00:40:52,620

So what's your professional assessment as a crypt analyst?

919

00:40:52,620 --> 00:40:54,620

I believe it's a hoax.

920

00:40:54,620 --> 00:41:03,620

And thereby meaning that the author of the papers is the same person as the person who cracked the code.

921

00:41:03,620 --> 00:41:05,620

This is a stunning find.

922

00:41:05,620 --> 00:41:08,620

Since the Declaration doesn't cleanly work on cipher two,

923

00:41:08,620 --> 00:41:13,620

and since ciphers one and three seem to have been thrown together using strings of sequential letters,

924

00:41:13,620 --> 00:41:19,620

the only possible conclusion is that whoever wrote the cipher also faked solving it.

925

00:41:19,620 --> 00:41:23,620

In other words, the publisher James Ward.

926

00:41:23,620 --> 00:41:27,620

So it's really a publish employee?

927

00:41:27,620 --> 00:41:29,620

That's right.

928

00:41:30,620 --> 00:41:38,620

Mr. Matiers' 21st century analysis of the Beale ciphers has led us to a definitive answer.

929

00:41:38,620 --> 00:41:41,620

This code is a brilliant hoax.

930

00:41:41,620 --> 00:41:48,620

James Ward, the man who published the Beale papers, created in a sense a viral marketing stunt for the ages.

931

00:41:48,620 --> 00:41:52,620

By solving just the cipher that describes the glittering treasure,

932

00:41:52,620 --> 00:41:55,620

he gave hope that the other two could also be cracked,

933

00:41:55,620 --> 00:41:59,620

and that anyone who purchased his pamphlet could get rich overnight.

934

00:41:59,620 --> 00:42:06,620

No doubt that countless Beale fortune hunters present and future will disagree and be undeterred.

935

00:42:06,620 --> 00:42:12,620

And while I think that science has proved that there's no gold waiting for them in Virginia's backcountry,

936

00:42:12,620 --> 00:42:14,620

I don't think they'll come up empty-handed.

937

00:42:14,620 --> 00:42:17,620

It's the thrill of the hunt, the camaraderie,

938

00:42:17,620 --> 00:42:23,620

and the adventure of chasing this improbable dream in unspoiled American wilderness.

939

00:42:23,620 --> 00:42:26,620

That's the real treasure that waits to be found.

