

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:26,000

Welcome to Northwest Orient Flight 305. Destination Seattle. 43 souls aboard. And one of the last to arrive is a passenger who looks just like any other. Dark suit, black tie. Just another anonymous businessman headed home for the holidays.

2

00:00:27,000 --> 00:00:41,000

Our passenger has bought himself a ticket using the name Dan Cooper. He carries a briefcase which hasn't been inspected by airport security. That's because here in 1971, despite a rash of attempted hijackings, there isn't any airport security.

3

00:00:44,000 --> 00:00:50,000

On board, passengers are stowing their belongings, taking their seats and settling in for the short 28 minute flight. Thank you.

4

00:00:51,000 --> 00:01:00,000

Mr. Cooper settles into seat 18E at the back of the aircraft and orders himself a bourbon and 7-up, a sophisticated drink at the time.

5

00:01:05,000 --> 00:01:16,000

It isn't until the plane taxis away from the gate that he hands 23 year old flight attendant Flo Schaffner a note. Of course, a lot of businessmen pass notes to Flo, so she promptly disregards it.

6

00:01:17,000 --> 00:01:20,000

But this one was different.

7

00:01:25,000 --> 00:01:32,000

And just like that, the fate of this normal commuter flight has suddenly changed course and is about to become the stuff of legend.

8

00:01:47,000 --> 00:01:57,000

He is known as D.B. Cooper, mastermind of the only unsolved skyjacking in history and what some believe to be the perfect crime.

9

00:01:58,000 --> 00:02:12,000

In 1971, this mysterious traveler threatens to blow up Northwest Orient Flight 305. He's given \$200,000 and four parachutes before vanishing out the back of a Boeing 727, never to be seen again.

10

00:02:13,000 --> 00:02:25,000

The crime captivates the nation and sets off the largest manhunt in U.S. history. But now, decades later, the FBI is officially giving up on the case unsolved.

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00:02:28,000 --> 00:02:36,000

But not everyone is throwing in the towel. Journalists, scientists and passionate citizens may be closer than ever to cracking the case wide open.

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00:02:37,000 --> 00:02:49,000

They're uncovering FBI documents, pushing the scientific bounds of forensic testing and developing mind-blowing, groundbreaking theories about who D.B. Cooper was and what happened to him.

13

00:02:51,000 --> 00:03:02,000

So fasten your seatbelts and place your seatbacks in the upright position because we're taking off on an expedition unknown manhunt chasing aviation's most legendary outlaw.

14

00:03:07,000 --> 00:03:09,000

My name is Josh Gates.

15

00:03:09,000 --> 00:03:10,000

Look at that!

16

00:03:10,000 --> 00:03:14,000

With a degree in archaeology and a passion for exploration.

17

00:03:15,000 --> 00:03:19,000

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

18

00:03:19,000 --> 00:03:21,000

This is horrible. This is officially horrible.

19

00:03:22,000 --> 00:03:28,000

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

20

00:03:28,000 --> 00:03:29,000

We're going to try. Let's go.

21

00:03:30,000 --> 00:03:32,000

This is Expedition Unknown.

22

00:03:37,000 --> 00:03:46,000

Everything we know about what Cooper said and did that night comes from witness statements and the vast case files of the FBI, which are sealed and now shelved.

23

00:03:46,000 --> 00:03:54,000

So I'm starting my investigation right here in New York by meeting with Jeffrey Gray, the author of the best-selling book Skyjack.

24

00:03:54,000 --> 00:03:59,000

He's also the only investigative journalist with a copy of the full FBI files.

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00:03:59,000 --> 00:04:02,000

Have all of these been seen publicly before or no?

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00:04:02,000 --> 00:04:08,000

These are documents that have never been released or never really been shown in any forum until right now.

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00:04:08,000 --> 00:04:10,000

How did this come to pass?

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00:04:10,000 --> 00:04:17,000

You know, I'm an investigative reporter, so I cannot tell you where I got these FBI confidential case files.

29

00:04:17,000 --> 00:04:21,000

It wouldn't be a DB Cooper story if you could. It has to be some sense of mystery.

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00:04:23,000 --> 00:04:31,000

Cooper's taken on this kind of cult status as a character and we have this image of him, you know, from that sketch.

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00:04:33,000 --> 00:04:37,000

The two FBI composite sketches of DB Cooper are iconic.

32

00:04:37,000 --> 00:04:45,000

In them, Cooper looks suave, black suit, straight-slicked hair, dark glasses, a cool and collected criminal mastermind.

33

00:04:45,000 --> 00:04:46,000

Do you think that's accurate?

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00:04:46,000 --> 00:04:53,000

One of the new things I can tell you from these FBI files is a description from Robert Gregory.

35

00:04:54,000 --> 00:05:01,000

No passenger gave a more detailed description of the Skyjacker than Robert Gregory, who was sitting diagonally across from him.

36

00:05:01,000 --> 00:05:07,000

And what he would later tell the FBI in his interview may forever change what we think we know about DB Cooper.

37

00:05:08,000 --> 00:05:17,000

He says that his hair, okay, you can see here was jet black, wavy, a greasy patent leather sheen.

38

00:05:17,000 --> 00:05:20,000

So Gregory also tells us something else.

39

00:05:20,000 --> 00:05:29,000

The clothing, reddish brown suit with wide lapels, color was unusual, more of a russet color, and then he had the tie.

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00:05:29,000 --> 00:05:33,000

This guy's tie wasn't a Pierre Cardin, it was a town craft, which means he got it from J.C. Penny.

41

00:05:33,000 --> 00:05:36,000

It was actually a three-year-old tie that Busboys used.

42

00:05:36,000 --> 00:05:38,000

Sounds like an ugly 70s suit.

43

00:05:38,000 --> 00:05:41,000

A completely ugly suit. This is like a leisure suit, Larry.

44

00:05:41,000 --> 00:05:43,000

We have evidence that shows a very different guy.

45

00:05:43,000 --> 00:05:44,000

Right.

46

00:05:44,000 --> 00:05:50,000

The Cooper who took over this airplane, the Skyjacker, and the Cooper who everyone knows are two different guys.

47

00:05:51,000 --> 00:05:59,000

Cooper, it turns out, wasn't exactly Don Draper. His appearance was much more ordinary. His clothes disheveled and thrown together.

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00:05:59,000 --> 00:06:03,000

But for some reason, that description was never factored into the now famous sketches.

49

00:06:03,000 --> 00:06:12,000

Over the years, the FBI interviewed nearly a thousand potential suspects based on the drawings, including men turned in by their own suspicious families.

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00:06:12,000 --> 00:06:15,000

None were ever charged with the crime.

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00:06:15,000 --> 00:06:20,000

If we really want to understand who D.B. Cooper is, we have to understand that there is no D.B. Cooper.

52

00:06:20,000 --> 00:06:26,000

He's right. It was only through a widely repeated media error that he even became known as D.B.

53

00:06:26,000 --> 00:06:31,000

The man who hijacked Flight 305 was ticketed under the name Dan Cooper.

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00:06:31,000 --> 00:06:34,000

That is probably one of the biggest clues in the case.

55

00:06:34,000 --> 00:06:41,000

Now, for years, the FBI was stumped. What they didn't know was that there actually was a Dan Cooper, but that Dan Cooper wasn't a person.

56

00:06:41,000 --> 00:06:44,000

It was actually a comic book character.

57

00:06:44,000 --> 00:06:49,000

And I'll show you what Dan Cooper looks like.

58

00:06:49,000 --> 00:06:50,000

This is the comic.

59

00:06:50,000 --> 00:06:51,000

That's Dan Cooper.

60

00:06:51,000 --> 00:06:59,000

So hold on. This is a comic about a guy named Dan Cooper, and the cover is literally him jumping out of an airplane with a parachute.

61

00:06:59,000 --> 00:07:03,000

I mean, that's an impossible coincidence, isn't it?

62

00:07:03,000 --> 00:07:08,000

I think that that is a coincidence that is too coincidental to ignore.

63

00:07:08,000 --> 00:07:12,000

The comic book was published in Belgium, but was popular in Canada.

64

00:07:12,000 --> 00:07:15,000

It features a brazen military parachutist.

65

00:07:15,000 --> 00:07:22,000

If this was Cooper's inspiration, he could well be French-Canadian in the military, or a wannabe daredevil.

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00:07:22,000 --> 00:07:29,000

So the current state of affairs with this case publicly is that the FBI has said, kind of, we give up.

67

00:07:29,000 --> 00:07:32,000

This case is being investigated every day.

68

00:07:32,000 --> 00:07:41,000

And the people, I think, who have the best grip on the case are the civic sleuths that are actually, you know, are responsible for making the big, the big latest breaks.

69

00:07:41,000 --> 00:07:49,000

There are really, I'll diplomatically use the word, passionate people who are really deep into this.

70

00:07:49,000 --> 00:07:51,000

Well, you know about the Cooper curse, right?

71

00:07:51,000 --> 00:07:53,000

No. What's the Cooper curse?

72

00:07:53,000 --> 00:07:55,000

The Cooper case is an obsession.

73

00:07:55,000 --> 00:07:58,000

There's no way not to get obsessed with it once you start getting into it.

74

00:07:58,000 --> 00:08:02,000

And just when you think you're onto them, you learn something else that takes you in another direction.

75

00:08:02,000 --> 00:08:04,000

What is it about the Cooper story that's so obsessive?

76

00:08:04,000 --> 00:08:10,000

It's a treasure hunt, and the hunt is unveiling the true identity of the hijacker, and the stakes are very high.

77

00:08:11,000 --> 00:08:24,000

Armed with a handful of new clues and a plan not to go off the deep end, I begin my investigation to find out who D.B. Cooper really was, how he commandeered that aircraft, and how he got away.

78

00:08:25,000 --> 00:08:28,000

The flight from Portland to Seattle is less than half an hour.

79

00:08:28,000 --> 00:08:33,000

A few minutes after takeoff, Cooper lists his demands to flight attendant Florence Schaffner.

80

00:08:33,000 --> 00:08:36,000

She jots them down and then quickly takes them to the cockpit.

81

00:08:40,000 --> 00:08:42,000

Cooper's demands are fairly straightforward.

82

00:08:42,000 --> 00:08:51,000

He asks for \$200,000 in negotiable American currency, four parachutes, a fuel truck to be waiting in Seattle, and, thoughtfully, food for the flight crew.

83

00:08:52,000 --> 00:08:55,000

Flight 305 is being hijacked.

84

00:08:58,000 --> 00:09:01,000

The crew immediately follows the required protocols.

85

00:09:01,000 --> 00:09:04,000

We're not going to 305, we're being hijacked.

86

00:09:08,000 --> 00:09:15,000

When they land in Seattle, Cooper exchanges the passengers for the money and parachutes, and he tells the flight crew he wants to go to Mexico.

87

00:09:15,000 --> 00:09:19,000

Since he claims to have a bomb, they have no choice but to oblige.

88

00:09:20,000 --> 00:09:24,000

With the money and the parachutes aboard, Flight 305 gets back in the air.

89

00:09:24,000 --> 00:09:30,000

But what route it takes when it leaves Seattle is, like everything else in this case, a mystery.

90

00:09:30,000 --> 00:09:36,000

To chase Cooper, I catch my own flight to where Northwest Orient 305 first took off.

91

00:09:37,000 --> 00:09:39,000

Portland, Oregon.

92

00:09:45,000 --> 00:09:48,000

Portland is a unique town.

93

00:09:50,000 --> 00:09:53,000

We'll never use that.

94

00:09:55,000 --> 00:09:58,000

It's the perfect place to hitch up your tiny unicorn,

95

00:09:58,000 --> 00:10:01,000

try a hipster bacon-covered donut,

96

00:10:01,000 --> 00:10:03,000

get me a work application.

97

00:10:03,000 --> 00:10:04,000

I work here now.

98

00:10:04,000 --> 00:10:05,000

It's happening.

99

00:10:05,000 --> 00:10:07,000

I'm a full-time employee at a store.

100

00:10:08,000 --> 00:10:10,000

Or hit up a craft brewery.

101

00:10:13,000 --> 00:10:15,000

Surprise!

102

00:10:15,000 --> 00:10:17,000

Surprise!

103

00:10:20,000 --> 00:10:22,000

Oh my God, that's a lot of beer.

104

00:10:22,000 --> 00:10:24,000

Happy 50th State!

105

00:10:24,000 --> 00:10:28,000

My crew has arranged a little surprise party for a milestone I'm honored to reach.

106

00:10:28,000 --> 00:10:31,000

I'm finally visiting my 50th state.

107

00:10:31,000 --> 00:10:33,000

50 beers for 50 states.

108

00:10:33,000 --> 00:10:35,000

Oh my God, okay, so it's one beer per state.

109

00:10:35,000 --> 00:10:36,000

Where are you from?

110

00:10:36,000 --> 00:10:37,000

Alabama.

111

00:10:37,000 --> 00:10:38,000

Alabama.

112

00:10:38,000 --> 00:10:39,000

Texas.

113

00:10:39,000 --> 00:10:40,000

Texas, there we go.

114

00:10:40,000 --> 00:10:41,000

Connecticut.

115

00:10:41,000 --> 00:10:42,000

The mean streets of Connecticut.

116

00:10:42,000 --> 00:10:43,000

Michigan.

117

00:10:43,000 --> 00:10:44,000

Michigan gets a beer.

118

00:10:44,000 --> 00:10:45,000

Cheers, everybody!

119

00:10:45,000 --> 00:10:46,000

Cheers!

120

00:10:46,000 --> 00:10:47,000

Cheers!

121

00:10:47,000 --> 00:10:48,000

Cheers!

122

00:10:48,000 --> 00:10:49,000

Cheers!

123

00:10:49,000 --> 00:10:51,000

But I'm not just in town to celebrate.

124

00:10:51,000 --> 00:10:53,000

I'm here to investigate.

125

00:10:55,000 --> 00:10:57,000

Cooper hijacks the plane here in Portland.

126

00:10:57,000 --> 00:11:00,000

After getting the money and parachutes in Seattle,

127

00:11:00,000 --> 00:11:02,000

the plane heads south toward Mexico.

128

00:11:02,000 --> 00:11:06,000

Based on when the FBI believes Cooper jumped out of the plane,

129

00:11:06,000 --> 00:11:10,000

they establish a search zone in the forests around Ariel, Washington.

130

00:11:10,000 --> 00:11:12,000

Which is where I'm headed next.

131

00:11:13,000 --> 00:11:16,000

So this is the original FBI search area.

132

00:11:16,000 --> 00:11:20,000

Miles and miles of nothing but forests and mountains.

133

00:11:20,000 --> 00:11:24,000

And frankly, this is a terrible place to jump out of an airplane.

134

00:11:24,000 --> 00:11:25,000

I mean, look around.

135

00:11:25,000 --> 00:11:30,000

You've got nothing but incredibly tall trees that you could get impaled or snagged up on.

136

00:11:30,000 --> 00:11:32,000

You've got lakes, you've got rivers.

137

00:11:32,000 --> 00:11:36,000

There's very little infrastructure here, very few roads that he could escape out on.

138

00:11:36,000 --> 00:11:41,000

But after four decades and thousands and thousands of investigators pouring through these woods,

139

00:11:41,000 --> 00:11:44,000

nobody's found a parachute, nobody's found a body.

140

00:11:44,000 --> 00:11:49,000

The man who called himself Dan Cooper appears to have just vanished off the face of the Earth.

141

00:11:50,000 --> 00:11:53,000

But what if the reason the FBI never found anything in these woods

142

00:11:53,000 --> 00:11:55,000

is because Cooper was never here?

143

00:11:58,000 --> 00:12:04,000

I grab a car and drive 20 miles to connect with three dedicated aviation experts and researchers

144

00:12:04,000 --> 00:12:07,000

who have asked me to meet them at a spot called Tina Barr.

145

00:12:07,000 --> 00:12:08,000

Hey, Josh.

146

00:12:08,000 --> 00:12:09,000

I'm Josh. How are you?

147

00:12:09,000 --> 00:12:10,000

Hi, Josh. I'm Bruce.

148

00:12:10,000 --> 00:12:12,000

Hey, Bruce, nice to meet you. How are you, sir?

149

00:12:12,000 --> 00:12:14,000

Nice to meet you, Josh. I'm Myer Lillie.

150

00:12:14,000 --> 00:12:15,000

Myer, nice to meet you guys.

151

00:12:15,000 --> 00:12:19,000

The FBI established their drop zone pretty far away from here.

152

00:12:19,000 --> 00:12:22,000

And how did you guys come up with one that's so different?

153

00:12:22,000 --> 00:12:30,000

The FBI was looking where most commercial airplanes flying at 10,000 feet or lower would be flying.

154

00:12:30,000 --> 00:12:36,000

And that would be in that area about 20 miles that way to the east.

155

00:12:36,000 --> 00:12:44,000

The speculation is this. With a bomb on board, the pilots didn't want to fly over populated areas of Vancouver and Portland.

156

00:12:44,000 --> 00:12:48,000

So if they flew a few miles west, they would avoid that.

157

00:12:48,000 --> 00:12:49,000

Right.

158

00:12:49,000 --> 00:12:50,000

And that puts them right here.

159

00:12:50,000 --> 00:12:55,000

The planes accepted flight path over aerial Washington established the FBI search area.

160

00:12:55,000 --> 00:13:03,000

But since the pilots wanted to avoid major cities, the men theorized that the actual course would have been further west over this very spot.

161

00:13:03,000 --> 00:13:11,000

This spot is significant because it's the only place where any money from the D.B. Cooper story has ever been found.

162

00:13:11,000 --> 00:13:23,000

In February of 1980, a family on a camping trip was building a fire pit when their young boys swept his hand through the sand and found three stacked bundles of cash totaling \$5,800.

163

00:13:23,000 --> 00:13:27,000

All bearing the serial numbers of D.B. Cooper's ransom money.

164

00:13:27,000 --> 00:13:34,000

Some are convinced that it was placed here by Cooper himself as a diversion. Others think it washed up after Cooper died in the fall.

165

00:13:34,000 --> 00:13:38,000

So when that money was found, the FBI, I'm sure, churned up here in droves, right?

166

00:13:38,000 --> 00:13:39,000

Yes.

167

00:13:39,000 --> 00:13:43,000

But did they search this whole area, the spot you've identified as the new drop zone?

168

00:13:43,000 --> 00:13:44,000

No.

169

00:13:44,000 --> 00:13:46,000

So they focused here, but not the rest of this new drop zone?

170

00:13:46,000 --> 00:13:47,000

Yes.

171

00:13:47,000 --> 00:13:49,000

We think that area needs to be searched more.

172

00:13:49,000 --> 00:13:51,000

What stands to be found here, do you think?

173

00:13:51,000 --> 00:13:55,000

Basically the remnants of a parachute and a harness.

174

00:13:55,000 --> 00:14:03,000

The metal hardware on the parachute, the frame, harnesses, clips, and some personal items like belt buckles, pocket knife, things like that.

175

00:14:03,000 --> 00:14:05,000

Let's not forget the rest of the money.

176

00:14:05,000 --> 00:14:06,000

And the money.

177

00:14:06,000 --> 00:14:07,000

Yeah.

178

00:14:07,000 --> 00:14:08,000

Right?

179

00:14:08,000 --> 00:14:09,000

Yeah.

180

00:14:09,000 --> 00:14:11,000

All right, boys, well, let's get to it, huh?

181

00:14:11,000 --> 00:14:18,000

This is a fairly vast area so the men have called in reinforcements in the form of a small army of D.B. Cooper enthusiasts.

182

00:14:18,000 --> 00:14:24,000

And with metal detectors in hand, we all fan out to see if history might be right under our feet.

183

00:14:26,000 --> 00:14:31,000

Part of me feels really confident about this search.

184

00:14:31,000 --> 00:14:39,000

You know, I do buy into the logic behind it, but it's hard to escape the fact that what we're looking for is a real needle in a haystack.

185

00:14:39,000 --> 00:14:42,000

It's not just one man or a parachute or money.

186

00:14:42,000 --> 00:14:44,000

It's in an area that has changed so much.

187

00:14:44,000 --> 00:14:46,000

We're talking about almost 50 years on now.

188

00:14:46,000 --> 00:14:51,000

So the hunt may be in a promising place, but that doesn't mean that it's easy.

189

00:14:52,000 --> 00:14:57,000

Lucky for us, it only takes an hour to get a solid hit on our metal detectors.

190

00:14:57,000 --> 00:14:59,000

Something big there.

191

00:15:00,000 --> 00:15:03,000

Myer, I got a pretty big hit.

192

00:15:03,000 --> 00:15:05,000

Did Josh find something?

193

00:15:13,000 --> 00:15:17,000

I'm chasing new leads in the hunt for infamous skyjacker D.B. Cooper.

194

00:15:17,000 --> 00:15:26,000

In Southern Washington, I'm working with researchers who believe this is the real location where Cooper parachuted into the unknown more than four decades ago.

195

00:15:33,000 --> 00:15:35,000

Something big there.

196

00:15:36,000 --> 00:15:38,000

Myer, I got a pretty big hit.

197

00:15:40,000 --> 00:15:42,000

Did Josh find something?

198

00:15:42,000 --> 00:15:43,000

Thanks, man.

199

00:15:47,000 --> 00:15:54,000

I got a good hit on the metal detector just trying to figure out what it is.

200

00:16:02,000 --> 00:16:04,000

What is that?

201

00:16:05,000 --> 00:16:07,000

Robert.

202

00:16:09,000 --> 00:16:11,000

Piece of something.

203

00:16:11,000 --> 00:16:13,000

I got a good hit on the metal detector.

204

00:16:14,000 --> 00:16:16,000

Piece of something.

205

00:16:16,000 --> 00:16:18,000

Some kind of clip.

206

00:16:18,000 --> 00:16:20,000

Some kind of a ring.

207

00:16:20,000 --> 00:16:23,000

Could be an accessory from the parachute.

208

00:16:25,000 --> 00:16:31,000

Anyone who's ever strapped on a parachute, which I have not, thank you very much, knows they contain rings and clips.

209

00:16:31,000 --> 00:16:34,000

And this metal does resemble the hardware from Cooper's shoot.

210

00:16:34,000 --> 00:16:36,000

But it's a long shot.

211

00:16:37,000 --> 00:16:38,000

Or it could be nothing.

212

00:16:38,000 --> 00:16:39,000

Could be nothing.

213

00:16:39,000 --> 00:16:41,000

Right, that's the mystery.

214

00:16:42,000 --> 00:16:47,000

What do you say to people who would say, look, it's been four decades, even the FBI's given up on this.

215

00:16:47,000 --> 00:16:48,000

It's not going to be solved.

216

00:16:48,000 --> 00:16:50,000

Well, look at the history of the case.

217

00:16:50,000 --> 00:16:57,000

The biggest clue, the biggest lead, the biggest break in the case occurred eight years after the skyjacking.

218

00:16:57,000 --> 00:17:00,000

By an eight-year-old kid, getting ready to cook hot dogs on the beach.

219

00:17:00,000 --> 00:17:01,000

Right.

220

00:17:01,000 --> 00:17:02,000

Wasn't the FBI.

221

00:17:02,000 --> 00:17:03,000

It wasn't the FBI.

222

00:17:03,000 --> 00:17:04,000

They showed up two days later.

223

00:17:04,000 --> 00:17:05,000

Right.

224

00:17:05,000 --> 00:17:06,000

Okay.

225

00:17:06,000 --> 00:17:08,000

All we need is that one piece of evidence.

226

00:17:08,000 --> 00:17:10,000

I think that's what keeps us going.

227

00:17:10,000 --> 00:17:14,000

That one piece of evidence is going to be the piece that puts the puzzle all together.

228

00:17:14,000 --> 00:17:17,000

If you find that critical piece of evidence, I hope you give me a call.

229

00:17:17,000 --> 00:17:18,000

We'll call you right away, we promise.

230

00:17:18,000 --> 00:17:19,000

Thank you, Josh.

231

00:17:19,000 --> 00:17:20,000

Thank you very much.

232

00:17:22,000 --> 00:17:24,000

The metal will be sent to a lab for testing.

233

00:17:24,000 --> 00:17:30,000

Just another sliver of hope to find something connected to a man who didn't leave anything to chance.

234

00:17:31,000 --> 00:17:36,000

After Cooper gets the ransom money in Seattle, he says he wants the plane to fly to Mexico

235

00:17:36,000 --> 00:17:41,000

at an altitude of 10,000 feet with the flaps trimmed to 15 degrees.

236

00:17:41,000 --> 00:17:46,000

The pilots insist in that configuration the plane won't make it all the way to Mexico.

237

00:17:46,000 --> 00:17:49,000

So they decide to make a refueling stop in Reno.

238

00:17:49,000 --> 00:17:53,000

On the way, Cooper settles in and ingratiates himself with the flight attendant.

239

00:17:53,000 --> 00:17:59,000

He makes small talk and he smokes a total of eight cigarettes throughout the entire ordeal.

240

00:17:59,000 --> 00:18:04,000

The cigarette butts represent the one source of potentially viable Cooper DNA,

241

00:18:04,000 --> 00:18:10,000

which is a shame because in the years that follow, the FBI will lose this crucial evidence.

242

00:18:12,000 --> 00:18:17,000

In 1971, Cooper couldn't have known that DNA from a cigarette could be used to identify him.

243

00:18:17,000 --> 00:18:22,000

Still, he's scrupulous in collecting all potential evidence, such as the notes that he wrote.

244

00:18:22,000 --> 00:18:24,000

But he makes one huge mistake.

245

00:18:24,000 --> 00:18:28,000

He forgets that he's taken off his black clip-on tie.

246

00:18:29,000 --> 00:18:33,000

Very few outside investigators ever tested the tie,

247

00:18:33,000 --> 00:18:36,000

which is why I can't wait to talk to one of them.

248

00:18:36,000 --> 00:18:39,000

Tom Kay from his lab in Tucson.

249

00:18:39,000 --> 00:18:40,000

Tom.

250

00:18:40,000 --> 00:18:41,000

Josh.

251

00:18:41,000 --> 00:18:42,000

How are ya?

252

00:18:42,000 --> 00:18:43,000

Good to see you finally.

253

00:18:43,000 --> 00:18:49,000

I really wanted to chat with you because I know that you had this really special access to some of the evidence in this case.

254

00:18:49,000 --> 00:18:53,000

Yeah, that's true. Primarily we were interested in D.B. Cooper's tie.

255

00:18:53,000 --> 00:18:58,000

The thing about a tie is, it follows you around everywhere you go, and you never wash it.

256

00:18:58,000 --> 00:19:03,000

And that's the important point here because it accumulates particles from everywhere you've ever been.

257

00:19:03,000 --> 00:19:06,000

And so what's the process? How do you get particles off a tie?

258

00:19:06,000 --> 00:19:10,000

Well, we went there kind of loaded with these stubs they're called.

259

00:19:10,000 --> 00:19:14,000

They're small aluminum discs, and they have carbon sticky tape on them.

260

00:19:14,000 --> 00:19:17,000

And then we stick it to the tie and peel it back off.

261

00:19:17,000 --> 00:19:20,000

We got 19 sticky stubs off of Cooper's tie.

262

00:19:20,000 --> 00:19:24,000

And on those stubs, how many different particles were you able to identify?

263

00:19:24,000 --> 00:19:30,000

We looked at the particles by hand, and we were able to identify about 700 different particles.

264

00:19:30,000 --> 00:19:31,000

Wow, that's a lot.

265

00:19:31,000 --> 00:19:37,000

And so when you say you looked at it all by hand, do you feel like you've gotten all the evidence there is to get?

266

00:19:37,000 --> 00:19:43,000

You know, we have a lot of particles, and we have only the ability to look at them manually,

267

00:19:43,000 --> 00:19:47,000

which really hinders our ability to analyze the particles one by one.

268

00:19:47,000 --> 00:19:51,000

We know that there's hundreds to thousands of particles waiting to be analyzed.

269

00:19:51,000 --> 00:19:54,000

What's the process to actually look at those additional particles?

270

00:19:54,000 --> 00:20:00,000

Well, you know, in a perfect world, there's a device, and it can do 3,000 particles per hour.

271

00:20:00,000 --> 00:20:02,000

That's what we need.

272

00:20:02,000 --> 00:20:08,000

With the FBI having shelved the Cooper case, I can't resist jumping into the citizen-led search myself.

273

00:20:08,000 --> 00:20:13,000

I mean, I don't want to be too forward here, but if I could help facilitate that,

274

00:20:13,000 --> 00:20:18,000

if we could find a way to get a lab, and if we can, let's see if we can get those tested

275

00:20:18,000 --> 00:20:21,000

and see what modern technology can bring to the equation.

276

00:20:21,000 --> 00:20:26,000

If your team could pull off something like that, we would absolutely be at the door instantly.

277

00:20:26,000 --> 00:20:30,000

Okay, great. Well, let me look into it, Tom, and we'll pick up the conversation from there.

278

00:20:30,000 --> 00:20:31,000

Sounds good.

279

00:20:31,000 --> 00:20:32,000

Great talking to you.

280

00:20:32,000 --> 00:20:33,000

Bye-bye.

281

00:20:33,000 --> 00:20:34,000

Bye.

282

00:20:34,000 --> 00:20:42,000

Eager to help Tom out, my team and I start reaching out, hoping to find a lab willing to crack one of our greatest unsolved mysteries.

283

00:20:43,000 --> 00:20:49,000

Back aboard Northwest Orient 305, the man who once owned that clip-on tie tells flight attendant Tina Mucklow

284

00:20:49,000 --> 00:20:56,000

to join the rest of the crew in the cockpit, instructing her to close the first-class curtain and for no one to come out.

285

00:21:04,000 --> 00:21:08,000

That was the last anyone saw of the man now known as D.B. Cooper.

286

00:21:13,000 --> 00:21:19,000

The hijacking of Northwest Orient Flight 305 by D.B. Cooper remains one of the great unsolved crimes of the 20th century,

287

00:21:19,000 --> 00:21:27,000

but examining the timeline of the case may reveal crucial new evidence that could help identify where Cooper jumped

288

00:21:27,000 --> 00:21:29,000

and whether he really got away.

289

00:21:29,000 --> 00:21:34,000

With the flight crew sequestered in the cockpit, Cooper straps on one of the parachutes

290

00:21:34,000 --> 00:21:38,000

and finds the man who was the first to land on the plane.

291

00:21:38,000 --> 00:21:43,000

The pilots report feeling movement in the tail of the aircraft around 8.13 p.m.

292

00:21:43,000 --> 00:21:49,000

An indicator that Cooper has depressurized the door, descended the stairs and jumped into history.

293

00:21:53,000 --> 00:21:56,000

No trace of Cooper's death has been found.

294

00:21:56,000 --> 00:22:03,000

The pilot is now on the plane, and the man who was the first to land on the plane is the man who was the first to land on the plane.

295

00:22:04,000 --> 00:22:09,000

No trace of Cooper was ever found in that drop zone over aerial Washington.

296

00:22:09,000 --> 00:22:15,000

But that doesn't stop the local Cooper aficionados from celebrating the event that put their town on the map.

297

00:22:21,000 --> 00:22:28,000

Around here, Cooper is a counter-culture folk hero, and they've been throwing him a party almost every year since 1972.

298

00:22:28,000 --> 00:22:35,000

The party celebrates Cooper as a fearless individualist who found an amazing way to stick it to the man and get away with it.

299

00:22:35,000 --> 00:22:40,000

TV Cooper was our modern day Jesse J.

300

00:22:40,000 --> 00:22:42,000

I think it's great he got away.

301

00:22:42,000 --> 00:22:44,000

Hold on a second here, sir.

302

00:22:44,000 --> 00:22:45,000

Wait a minute.

303

00:22:45,000 --> 00:22:47,000

Wait just a minute.

304

00:22:47,000 --> 00:22:52,000

Since 1980, the party has been held here at the Aerial General Store.

305

00:22:52,000 --> 00:22:57,000

A self-styled, smoke-filled, veritable museum of Cooper oddities.

306

00:22:57,000 --> 00:22:59,000

And I'm not just talking about the Chachkes.

307

00:22:59,000 --> 00:23:00,000

Do you think he made it out?

308

00:23:00,000 --> 00:23:04,000

Yeah, because the whole thing was Nixon distracting us from Vietnam.

309

00:23:04,000 --> 00:23:05,000

It was a government inside job.

310

00:23:05,000 --> 00:23:07,000

Yeah, a government inside job.

311

00:23:07,000 --> 00:23:11,000

I'm glad he got away so he could have this big party.

312

00:23:11,000 --> 00:23:13,000

Tidemy Cooper.

313

00:23:13,000 --> 00:23:14,000

Yeah.

314

00:23:14,000 --> 00:23:15,000

You're here.

315

00:23:15,000 --> 00:23:16,000

Cheers.

316

00:23:16,000 --> 00:23:24,000

Locals even attend the festivities dressed up as Cooper, ransom money and all, which, after a few beers, inspires my own daring heist.

317

00:23:28,000 --> 00:23:36,000

Just because the FBI never found their man here, that doesn't mean they're going to be a part of the party.

318

00:23:36,000 --> 00:23:43,000

Just because the FBI never found their man here, that doesn't mean there's nothing of Cooper's to see in Washington.

319

00:23:43,000 --> 00:23:49,000

In a small museum in Tacoma, I come face to face with an important piece of Cooper evidence.

320

00:23:49,000 --> 00:23:56,000

There are obviously very few physical pieces of evidence left from the Cooper skyjacking, and this is one of them.

321

00:23:56,000 --> 00:23:57,000

This is really extraordinary.

322

00:23:57,000 --> 00:24:04,000

It's one of the four parachutes that was given to Cooper by the FBI, and it's one of the two that he left behind.

323

00:24:04,000 --> 00:24:11,000

At the time, this was the newer, sportier model that would have given Cooper more control on the way down, and yet he didn't take this.

324

00:24:11,000 --> 00:24:16,000

He opted for the older military chute, and that raises a really puzzling question.

325

00:24:16,000 --> 00:24:26,000

Does this mean that Cooper was a military guy, and that he took a parachute he was familiar with, or does it mean that he didn't actually know much about parachuting at all, and just made the wrong choice?

326

00:24:27,000 --> 00:24:36,000

I leave the unused parachute behind and press on to a meeting with a researcher who recently published a paper explaining how he thinks Cooper may have eluded capture.

327

00:24:36,000 --> 00:24:43,000

At Seattle's Boeing Field, I meet retired FBI agent and former Vietnam paratrooper Greg Hall.

328

00:24:43,000 --> 00:24:44,000

Greg!

329

00:24:44,000 --> 00:24:45,000

Josh, how are you doing today?

330

00:24:45,000 --> 00:24:47,000

I'm doing great. What a spot for a meeting.

331

00:24:47,000 --> 00:24:54,000

It is. Thanks for coming out. This is the 727, and it's not by chance that D.B. Cooper selected this style of airplane.

332

00:24:54,000 --> 00:24:55,000

Okay.

333

00:24:55,000 --> 00:25:09,000

These are the famous aft stairs, yeah?

334

00:25:09,000 --> 00:25:15,000

Correct. These are the aft stairs on the 727. They were found on two aircraft at that time, two commercial aircrafts.

335

00:25:15,000 --> 00:25:17,000

Now, what's your background coming into this?

336

00:25:17,000 --> 00:25:21,000

Well, I served in the Army as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne.

337

00:25:21,000 --> 00:25:22,000

Wow.

338

00:25:22,000 --> 00:25:26,000

And I jumped from a similar setup, but not a stair, but we called it tailgate.

339

00:25:26,000 --> 00:25:33,000

And I believe Cooper was also an experienced military paratrooper, most likely Army, and he also jumped from tailgates.

340

00:25:33,000 --> 00:25:36,000

What makes you believe that Cooper was military?

341

00:25:36,000 --> 00:25:40,000

Because of the way the whole crime developed.

342

00:25:40,000 --> 00:25:43,000

And he jumped at night, which we're trained to jump at night.

343

00:25:43,000 --> 00:25:46,000

He used another aspect of an operation plan, that's called the diversion.

344

00:25:46,000 --> 00:25:49,000

A diversion in airborne operations is similar to a magician.

345

00:25:49,000 --> 00:25:51,000

You just slide a hand. It's misdirection.

346

00:25:51,000 --> 00:25:52,000

Okay.

347

00:25:52,000 --> 00:26:01,000

And so in a diversion, try to make the enemy think, in this case, the criminal investigators think you jumped in one place, which in his case would have been Southern Washington State.

348

00:26:01,000 --> 00:26:04,000

So you're saying you think that the original drop zone is incorrect?

349

00:26:04,000 --> 00:26:06,000

Yes, absolutely.

350

00:26:07,000 --> 00:26:22,000

My investigation into the mysterious case of the Skyjacker known as D.B. Cooper has led me to retired FBI agent and former Army paratrooper Greg Hall, who has raised a groundbreaking new theory.

351

00:26:22,000 --> 00:26:25,000

So you're saying you think that the original drop zone is incorrect?

352

00:26:25,000 --> 00:26:27,000

Yes, absolutely.

353

00:26:27,000 --> 00:26:33,000

I think the original search zone was based upon the diversion he created back here.

354

00:26:33,000 --> 00:26:38,000

And it was very successful, successful enough that it flew law enforcement for 45 years.

355

00:26:38,000 --> 00:26:43,000

And he created that diversion by coming down the stairs and he jumped on him.

356

00:26:43,000 --> 00:26:48,000

It caused the plane to oscillate, which was felt up under control yoke by the pilots.

357

00:26:50,000 --> 00:26:55,000

It has long been believed that Cooper jumped at approximately 8.13 p.m.

358

00:26:55,000 --> 00:27:00,000

Because this is the time when the pilots recorded what they described as a pressure bump.

359

00:27:00,000 --> 00:27:06,000

The assumption is that when Cooper opened the aft door, the pilots felt it and assumed he jumped immediately.

360

00:27:08,000 --> 00:27:10,000

But what if he didn't?

361

00:27:12,000 --> 00:27:18,000

Greg believes that Cooper bounced up and down on the stairs to trick the crew into thinking he'd vacated the aircraft,

362

00:27:18,000 --> 00:27:25,000

making them record the wrong jump time, causing the FBI to establish a totally incorrect drop zone.

363

00:27:26,000 --> 00:27:29,000

And so what do you think is his most likely jump point?

364

00:27:29,000 --> 00:27:33,000

Just to go along with what I said earlier about him being an experienced parachutist,

365

00:27:33,000 --> 00:27:39,000

you look for a drop zone that has open area, it has roads, or something you can hitchhike to and get in.

366

00:27:39,000 --> 00:27:42,000

I'd say it's most likely a jump point that was north of Reno.

367

00:27:42,000 --> 00:27:45,000

The plane's coming in, approaching the airport to land.

368

00:27:45,000 --> 00:27:49,000

It's going low and slow, it'll come down and jump and be done with it.

369

00:27:49,000 --> 00:27:54,000

It's a very logical theory, but I'm skeptical that Cooper jumped at the same time.

370

00:27:54,000 --> 00:27:57,000

But I'm skeptical since there's no corroborating evidence.

371

00:27:57,000 --> 00:27:58,000

Or is there?

372

00:27:58,000 --> 00:28:01,000

Greg tells me that just a few days after the hijacking,

373

00:28:01,000 --> 00:28:04,000

the Reno Gazette got a letter that read,

374

00:28:04,000 --> 00:28:08,000

Thanks for the hospitality, signed D.B. Cooper.

375

00:28:08,000 --> 00:28:12,000

The note was cobbled together with scraps from an article in the Sacramento Bee,

376

00:28:12,000 --> 00:28:14,000

which was published a few days earlier.

377

00:28:14,000 --> 00:28:19,000

Sacramento is the closest big city to Reno, just a two hour drive away.

378

00:28:20,000 --> 00:28:26,000

Has someone really tested that theory to try to establish a more southerly search zone?

379

00:28:26,000 --> 00:28:28,000

No, it has not been tested.

380

00:28:28,000 --> 00:28:32,000

And is there a way to test that? Is there a way to try to create a new drop zone?

381

00:28:32,000 --> 00:28:37,000

The best way to test that theory is go ahead and do it. Do a parachute jump.

382

00:28:37,000 --> 00:28:39,000

Out of a plane on approach to Reno?

383

00:28:39,000 --> 00:28:42,000

Out of a plane with a parachute on approach to Reno, yes.

384

00:28:42,000 --> 00:28:44,000

Well, it was crazy enough to try that.

385

00:28:44,000 --> 00:28:45,000

You?

386

00:28:50,000 --> 00:28:55,000

Against my better judgment, Greg and I fly 700 miles to Reno, Nevada.

387

00:28:57,000 --> 00:29:00,000

They call it the biggest little city in the world,

388

00:29:00,000 --> 00:29:04,000

which I guess plays better on paper than Vegas, but much weirder.

389

00:29:04,000 --> 00:29:07,000

And while Reno might not shine quite as bright as Sin City,

390

00:29:07,000 --> 00:29:10,000

you get the feeling that Reno doesn't really give a damn what you think.

391

00:29:10,000 --> 00:29:11,000

And I like that.

392

00:29:11,000 --> 00:29:16,000

This is also where D.B. Cooper's Skyjack plane landed, minus one Skyjack.

393

00:29:16,000 --> 00:29:21,000

Greg's plan here is simple. Follow Flight 305's original flight path into Reno.

394

00:29:21,000 --> 00:29:25,000

Then, at the spot where he believes Cooper really parachuted,

395

00:29:25,000 --> 00:29:29,000

I'm supposed to do the same thing, which I've never, ever done.

396

00:29:30,000 --> 00:29:33,000

Before I have a chance to tell Greg that I'm on the verge of throwing up,

397

00:29:33,000 --> 00:29:38,000

I'm on a tarmac meeting Juan and his partner Dave, both professional skydivers.

398

00:29:38,000 --> 00:29:41,000

They're my new worst enemies slash best friends.

399

00:29:41,000 --> 00:29:43,000

What's the plan? Where am I jumping?

400

00:29:43,000 --> 00:29:48,000

You're going to be on the same flight path as the 727 back in 1971 going into Reno.

401

00:29:48,000 --> 00:29:52,000

And when you get at the proper location where you'd best think that Cooper jumped from,

402

00:29:52,000 --> 00:29:54,000

you're going to exit the aircraft.

403

00:29:54,000 --> 00:29:57,000

When you get on the ground, you'll have your GPS unit.

404

00:29:57,000 --> 00:30:01,000

You'll lock in the coordinates and I'll vector in right on where you're at.

405

00:30:01,000 --> 00:30:03,000

Okay, makes sense.

406

00:30:03,000 --> 00:30:04,000

You ready?

407

00:30:04,000 --> 00:30:06,000

I'm really not.

408

00:30:06,000 --> 00:30:07,000

Full confession.

409

00:30:07,000 --> 00:30:10,000

I have kind of avoided this my whole life.

410

00:30:10,000 --> 00:30:13,000

I've done every crazy thing you can think of except for this.

411

00:30:13,000 --> 00:30:15,000

We'll take it easy on you.

412

00:30:15,000 --> 00:30:17,000

I'm terrified of this.

413

00:30:17,000 --> 00:30:20,000

If you weren't concerned, if you didn't have any anxiety, we'd be concerned.

414

00:30:20,000 --> 00:30:22,000

Have a little bit of fear.

415

00:30:22,000 --> 00:30:24,000

Oh, I got a little bit of fear.

416

00:30:24,000 --> 00:30:26,000

And whom am I getting strapped to here?

417

00:30:26,000 --> 00:30:27,000

Right here.

418

00:30:27,000 --> 00:30:29,000

How many jumps have you had?

419

00:30:29,000 --> 00:30:31,000

You know, there's my second day today.

420

00:30:31,000 --> 00:30:33,000

This guy.

421

00:30:33,000 --> 00:30:35,000

Okay boys, let's go.

422

00:30:36,000 --> 00:30:42,000

There are times in my line of work when I can't believe the incredibly amazing things I get to do.

423

00:30:42,000 --> 00:30:44,000

And I mentioned that I don't want to do this.

424

00:30:44,000 --> 00:30:46,000

At all.

425

00:30:49,000 --> 00:30:55,000

And then there are times like this where I can't believe the stupidly dangerous things I agree to do.

426

00:30:57,000 --> 00:30:59,000

Do you know how many Mexican techs to take you out of the airplane?

427

00:30:59,000 --> 00:31:00,000

How many?

428

00:31:00,000 --> 00:31:01,000

Only Juan.

429

00:31:01,000 --> 00:31:03,000

Oh my God.

430

00:31:03,000 --> 00:31:06,000

Please don't let that be the last joke I hear on this earth.

431

00:31:11,000 --> 00:31:12,000

Check, check, check.

432

00:31:12,000 --> 00:31:13,000

One, two, one, two.

433

00:31:13,000 --> 00:31:14,000

Greg, you read me?

434

00:31:14,000 --> 00:31:15,000

Ten for it.

435

00:31:15,000 --> 00:31:16,000

Copy.

436

00:31:16,000 --> 00:31:17,000

How about me?

437

00:31:17,000 --> 00:31:18,000

Land clear.

438

00:31:18,000 --> 00:31:19,000

Let's rock and roll.

439

00:31:23,000 --> 00:31:25,000

The plane lurches into the air.

440

00:31:25,000 --> 00:31:29,000

And I'm keenly aware of each foot we climb on the way up.

441

00:31:29,000 --> 00:31:33,000

Because I'm going to have to fall through every one of them again on the way down.

442

00:31:59,000 --> 00:32:01,000

And make the jump.

443

00:32:08,000 --> 00:32:11,000

Greg, unfortunately the flight is in the most likely jump area.

444

00:32:11,000 --> 00:32:13,000

We're going to get to 100 and rock and roll here.

445

00:32:17,000 --> 00:32:18,000

We're in overstate.

446

00:32:18,000 --> 00:32:20,000

How terrified I am right now.

447

00:32:25,000 --> 00:32:27,000

Maybe it's not too late to back out.

448

00:32:28,000 --> 00:32:31,000

After all, do we really need to know what happens at D.B. Cooper?

449

00:32:34,000 --> 00:32:37,000

Once we hit 11,000 feet, Juan tells me it's go time.

450

00:32:37,000 --> 00:32:40,000

I pretend not to hear him, but it's too late.

451

00:32:44,000 --> 00:32:45,000

And just like that.

452

00:32:45,000 --> 00:33:01,000

I'm on a small plane approaching Reno, Nevada to retrace the path of the 727 that D.B. Cooper skyjacked in 1971.

453

00:33:01,000 --> 00:33:06,000

To help establish a new search zone, I too am about to jump out of a perfectly good airplane.

454

00:33:06,000 --> 00:33:07,000

Greg, we're pushing the flight.

455

00:33:07,000 --> 00:33:09,000

This is the most likely jump area.

456

00:33:09,000 --> 00:33:11,000

We're going to get to 100 and rock and roll here.

457

00:33:12,000 --> 00:33:14,000

I'm supposed to love adventure.

458

00:33:14,000 --> 00:33:15,000

And I do.

459

00:33:15,000 --> 00:33:19,000

But also, I've spent my entire adult life avoiding jumping out of a plane.

460

00:33:19,000 --> 00:33:22,000

My heart is in my throat and I'm shaking all over.

461

00:33:22,000 --> 00:33:24,000

There's no way out, but down.

462

00:33:42,000 --> 00:33:43,000

Yeah!

463

00:33:43,000 --> 00:33:44,000

Whoa!

464

00:33:51,000 --> 00:33:52,000

Oh my God!

465

00:34:11,000 --> 00:34:20,000

As I free fall over the Reno landscape, I can't help but think this is exactly what D.B. Cooper must have felt as he hurtled toward the waiting world below.

466

00:34:20,000 --> 00:34:25,000

Looking down here, this is the ideal place to parachute.

467

00:34:25,000 --> 00:34:31,000

It's impossible for me to imagine Cooper, a knife in those thick forests.

468

00:34:42,000 --> 00:34:43,000

Woo!

469

00:34:43,000 --> 00:34:44,000

Woo!

470

00:34:44,000 --> 00:34:45,000

Good job, man.

471

00:34:45,000 --> 00:34:46,000

Haha!

472

00:34:46,000 --> 00:34:47,000

Woo!

473

00:34:47,000 --> 00:34:48,000

That was a lot, right?

474

00:34:48,000 --> 00:34:49,000

Oh, God!

475

00:34:52,000 --> 00:34:53,000

You can't describe it.

476

00:34:53,000 --> 00:34:57,000

I don't have any words to really describe it.

477

00:34:57,000 --> 00:35:02,000

That's like, oh God, that was the scariest.

478

00:35:02,000 --> 00:35:05,000

And the coolest thing I have done.

479

00:35:05,000 --> 00:35:06,000

Oh!

480

00:35:08,000 --> 00:35:14,000

Before I did this, I was very confident I was going to come down here and say that it was fun, but I would never do it again.

481

00:35:14,000 --> 00:35:16,000

But I would do it again right now.

482

00:35:16,000 --> 00:35:17,000

I really would.

483

00:35:17,000 --> 00:35:18,000

Oh, man.

484

00:35:18,000 --> 00:35:19,000

Woo!

485

00:35:19,000 --> 00:35:20,000

All right.

486

00:35:20,000 --> 00:35:21,000

Hey, Juan.

487

00:35:21,000 --> 00:35:22,000

Yeah.

488

00:35:22,000 --> 00:35:23,000

Thanks, buddy.

489

00:35:23,000 --> 00:35:24,000

I know.

490

00:35:24,000 --> 00:35:25,000

Thank you.

491

00:35:25,000 --> 00:35:26,000

You're great.

492

00:35:26,000 --> 00:35:27,000

Thank you.

493

00:35:27,000 --> 00:35:28,000

Thank you.

494

00:35:28,000 --> 00:35:29,000

Thank you.

495

00:35:29,000 --> 00:35:30,000

Thank you.

496

00:35:30,000 --> 00:35:31,000

Thank you.

497

00:35:31,000 --> 00:35:32,000

I know.

498

00:35:32,000 --> 00:35:33,000

Thank you.

499

00:35:33,000 --> 00:35:34,000

You're great.

500

00:35:34,000 --> 00:35:35,000

That was amazing.

501

00:35:35,000 --> 00:35:36,000

All right.

502

00:35:36,000 --> 00:35:37,000

I got to call my guy by walkie.

503

00:35:37,000 --> 00:35:38,000

I'm going to take this stuff off.

504

00:35:38,000 --> 00:35:39,000

Okay.

505

00:35:39,000 --> 00:35:40,000

You want me to help you out?

506

00:35:40,000 --> 00:35:41,000

Yeah.

507

00:35:41,000 --> 00:35:44,000

You grab the shoot and I'll go out and meet Greg.

508

00:35:44,000 --> 00:35:51,000

I lock in my GPS coordinates, send them to Greg, and make my way toward the road to meet him.

509

00:35:55,000 --> 00:35:57,000

Greg, I see you.

510

00:35:57,000 --> 00:35:58,000

Roger.

511

00:35:58,000 --> 00:36:00,000

I have you inside.

512

00:36:00,000 --> 00:36:04,000

Josh, how are you?

513

00:36:04,000 --> 00:36:05,000

Good.

514

00:36:05,000 --> 00:36:06,000

How was the jump?

515

00:36:06,000 --> 00:36:07,000

Woo-hoo!

516

00:36:07,000 --> 00:36:08,000

Oh, my God.

517

00:36:08,000 --> 00:36:11,000

That is officially the craziest thing I've ever done.

518

00:36:11,000 --> 00:36:14,000

Josh, I want to ask you one question.

519

00:36:14,000 --> 00:36:15,000

The big one for me.

520

00:36:15,000 --> 00:36:20,000

Would you rather land in this desert scrub, very soft and spongy, or in a pine trees in

521

00:36:20,000 --> 00:36:21,000

the state of Washington?

522

00:36:21,000 --> 00:36:25,000

That's exactly what I was thinking when we were coming down was looking down here.

523

00:36:25,000 --> 00:36:27,000

You could almost land anywhere.

524

00:36:27,000 --> 00:36:28,000

Exactly.

525

00:36:28,000 --> 00:36:32,000

You know, and up in the original search area up in Washington state, it seems like the

526

00:36:32,000 --> 00:36:35,000

worst possible place to jump out of an airplane.

527

00:36:35,000 --> 00:36:36,000

Correct.

528

00:36:36,000 --> 00:36:38,000

And has anybody ever searched this area?

529

00:36:38,000 --> 00:36:39,000

Nope.

530

00:36:39,000 --> 00:36:40,000

No one has ever searched this area.

531

00:36:40,000 --> 00:36:44,000

Nobody has ever gone out to look for anything because, again, the focus was two states away,

532

00:36:44,000 --> 00:36:46,000

and that's the way Cooper wanted it.

533

00:36:46,000 --> 00:36:47,000

Right.

534

00:36:47,000 --> 00:36:53,000

Our experiment has revealed that the original FBI search area may be as much as 400 miles

535

00:36:53,000 --> 00:36:56,000

away from Cooper's real drop zone.

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00:36:56,000 --> 00:37:01,000

An all-new location just begging to be investigated for the very first time.

537

00:37:01,000 --> 00:37:04,000

I think Cooper fooled everybody with that diversion.

538

00:37:04,000 --> 00:37:09,000

He was hoping to buy probably 48 hours to get out of this area, and instead he bought

539

00:37:09,000 --> 00:37:10,000

45 years.

540

00:37:10,000 --> 00:37:12,000

He fooled us all.

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00:37:12,000 --> 00:37:13,000

We're still looking for him.

542

00:37:13,000 --> 00:37:14,000

Still looking for him.

543

00:37:14,000 --> 00:37:16,000

But now we've got a whole new place to search.

544

00:37:16,000 --> 00:37:17,000

Exactly.

545

00:37:17,000 --> 00:37:22,000

We begin the first of what will be many sweeps of this area when I get the call I've been

546

00:37:22,000 --> 00:37:23,000

waiting for.

547

00:37:23,000 --> 00:37:28,000

My team and I found a lab with the equipment needed to conduct next-gen testing of the

548

00:37:28,000 --> 00:37:32,000

particles on D.B. Cooper's tie, and the results are in.

549

00:37:32,000 --> 00:37:39,000

So I hop a plane to Tucson to meet investigator Tom Kaye, who can interpret the findings.

550

00:37:39,000 --> 00:37:40,000

Hey, Tom, how are you?

551

00:37:40,000 --> 00:37:41,000

Josh, good to see you.

552

00:37:41,000 --> 00:37:42,000

Yeah, good to meet you in person.

553

00:37:42,000 --> 00:37:43,000

Finally, yeah.

554

00:37:43,000 --> 00:37:49,000

So, I understand that a lab has been able to test the tie samples for additional particles.

555

00:37:49,000 --> 00:37:50,000

Absolutely.

556

00:37:50,000 --> 00:37:56,000

Through the efforts of your team, we were able to get the Macron Group out of Chicago,

557

00:37:56,000 --> 00:38:01,000

which is one of the foremost labs in the country, to do an automated analysis of all 19 of our

558

00:38:01,000 --> 00:38:02,000

stubs.

559

00:38:02,000 --> 00:38:03,000

Okay, so what'd they find?

560

00:38:03,000 --> 00:38:06,000

What they found was 100,000 particles.

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00:38:06,000 --> 00:38:09,000

So we've got from 700 particles to 100,000.

562

00:38:09,000 --> 00:38:10,000

100,000.

563

00:38:10,000 --> 00:38:13,000

Please tell me that the results show something interesting.

564

00:38:13,000 --> 00:38:14,000

Absolutely.

565

00:38:14,000 --> 00:38:16,000

Fantastic results.

566

00:38:21,000 --> 00:38:27,000

We've assisted D.B. Cooper investigator Tom Kaye in securing the technology needed to scan

567

00:38:27,000 --> 00:38:31,000

particles left on the discarded necktie of the notorious Skyjacker.

568

00:38:31,000 --> 00:38:32,000

The hope?

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00:38:32,000 --> 00:38:34,000

To answer the million-dollar question.

570

00:38:34,000 --> 00:38:36,000

Who is D.B. Cooper?

571

00:38:36,000 --> 00:38:39,000

Please tell me that the results show something interesting.

572

00:38:39,000 --> 00:38:40,000

You bet they do.

573

00:38:40,000 --> 00:38:41,000

Really?

574

00:38:41,000 --> 00:38:42,000

Absolutely.

575

00:38:42,000 --> 00:38:43,000

Fantastic results.

576

00:38:43,000 --> 00:38:44,000

Awesome.

577

00:38:44,000 --> 00:38:45,000

So what specifically showed up?

578

00:38:45,000 --> 00:38:49,000

So we have representations here in these little vials.

579

00:38:49,000 --> 00:38:50,000

Okay.

580

00:38:50,000 --> 00:38:51,000

So this is cerium.

581

00:38:51,000 --> 00:38:53,000

It's a rare earth element.

582

00:38:53,000 --> 00:38:55,000

And lanthanum is another one.

583

00:38:55,000 --> 00:38:57,000

This is yttrium.

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00:38:57,000 --> 00:38:58,000

Okay.

585

00:38:58,000 --> 00:39:00,000

And this one is mercury.

586

00:39:00,000 --> 00:39:01,000

Mercury.

587

00:39:01,000 --> 00:39:06,000

So these rare earth elements in 1971, what would these things be used for?

588

00:39:06,000 --> 00:39:11,000

Well, we start with the most unusual of those, which is the rare earth element yttrium.

589

00:39:11,000 --> 00:39:12,000

Okay.

590

00:39:12,000 --> 00:39:16,000

What's the most common use for yttrium in 1971?

591

00:39:16,000 --> 00:39:21,000

It turns out it's the red phosphor in TV screens.

592

00:39:21,000 --> 00:39:28,000

23 out of the 26 particles we found are related to production of CRT tubes.

593

00:39:28,000 --> 00:39:30,000

It doesn't have to be television, right?

594

00:39:30,000 --> 00:39:34,000

I mean, it's the cathode ray tube that's used in televisions, but it's also used in other

595

00:39:34,000 --> 00:39:38,000

things like in the military, they would use it for radar screens and instruments, they

596

00:39:38,000 --> 00:39:40,000

would use it for like a oscilloscope screen.

597

00:39:40,000 --> 00:39:43,000

So these cathode ray tubes are found in lots of different products.

598

00:39:43,000 --> 00:39:44,000

Right.

599

00:39:44,000 --> 00:39:47,000

Based on what you find in the time, who is this guy?

600

00:39:47,000 --> 00:39:53,000

So it strongly suggests that he's in the manufacturing world of CRT tubes.

601

00:39:53,000 --> 00:39:59,000

So I mean that in a lot of ways really wipes the slate clean of a lot of these previous

602

00:39:59,000 --> 00:40:00,000

suspects.

603

00:40:00,000 --> 00:40:04,000

Well, for a lot of people that are championing those suspects, yes, it's a real problem

604

00:40:04,000 --> 00:40:10,000

because this evidence suggests strongly he's from a very advanced manufacturing environment.

605

00:40:10,000 --> 00:40:11,000

Wow.

606

00:40:11,000 --> 00:40:14,000

What's fascinating is that you hear this announcement from the FBI where they say,

607

00:40:14,000 --> 00:40:19,000

we're basically, you know, giving up here, we're going to close the case, leave it unsolved.

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00:40:19,000 --> 00:40:23,000

And yet it's still marching forward with big new discoveries.

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00:40:23,000 --> 00:40:26,000

The last evidence that was new came up in 1980 when they found the money.

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00:40:26,000 --> 00:40:31,000

This is the only new evidence to show up and it's evidence that's localizing what world

611

00:40:31,000 --> 00:40:32,000

Cooper lived in.

612

00:40:32,000 --> 00:40:38,000

This has got to be the most significant evidence to come out of this case since 1980.

613

00:40:39,000 --> 00:40:45,000

The evidence is historic and it underscores something that's been haunting me since I

614

00:40:45,000 --> 00:40:47,000

first started down this rabbit hole.

615

00:40:47,000 --> 00:40:51,000

Everything we think we know about D.B. Cooper is dead wrong.

616

00:40:51,000 --> 00:40:56,000

The FBI files reveal that Cooper was far less refined than we imagined.

617

00:40:56,000 --> 00:41:01,000

His name appears to be inspired by a comic book and he may well be from north of the

618

00:41:01,000 --> 00:41:02,000

border.

619

00:41:02,000 --> 00:41:05,000

There's more searching to be done along the beaches of Tina Bar.

620

00:41:05,000 --> 00:41:11,000

We have an entirely new drop zone just outside of Reno with a compelling theory that Cooper hailed

621

00:41:11,000 --> 00:41:13,000

from a military background.

622

00:41:13,000 --> 00:41:19,000

And now this new physical evidence that places Cooper in a highly specific and technical industry.

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00:41:19,000 --> 00:41:24,000

Author Jeff Gray warned me not to get too close to this case, that looking for Cooper

624

00:41:24,000 --> 00:41:26,000

can become an obsession.

625

00:41:26,000 --> 00:41:28,000

And now I see why.

626

00:41:28,000 --> 00:41:34,000

Cooper Mania as it's known, endures because on some level we all want to feel what he felt

627

00:41:34,000 --> 00:41:38,000

to make that big jump and defy the pressures of the world.

628

00:41:38,000 --> 00:41:41,000

If he gets away, we get away.

629

00:41:41,000 --> 00:41:48,000

The FBI may have put this case on ice, but as far as I can tell, the hunt for D.B. Cooper is just

heating up.