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

Tonight on History's Greatest Mysteries,

2

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

he was an action hero, a cultural icon,

3

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

a martial arts legend on the cusp of superstardom.

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

I'm Lawrence Fishburne.

5

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

On July 20th, 1973, Bruce Lee died tragically at the age of 32,

6

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

the official cause of death, a fatal reaction to aspirin.

7

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

On tonight's mystery, Bruce Lee's surviving brother

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

has questions about what really happened.

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

It was total shock. I mean, how could that be?

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00:00:37,000 --> 00:00:41,000

I need answers about Bruce's death.

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00:00:41,000 --> 00:00:45,000

Now Robert Lee has enlisted a former Hong Kong police detective

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

to launch an investigation into the truth.

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

Do you think there was foul play?

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

Good question. You know, I would sure like to find out.

15

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

Was Bruce Lee killed because of bad blood?

16

00:00:56,000 --> 00:01:00,000

Bruce pulls out knife, threatens that if Lowell Way says anything

17

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

or does anything, he's going to stick it in Lowell Way's neck.

18

00:01:03,000 --> 00:01:05,000

Was his death self-inflicted?

19

00:01:05,000 --> 00:01:10,000

I was rather shocked to discover Bruce had had his sweat glands removed.

20

00:01:10,000 --> 00:01:14,000

Could the answers lie in Bruce Lee's previously unseen autops?

21

00:01:14,000 --> 00:01:19,000

They look for arsenic. Quite a common way of poisoning people.

22

00:01:19,000 --> 00:01:25,000

Or could Bruce Lee have been caught up in a gangland feud with Hong Kong's underworld?

23

00:01:34,000 --> 00:01:37,000

The mysterious death of a true action hero.

24

00:01:37,000 --> 00:01:42,000

Who or what killed the one the only Bruce Lee?

25

00:01:49,000 --> 00:01:54,000

The End

26

00:02:04,000 --> 00:02:07,000

At the dawning

27

00:02:07,000 --> 00:02:11,000

Of the morning

28

00:02:11,000 --> 00:02:14,000

On the earth

29

00:02:14,000 --> 00:02:16,000

Of the dragon

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00:02:16,000 --> 00:02:21,000

Today, Bruce Lee's brother, Robert, is a musician who lives in Los Angeles.

31

00:02:21,000 --> 00:02:24,000

Bruce is far more than just his big brother.

32

00:02:24,000 --> 00:02:26,000

He is his inspiration.

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00:02:26,000 --> 00:02:32,000

Into this world came a little dragon Bruce Lee.

34

00:02:32,000 --> 00:02:36,000

Every time I do the ballad of Bruce Lee,

35

00:02:36,000 --> 00:02:38,000

yeah, just think of him.

36

00:02:38,000 --> 00:02:41,000

It's hard not to miss him, hard not to think about him

37

00:02:41,000 --> 00:02:44,000

because he is my idol, really.

38

00:02:44,000 --> 00:02:48,000

For he was strong

39

00:02:48,000 --> 00:02:54,000

and his will untame.

40

00:02:58,000 --> 00:03:02,000

Well, this was early on in, you know,

41

00:03:02,000 --> 00:03:05,000

I think this is taken in the 60s in L.A.

42

00:03:08,000 --> 00:03:10,000

Is the model?

43

00:03:10,000 --> 00:03:11,000

Yeah.

44

00:03:11,000 --> 00:03:17,000

In the late 1960s and early 70s, Bruce Lee had begun to find fame on American television.

45

00:03:17,000 --> 00:03:21,000

Kato's right with the Deathly Art of Kung Fu.

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00:03:21,000 --> 00:03:23,000

Supporting roles in Hollywood pictures.

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00:03:23,000 --> 00:03:25,000

It's Lee, the underpunch.

48

00:03:25,000 --> 00:03:27,000

And in low budget Hong Kong action movies.

49

00:03:27,000 --> 00:03:31,000

Against the dragon, even the best are better off dead.

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00:03:34,000 --> 00:03:36,000

But Bruce wasn't satisfied.

51

00:03:36,000 --> 00:03:39,000

He had far bigger ambitions.

52

00:03:41,000 --> 00:03:44,000

He did write down on a piece of paper,

53

00:03:44,000 --> 00:03:48,000

which he put under his pillow every night,

54

00:03:48,000 --> 00:03:54,000

that he wanted to be the highest made actor in the world.

55

00:03:55,000 --> 00:03:58,000

He doesn't write down, man, I just really like a job.

56

00:03:58,000 --> 00:04:01,000

He doesn't write down, I'd like steady work.

57

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

He writes down, I want to be the biggest star in the world.

58

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

Like that's the level of his ambition.

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00:04:07,000 --> 00:04:13,000

As this rare interview shows, Bruce's ambitions reached far beyond simple fame.

60

00:04:13,000 --> 00:04:20,000

He saw his films as the perfect platform to fight back against prejudiced and racial stereotypes.

61

00:04:20,000 --> 00:04:24,000

In the United States, I think something about the Oriental,

62

00:04:24,000 --> 00:04:29,000

I mean the true Oriental should be shown.

63

00:04:29,000 --> 00:04:31,000

Hollywood sure as heck hasn't.

64

00:04:31,000 --> 00:04:33,000

You better believe it, man.

65

00:04:33,000 --> 00:04:38,000

There's always that pigtail and bouncing around chop chop, you know, with the Iceland and all that.

66

00:04:38,000 --> 00:04:40,000

Bruce always wanted to be a pioneer.

67

00:04:40,000 --> 00:04:45,000

And I'm sure that's what he wanted, you know, people to remember him by.

68

00:04:51,000 --> 00:04:56,000

On July 20th, 1973, Bruce Lee was in Hong Kong.

69

00:04:56,000 --> 00:04:58,000

Awaiting the release of the movie,

70

00:04:58,000 --> 00:05:02,000

he hoped would finally bring him the international fame he'd crave.

71

00:05:03,000 --> 00:05:07,000

The film's brother presents Enter the Dragon.

72

00:05:07,000 --> 00:05:11,000

Made with one of the biggest studios in Hollywood,

73

00:05:11,000 --> 00:05:15,000

he knew this film could make or break his career.

74

00:05:15,000 --> 00:05:23,000

Enter the Dragon is the first time a Chinese-American male actor has ever starred in a Hollywood movie.

75

00:05:23,000 --> 00:05:30,000

Starring Black Bell Call of Fame, undisputed martial arts champion and international film star Bruce Lee.

76

00:05:30,000 --> 00:05:34,000

For Bruce Lee, this had been everything he'd been working for.

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00:05:34,000 --> 00:05:38,000

And if it succeeds, it will launch him into superstardom.

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00:05:38,000 --> 00:05:42,000

If it fails, he's never going to make it as a Hollywood actor.

79

00:05:42,000 --> 00:05:46,000

And so this is the ultimate big break for Bruce Lee.

80

00:05:46,000 --> 00:05:48,000

Bruce is not just the movie's star,

81

00:05:48,000 --> 00:05:53,000

he is also the fight choreographer and directs the martial arts scenes.

82

00:05:53,000 --> 00:05:57,000

Fighting techniques are carefully choreographed by Bruce Lee.

83

00:05:57,000 --> 00:06:02,000

This is a plan in coordination at the only protection against possible legal accidents.

84

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

Less than a month before the movie's release, Bruce Lee complains of a headache.

85

00:06:11,000 --> 00:06:18,000

Takes a painkiller, goes for a nap, but never wakes up.

86

00:06:21,000 --> 00:06:25,000

His death leaves the whole of Hong Kong in shock.

87

00:06:25,000 --> 00:06:28,000

One day he was alive and well and he was being Bruce Lee

88

00:06:28,000 --> 00:06:32,000

and he was on the verge of achieving everything he'd ever dreamed of.

89

00:06:32,000 --> 00:06:35,000

And the next, he just was gone.

90

00:06:37,000 --> 00:06:40,000

How could their hero have died so suddenly?

91

00:06:42,000 --> 00:06:48,000

The crowds and the cameras give Bruce's widow, Linda, little chance to grieve in pride.

92

00:06:48,000 --> 00:06:54,000

An American, she and her two children, have only been living in Hong Kong for a little over a year.

93

00:06:54,000 --> 00:06:59,000

Raymond Chow, who is Bruce's producer, business partner and his friend,

94

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

has to take on the role of like uncle or father, protector,

95

00:07:03,000 --> 00:07:10,000

to Linda and the children through what would be a very unfamiliar ritual of a Chinese funeral.

96

00:07:15,000 --> 00:07:17,000

What do you know about Han?

97

00:07:17,000 --> 00:07:20,000

We know everything. We can prove nothing.

98

00:07:21,000 --> 00:07:27,000

Just 30 days after Bruce Lee's passing, Enter the Dragon is released.

99

00:07:27,000 --> 00:07:33,000

Enter the Dragon, where the world's greatest martial arts athletes meet the ultimate challenge.

100

00:07:33,000 --> 00:07:38,000

To this day, the movie has grossed an excess of \$400 million,

101

00:07:38,000 --> 00:07:42,000

making it one of the most profitable films of all time.

102

00:07:42,000 --> 00:07:46,000

Bruce Lee on screen is just captivating.

103

00:07:46,000 --> 00:07:49,000

You cannot take your eyes off of him.

104

00:07:49,000 --> 00:07:53,000

He's a shining incandescent star, the Kung Fu hero.

105

00:07:53,000 --> 00:07:59,000

The idea of the Asian male as this martial arts master who beats up all the bad guys.

106

00:08:02,000 --> 00:08:06,000

There was no question that he was the superstar of this particular movie.

107

00:08:06,000 --> 00:08:10,000

I think for young people of Asian descent,

108

00:08:10,000 --> 00:08:14,000

and I think young people of all kinds of backgrounds all around the world

109

00:08:14,000 --> 00:08:18,000

to be able to see that picture was transformative.

110

00:08:18,000 --> 00:08:20,000

It was like mind-blowing.

111

00:08:24,000 --> 00:08:29,000

To this day, Bruce Lee is a global superstar and icon.

112

00:08:29,000 --> 00:08:33,000

In death, his life's dreams had come true.

113

00:08:39,000 --> 00:08:46,000

For Robert Lee and his sister Phoebe, the cruel timing of Bruce's passing still weighs heavily.

114

00:08:48,000 --> 00:08:53,000

I think the Dragon is a very strong spirit.

115

00:08:53,000 --> 00:08:56,000

I saw his mother in the movie.

116

00:09:08,000 --> 00:09:13,000

Almost half a century after Bruce's passing, they are still haunted by rumors.

117

00:09:14,000 --> 00:09:18,000

After his death, so many stories floated around.

118

00:09:18,000 --> 00:09:20,000

Oh man, my goodness.

119

00:09:20,000 --> 00:09:23,000

Yeah, there's always this doubt.

120

00:09:23,000 --> 00:09:26,000

I mean, how? Why?

121

00:09:26,000 --> 00:09:27,000

I don't know.

122

00:09:27,000 --> 00:09:30,000

But if there's a doubt, there is a doubt, you know.

123

00:09:30,000 --> 00:09:32,000

That's all I can say.

124

00:09:33,000 --> 00:09:40,000

The official autopsy claims Bruce is killed by an allergic reaction to aspirin in the painkiller he took.

125

00:09:40,000 --> 00:09:46,000

I mean, I think there was a perception on the part of everybody around the world, particularly in Hong Kong,

126

00:09:46,000 --> 00:09:51,000

that aspirin was just too ordinary to kill somebody so extraordinary.

127

00:09:51,000 --> 00:09:53,000

Is that really how Bruce died?

128

00:09:53,000 --> 00:09:57,000

I mean, it's hard for me to believe what this was, very difficult.

129

00:09:57,000 --> 00:10:00,000

I need answers about Bruce's death.

130

00:10:01,000 --> 00:10:07,000

At 72, Robert wants to understand why his brother died before it's too late.

131

00:10:07,000 --> 00:10:12,000

And he knows just the man to reinvestigate Bruce Lee's mysterious death.

132

00:10:12,000 --> 00:10:13,000

Hey Robert.

133

00:10:13,000 --> 00:10:14,000

Hey Philip.

134

00:10:14,000 --> 00:10:20,000

His old school friend, Phillip Chan, a Hong Kong police detective during the city's most volatile decade, the 1970s.

135

00:10:20,000 --> 00:10:27,000

Chan investigated murders, gangland feuds, and Hong Kong's most high-profile cases.

136

00:10:27,000 --> 00:10:32,000

I remember there was one time he solved a hostage situation in the city.

137

00:10:32,000 --> 00:10:35,000

He was able to get all the hostages out and all that.

138

00:10:35,000 --> 00:10:37,000

He became a hero.

139

00:10:37,000 --> 00:10:44,000

I know you are a stand-up person and you have done a lot of investigations.

140

00:10:44,000 --> 00:10:52,000

And I trust you, okay? So, Phillip, so if you can really help me to come up with some good, solid information,

141

00:10:52,000 --> 00:10:56,000

I would really thank you so very much.

142

00:10:56,000 --> 00:10:58,000

Do you think there was foul play?

143

00:10:58,000 --> 00:11:03,000

You know, good question. You know, I would sure like to find out.

144

00:11:04,000 --> 00:11:10,000

The Hong Kong authorities keep the official records of any mysterious death out of the public domain.

145

00:11:10,000 --> 00:11:15,000

But Chan thinks these vials could provide vital clues.

146

00:11:15,000 --> 00:11:20,000

I still have to get into the official record. The coroner's inquiry?

147

00:11:20,000 --> 00:11:21,000

Right.

148

00:11:21,000 --> 00:11:25,000

I cannot get it myself. I need your authorization as a member of his family.

149

00:11:25,000 --> 00:11:27,000

Yes, I'll be more than happy to do that.

150

00:11:27,000 --> 00:11:31,000

Okay, okay, Robert. I think I would be very happy to help you.

151

00:11:31,000 --> 00:11:32,000

Well, thank you.

152

00:11:32,000 --> 00:11:37,000

The memory of a great hero, your beloved brother.

153

00:11:37,000 --> 00:11:39,000

I'm very interested and I will help.

154

00:11:39,000 --> 00:11:42,000

Thank you, Phillip. I really appreciate that.

155

00:11:42,000 --> 00:11:45,000

You're very kind. Really. From the bottom of my heart, really. Thank you.

156

00:11:45,000 --> 00:11:47,000

Okay, so please wait a minute.

157

00:11:47,000 --> 00:11:48,000

I will.

158

00:11:56,000 --> 00:11:59,000

As Bruce Lee passed away in Hong Kong,

159

00:11:59,000 --> 00:12:03,000

Phillip Chan will send to his investigation in this city.

160

00:12:04,000 --> 00:12:08,000

His first step is to reconstruct the day Bruce Lee died.

161

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

He starts with veteran journalist Robert Chow.

162

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

Come on in. Come on in.

163

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

Sorry to interrupt.

164

00:12:15,000 --> 00:12:17,000

No, no, no, no.

165

00:12:17,000 --> 00:12:22,000

In 1973, Robert Chow was an editor of one of Hong Kong's most popular

166

00:12:22,000 --> 00:12:25,000

English-language newspapers, The Star.

167

00:12:25,000 --> 00:12:30,000

Now, how did Bruce Lee's death come into your notice?

168

00:12:30,000 --> 00:12:33,000

It was on a Friday night, you know, the 20th.

169

00:12:33,000 --> 00:12:37,000

I think it was around about 11, 11.30.

170

00:12:37,000 --> 00:12:41,000

That night, now we had stringers at hospitals.

171

00:12:41,000 --> 00:12:46,000

The Star relied on freelance journalists known as stringers,

172

00:12:46,000 --> 00:12:51,000

who prowled Hong Kong, searching for breaking news stories.

173

00:12:51,000 --> 00:12:57,000

And the stringer actually went to the police desk in the hospitals.

174

00:12:57,000 --> 00:13:02,000

So they did confirm that Bruce Lee was hospitalized.

175

00:13:02,000 --> 00:13:04,000

And he was dead on arrival.

176

00:13:04,000 --> 00:13:07,000

And then everybody went mad and, you know, crazy,

177

00:13:07,000 --> 00:13:10,000

and we all followed that up.

178

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

That was how the story came about.

179

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

Knowing that the press had the story,

180

00:13:16,000 --> 00:13:20,000

Bruce's business partner Raymond Chow releases a statement,

181

00:13:20,000 --> 00:13:26,000

claiming Bruce collapsed at his family home while walking with his wife, Linda.

182

00:13:26,000 --> 00:13:31,000

It is a story that is not only about the story of the deceased,

183

00:13:31,000 --> 00:13:34,000

it is a story that soon unravels.

184

00:13:34,000 --> 00:13:40,000

It was about two days later that the news came out that, you know,

185

00:13:40,000 --> 00:13:43,000

Bruce Lee didn't die at his home.

186

00:13:43,000 --> 00:13:47,000

As Raymond Chow claimed, he did, right?

187

00:13:47,000 --> 00:13:53,000

This is actually the telly that says where Bruce Lee was actually found.

188

00:13:53,000 --> 00:13:59,000

Ambulance number A43 was summoned to Bicken Hill Road,

189

00:13:59,000 --> 00:14:02,000

on the second floor, flat A2.

190

00:14:02,000 --> 00:14:06,000

A 32-year-old man was taken to Queen Elizabeth Hospital,

191

00:14:06,000 --> 00:14:12,000

and he arrived at 2,300 hours that night, certainly not Bruce Lee's home.

192

00:14:12,000 --> 00:14:19,000

This apartment on Bicken Hill is the home of 26-year-old actress Betty Ting Pei.

193

00:14:19,000 --> 00:14:25,000

It is here that Bruce Lee is found unconscious and not breathing in her bed.

194

00:14:25,000 --> 00:14:30,000

The two were reportedly having an affair.

195

00:14:30,000 --> 00:14:33,000

Why do you think Raymond Chow lied?

196

00:14:33,000 --> 00:14:38,000

What Raymond Chow wanted to do was to protect Linda, you know,

197

00:14:38,000 --> 00:14:40,000

expanding of your husband's disability,

198

00:14:40,000 --> 00:14:47,000

and even worse was that he was actually in bed in his girlfriend's place.

199

00:14:47,000 --> 00:14:52,000

Raymond Chow told the press that Bruce Lee had collapsed at home with his wife

200

00:14:52,000 --> 00:14:55,000

to try to cover up the affair.

201

00:14:55,000 --> 00:15:01,000

And this turns this into the biggest scandal Hong Kong has ever seen.

202

00:15:01,000 --> 00:15:08,000

Because of Raymond Chow's deceit, the death of Bruce Lee is shrouded in mystery from the very beginning.

203

00:15:08,000 --> 00:15:13,000

The immediate thing the public learns is that they were lying about where Bruce Lee died,

204

00:15:13,000 --> 00:15:18,000

and so their assumption, quite naturally, is what else did they lie about?

205

00:15:18,000 --> 00:15:20,000

Maybe they lied about how he died.

206

00:15:23,000 --> 00:15:31,000

In Hong Kong, former police detective Phillip Chan's re-investigation into Bruce Lee's death is underway.

207

00:15:31,000 --> 00:15:40,000

He has discovered that from the very beginning the martial arts superstars passing was shrouded in deceit and lies.

208

00:15:40,000 --> 00:15:47,000

Bruce Lee didn't die at his home, you know. As Raymond Chow claimed, he did.

209

00:15:48,000 --> 00:15:55,000

Nearly 50 years after the event, a myriad of rumors and theories still swirl around Bruce Lee's death.

210

00:15:55,000 --> 00:16:03,000

But with the help of Bruce's brother, Robert Lee, Chan has obtained documents which might contain the truth.

211

00:16:03,000 --> 00:16:09,000

In this envelope are Bruce Lee's death files, official documents from the court in question to his death.

212

00:16:09,000 --> 00:16:17,000

These documents would include his autopsy report, toxicology report, statements from witnesses, police officers and medical officers.

213

00:16:17,000 --> 00:16:22,000

The Hong Kong government has never publicly released these records.

214

00:16:25,000 --> 00:16:28,000

At his office, Chan scours the evidence.

215

00:16:28,000 --> 00:16:37,000

I'm looking for inconsistencies in that base account, and for any decision which would be strange, dubious, and worthy of my further investigation.

216

00:16:37,000 --> 00:16:40,000

He creates a timeline of the day Bruce Lee died.

217

00:16:42,000 --> 00:16:51,000

On July 20th, 1973, Bruce arrives at the home of his alleged mistress, Betty Ting Pei, at 5 p.m. But he isn't alone.

218

00:16:52,000 --> 00:16:59,000

With him is Raymond Chow, Bruce Lee's business partner and producer on the film Enter the Dragon.

219

00:16:59,000 --> 00:17:06,000

What I'm interested in is understanding what Betty Ting Pei, the actress, and Raymond Chow say happened in the apartment that night.

220

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

According to both witnesses, the three sit down and discuss the script for Bruce's planned follow-up to Enter the Dragon, a film called Game of Death.

221

00:17:20,000 --> 00:17:23,000

At 7 p.m., he complains of a headache.

222

00:17:25,000 --> 00:17:28,000

Betty gives him a painkiller which contains aspirin.

223

00:17:28,000 --> 00:17:35,000

Bruce goes to sleep and Raymond heads off for dinner, leaving just Bruce and Betty in the apartment.

224

00:17:37,000 --> 00:17:43,000

At 9.30, Raymond calls to check on Bruce. Betty says she can't wake him up.

225

00:17:45,000 --> 00:17:51,000

Now, if you found somebody in your bed unconscious and unresponsive, what's the first thing you do?

226

00:17:52,000 --> 00:17:57,000

You'd tell 999 call an ambulance, but that's not what happened.

227

00:18:00,000 --> 00:18:06,000

Raymond tells the police he rushed back to the apartment and rang for medical assistance.

228

00:18:06,000 --> 00:18:08,000

But not for an ambulance.

229

00:18:09,000 --> 00:18:17,000

He called his personal doctor about 20 times and there was no answer. Then he called Betty's personal doctor.

230

00:18:19,000 --> 00:18:27,000

Ten minutes later, Dr. Eugene Chu arrives and finds Bruce is not breathing and there is no heartbeat.

231

00:18:28,000 --> 00:18:32,000

He tries CPR but can't revive him.

232

00:18:33,000 --> 00:18:37,000

It's Dr. Chu who finally calls the ambulance.

233

00:18:38,000 --> 00:18:49,000

Bruce doesn't get to the hospital until 11 p.m., a full hour and a quarter after he is first found unconscious and unresponsive.

234

00:18:51,000 --> 00:18:54,000

Bruce Lee is officially declared dead at 11.30 p.m.

235

00:18:55,000 --> 00:19:01,000

When the public learns Bruce Lee died in Betty's apartment, she is seen as a prime suspect.

236

00:19:02,000 --> 00:19:14,000

The Bruce Lee Betty Ting Pay scenario is like one of the classic lock room mysteries, which is that Bruce, Raymond, Betty are together at Betty's apartment.

237

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

Raymond leaves. Betty and Bruce will learn in the apartment Bruce dies.

238

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

This thing is Bruce is the one that ended up dead. Betty must be the one responsible because there was nobody else there.

239

00:19:29,000 --> 00:19:32,000

Her lifestyle choices further fuel public suspicions.

240

00:19:33,000 --> 00:19:42,000

Betty Ting Pay ran with a fast crowd and was involved in the darker aspects of Hong Kong show business and the underworld.

241

00:19:43,000 --> 00:19:54,000

There are death threats against Betty Ting Pay and there were bombing threats that occurred where the bombers wrote on the bomb, Betty Ting Pay knows why Bruce Lee died.

242

00:19:55,000 --> 00:20:02,000

But she wasn't the only person in the apartment. Raymond Chow is also in her home on the night Bruce Lee died.

243

00:20:03,000 --> 00:20:08,000

Why was Raymond so slow in giving Bruce the medical help that he needed so desperately?

244

00:20:08,000 --> 00:20:15,000

Over the years, questions have been raised about his role in Bruce Lee's death.

245

00:20:16,000 --> 00:20:26,000

Raymond's persona as a shadowy figure, as a bad guy, as the untrustworthy element in the equation.

246

00:20:27,000 --> 00:20:34,000

It comes from a very obvious scenario, which was that it was show business and Bruce handled the show and Raymond handled the business.

247

00:20:34,000 --> 00:20:40,000

Raymond built up his company Golden Harvest from nothing to being a leading studio in Hong Kong's movie industry.

248

00:20:41,000 --> 00:20:44,000

But in doing so, he also built up a reputation for ruthlessness.

249

00:20:45,000 --> 00:20:56,000

Raymond Chow was known as the smiling face tiger because he would smile to your face and nod and agree to everything and then he would rip you apart when you turned your back to it.

250

00:20:57,000 --> 00:21:05,000

Raymond and Bruce had made three films before Enter the Dragon. All three had broken box office records in Hong Kong.

251

00:21:06,000 --> 00:21:10,000

But in the months before Bruce's death, the two were openly clashing over money.

252

00:21:11,000 --> 00:21:22,000

Bruce Lee was growing in frustration about what he perceived as being the inaccurate accounting and that he had not had the money back from his films that he should have done.

253

00:21:22,000 --> 00:21:30,000

He would just confront Raymond and say, OK, I'm seeing in the trades the movie's made this much money. Where's mine?

254

00:21:31,000 --> 00:21:41,000

In response, Bruce had started talking to other studios about making films without Raymond, leaving Golden Harvest in danger of losing its golden goose.

255

00:21:42,000 --> 00:21:45,000

There's no studio who wants to lose their biggest star to some other studio.

256

00:21:45,000 --> 00:21:54,000

And I think the situation was even more extreme for Golden Harvest because Bruce Lee was such a dominant part of their revenue stream.

257

00:21:55,000 --> 00:22:01,000

Probably 80% of their revenues was based on Bruce Lee. So it was an existential threat to have Bruce Lee lead.

258

00:22:03,000 --> 00:22:13,000

Public suspicion has continued to swirl around Raymond Chow and Betty Ting Pei. But in 1973, both were cleared of any wrongdoing.

259

00:22:13,000 --> 00:22:21,000

Obviously, the authorities didn't think there was any suspicious circumstances and there was no outplay. But why did they rule that out?

260

00:22:26,000 --> 00:22:33,000

Former Hong Kong police detective Phillip Chan has zeroed in on two people of interest in his investigation of Bruce Lee's death.

261

00:22:34,000 --> 00:22:42,000

Bruce Lee's alleged mistress, Betty Ting Pei, and his business partner and collaborator, Raymond Chow, owner of Golden Harvest Films.

262

00:22:43,000 --> 00:22:44,000

Do you think there was foul play?

263

00:22:45,000 --> 00:22:46,000

I would sure like to find out.

264

00:22:47,000 --> 00:22:53,000

With the aid of Bruce's surviving brother Robert, Chan's been able to get access to previously unreleased documents.

265

00:22:54,000 --> 00:22:59,000

This is a death certificate issued by the Hong Kong Register of Births and Deaths.

266

00:23:00,000 --> 00:23:06,000

And down here it says the cause of death was acute cerebral edema due to hypersensitivities.

267

00:23:08,000 --> 00:23:19,000

Cerebral edema is swelling of the brain. The authorities claim it was triggered by a hypersensitivity or allergy that Bruce Lee had to the aspirin in the painkiller Betty gave him.

268

00:23:20,000 --> 00:23:29,000

They were coming to death by misadventure. This means that the death is considered to have been caused by an accident, which happened because of a risk that a person took voluntarily.

269

00:23:29,000 --> 00:23:35,000

The authorities decided that Betty didn't know Bruce would have a fatal reaction to the tablet.

270

00:23:36,000 --> 00:23:46,000

Obviously, the authorities didn't think there was any suspicious circumstances and there was no foul play. But why did they come to that conclusion? Why did they rule that out?

271

00:23:47,000 --> 00:23:55,000

This official verdict is based on one big assumption. The fatal swelling of Bruce's brain was caused by the aspirin in the painkiller.

272

00:23:58,000 --> 00:24:01,000

But does the evidence back this up?

273

00:24:05,000 --> 00:24:15,000

Chan is on his way to the office of one of Hong Kong's foremost forensic pathologists, Dr. Philip Baer, to review a key document in Bruce Lee's death files.

274

00:24:16,000 --> 00:24:17,000

Hi, Philip.

275

00:24:17,000 --> 00:24:19,000

Hello. Thank you for having me.

276

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

No, not at all.

277

00:24:20,000 --> 00:24:26,000

Well, I brought some documents relating to Bruce Lee's death.

278

00:24:26,000 --> 00:24:36,000

The first thing I would like to find out is about the cerebral edema. I know in layman terms it means the swelling of the brain. But how does it kill you?

279

00:24:36,000 --> 00:24:38,000

Oh, it's simple. Let me show you.

280

00:24:38,000 --> 00:24:39,000

Let me show you.

281

00:24:41,000 --> 00:24:56,000

The brain fills up almost all the space in the skull. There's very little spare space. As soon as the brain swells, where is it going to go? There's nowhere to go.

282

00:24:57,000 --> 00:25:15,000

Now, this is the underside of the brain. This is your brainstem. This controls your breathing. And this is exactly sitting against the bone here. So when this brain swells, it pushes down.

283

00:25:15,000 --> 00:25:24,000

And that brainstem gets crushed. So you can't breathe. And when you can't breathe, of course, you will die.

284

00:25:26,000 --> 00:25:29,000

Okay, so this is the autopsy report.

285

00:25:31,000 --> 00:25:42,000

If Bruce's fatal cerebral edema really was caused by an allergic reaction, Dr. Baer would expect the autopsy to note skin rashes and swelling across many parts of Bruce's body.

286

00:25:43,000 --> 00:25:55,000

No description of swelling of the eyes, of the lips, or of the tongue. No mention that there was any skin rash. Okay?

287

00:25:55,000 --> 00:26:11,000

And if you... Here it talks about the respiratory system. So the airways, there's no swelling. So nothing. There's nothing here that would suggest to us that Bruce Lee had...

288

00:26:12,000 --> 00:26:15,000

an allergic reaction that would kill.

289

00:26:17,000 --> 00:26:21,000

Basically what you're seeing is that Bruce Lee did not die because of his taking aspirin.

290

00:26:21,000 --> 00:26:31,000

Personally, if you ask me, I don't think so. The autopsy report shows no evidence that there was an allergic reaction.

291

00:26:32,000 --> 00:26:43,000

In 1973, the authorities misinterpreted the evidence in the autopsy. The fatal swelling of Bruce Lee's brain must have been caused by something other than aspirin.

292

00:26:43,000 --> 00:26:45,000

So, what's the latest?

293

00:26:45,000 --> 00:26:50,000

I've talked to one of the top forensic pathologists in Hong Kong.

294

00:26:50,000 --> 00:26:57,000

And, well, he told me that there wasn't a shadow evidence that your brother died of.

295

00:26:57,000 --> 00:26:59,000

No, I don't. An aspirin.

296

00:26:59,000 --> 00:27:00,000

Okay.

297

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

So, yeah.

298

00:27:01,000 --> 00:27:02,000

So what?

299

00:27:02,000 --> 00:27:07,000

So we have to cover up the other angle. One of the first things that I would like to look into would be foul play.

300

00:27:07,000 --> 00:27:08,000

Hmm.

301

00:27:08,000 --> 00:27:23,000

During those months, and maybe May, June, or July, did he tell you any stories about any encounters, you know, unusual encounters, like fights or, you know, challenges?

302

00:27:23,000 --> 00:27:28,000

And physically, did he bear any signs or anything that was unusual?

303

00:27:28,000 --> 00:27:34,000

He didn't mention that, you know, he was challenged by one person on the set.

304

00:27:34,000 --> 00:27:48,000

You know, he actually walked up to Bruce during a break and says that, you know, he's like, well, Bruce Lee, you know, I've seen action fighting, you know, your heroism on the silver screen.

305

00:27:48,000 --> 00:27:54,000

But I don't know how well you can do in life person.

306

00:27:54,000 --> 00:27:55,000

Hmm.

307

00:27:58,000 --> 00:28:09,000

The Hong Kong film industry in the 1970s was notoriously rough and violent, and Bruce Lee reportedly did make enemies, some with connections to the city's seedy underworld.

308

00:28:09,000 --> 00:28:14,000

In 1970s, Hong Kong's not the wild west. It was the wild east.

309

00:28:18,000 --> 00:28:27,000

In 1973, Bruce Lee died from swelling of the brain. The authorities ruled this was caused by a fatal reaction to aspirin.

310

00:28:27,000 --> 00:28:32,000

But a leading forensic pathologist has cast doubt on this verdict.

311

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

The autopsy report shows no evidence that there was an allergic reaction.

312

00:28:37,000 --> 00:28:42,000

Basically what you're seeing is that Bruce Lee did not die because of this taking aspirin.

313

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

I don't think so.

314

00:28:44,000 --> 00:28:49,000

If aspirin didn't cause the deadly swelling of Bruce Lee's brain, what did?

315

00:28:49,000 --> 00:28:53,000

Could the answer lie in Bruce Lee's past?

316

00:28:53,000 --> 00:29:02,000

Growing up in Hong Kong, Chan remembers hearing stories about Bruce Lee's legendary love of violence and fighting.

317

00:29:02,000 --> 00:29:09,000

Bruce Lee's mother gave birth in San Francisco at 7:12 a.m. on November 27th, 1940.

318

00:29:09,000 --> 00:29:15,000

According to the Chinese zodiac, Bruce was born in the hour and the year of the dragon.

319

00:29:15,000 --> 00:29:28,000

The dragon represents the pinnacle of power and the sort of myth, the legend of Bruce Lee is really bound up with this symbol of him as a dragon.

320

00:29:28,000 --> 00:29:34,000

From childhood, Bruce lived up to his birth sign. He was infamous for his fiery temper.

321

00:29:34,000 --> 00:29:36,000

Oh yeah, don't cross Bruce.

322

00:29:36,000 --> 00:29:40,000

He was not very good at tempering, but he was very kind.

323

00:29:40,000 --> 00:29:47,000

But it was Bruce's short views that led him to the martial arts skill which made him famous.

324

00:29:47,000 --> 00:29:53,000

He was a little bit like a little boy. He had his own cleverness, right?

325

00:29:53,000 --> 00:29:57,000

He didn't like to read books, he was a good man.

326

00:29:58,000 --> 00:30:01,000

He had a makeup on, he had a makeup on every day.

327

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

He had a makeup on all day.

328

00:30:06,000 --> 00:30:10,000

Bruce Lee's family moved back to Hong Kong in 1941.

329

00:30:10,000 --> 00:30:15,000

Growing up in the city in the 1950s, Bruce studied win-chun,

330

00:30:15,000 --> 00:30:21,000

a style of close-up fighting that uses quick arm movements and powerful kicks to defeat opponents.

331

00:30:21,000 --> 00:30:26,000

He learned this skill alongside this man, Chan Chee.

332

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

Their teacher was a kung fu legend.

333

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

This is my seafood, yip man.

334

00:30:34,000 --> 00:30:36,000

This photo is very important.

335

00:30:36,000 --> 00:30:43,000

I remember when I first started doing the win-chun, this school, yip man school.

336

00:30:43,000 --> 00:30:47,000

This is yip man. This is me.

337

00:30:48,000 --> 00:30:54,000

In recent years, the Grandmaster, yip man, has risen to mythical status,

338

00:30:54,000 --> 00:30:57,000

even spawning a series of movies about his life.

339

00:30:59,000 --> 00:31:05,000

But much of his fame comes from one very naturally gifted student, Bruce Lee.

340

00:31:08,000 --> 00:31:11,000

Even to me, to do the win-chun, I'm not stupid.

341

00:31:11,000 --> 00:31:14,000

But of course, cannot compare with him.

342

00:31:14,000 --> 00:31:20,000

Because he catch quick, clever and give what we call the sky gift.

343

00:31:22,000 --> 00:31:26,000

Then, a British colony, Hong Kong was rough, chaotic,

344

00:31:26,000 --> 00:31:29,000

and flooded with refugees fleeing communist China.

345

00:31:29,000 --> 00:31:35,000

Bruce found this the ideal place to show off his natural skills and vent his anger.

346

00:31:35,000 --> 00:31:37,000

I'm not a little bit of a kid.

347

00:31:37,000 --> 00:31:39,000

I'm not a little bit of a kid.

348

00:31:39,000 --> 00:31:41,000

I'm not a little bit of a kid.

349

00:31:41,000 --> 00:31:43,000

I vent his anger.

350

00:31:49,000 --> 00:31:54,000

In crowded Hong Kong, students from rival Kung Fu schools staged bloody challenge fights,

351

00:31:54,000 --> 00:31:56,000

wherever they could find space.

352

00:31:57,000 --> 00:32:05,000

The win-chun people, what they learn, they like to try to see, can work or not.

353

00:32:05,000 --> 00:32:09,000

So we're usually relied to fight with our side.

354

00:32:11,000 --> 00:32:15,000

When he was seven years old, Carmel Chow became one of a small number of people

355

00:32:15,000 --> 00:32:19,000

to have witnessed Bruce Lee fighting for real.

356

00:32:21,000 --> 00:32:27,000

There's only one fight, which I saw myself, which is up the rooftop of this building.

357

00:32:30,000 --> 00:32:33,000

I begged my brother to take me up to dinner to watch.

358

00:32:33,000 --> 00:32:37,000

He didn't want me to go there, because obviously it was insolable for me,

359

00:32:37,000 --> 00:32:39,000

but since then, he took me there.

360

00:32:39,000 --> 00:32:45,000

Even though he was only 17, Bruce was an old hand at these challenge matches.

361

00:32:45,000 --> 00:32:50,000

Let's go to the rooftop now, where the fight took place.

362

00:32:52,000 --> 00:32:54,000

Fight happened here.

363

00:32:54,000 --> 00:33:00,000

Bruce came up with his mates yelling, shouting, so when the guy says,

364

00:33:00,000 --> 00:33:03,000

ready, and they start the fight.

365

00:33:04,000 --> 00:33:10,000

And within minutes, the other guy was being knocked off,

366

00:33:10,000 --> 00:33:15,000

being hit badly, and Bruce walked away and within no time.

367

00:33:15,000 --> 00:33:17,000

So it happened very quickly.

368

00:33:17,000 --> 00:33:21,000

And I saw the other guy lying somewhere here, I think, with blood in his face,

369

00:33:21,000 --> 00:33:23,000

really badly injured.

370

00:33:23,000 --> 00:33:25,000

He's all bashed up by Bruce.

371

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

I think he came back with a black eye.

372

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

It was the first time I saw Bruce with a black eye.

373

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

And I said, wow, what happened?

374

00:33:36,000 --> 00:33:40,000

He said, you know, I got the black eye, but you know what?

375

00:33:40,000 --> 00:33:44,000

My opponent, he lost a lot of teeth, you know, from the fight.

376

00:33:44,000 --> 00:33:47,000

You know, so I know I won.

377

00:33:54,000 --> 00:33:59,000

Martial arts did prove a perfect release for Bruce's temper.

378

00:33:59,000 --> 00:34:03,000

But his love of fighting also landed him in trouble.

379

00:34:03,000 --> 00:34:08,000

Around 1958, Bruce was involved in so many fights, you know.

380

00:34:08,000 --> 00:34:11,000

He was being observed by the police.

381

00:34:22,000 --> 00:34:25,000

He said, you know, if your son involves in another fight,

382

00:34:25,000 --> 00:34:28,000

we'll definitely, you know, take him to jail.

383

00:34:31,000 --> 00:34:33,000

Bruce's parents took radical action,

384

00:34:33,000 --> 00:34:38,000

sending the 18-year-old to the United States with just \$100 in his pocket.

385

00:34:38,000 --> 00:34:42,000

But as this footage from 1965 reveals,

386

00:34:42,000 --> 00:34:44,000

Bruce gets his big break in Hollywood

387

00:34:44,000 --> 00:34:47,000

because of the talents he learned on the rooftops of Hong Kong.

388

00:34:47,000 --> 00:34:51,000

What's interesting about Bruce Lee when you see him in that screen test

389

00:34:51,000 --> 00:34:53,000

is he's got this real charisma.

390

00:34:53,000 --> 00:34:55,000

They ask him to show some punches and kicks,

391

00:34:55,000 --> 00:34:59,000

and he grabs this, like, 60-year-old cameraman

392

00:34:59,000 --> 00:35:03,000

and has him stand there while he throws these punches

393

00:35:03,000 --> 00:35:05,000

that are faster than the eye can see,

394

00:35:05,000 --> 00:35:08,000

but like millimeters from the man's face.

395

00:35:10,000 --> 00:35:12,000

No one had ever seen this before.

396

00:35:12,000 --> 00:35:17,000

So this is the break that he needs to launch his sort of Hollywood career.

397

00:35:17,000 --> 00:35:21,000

It is this spellbinding display that lands Bruce his breakout role

398

00:35:21,000 --> 00:35:24,000

as the Green Hornet sidekick and driver, Cato.

399

00:35:24,000 --> 00:35:28,000

Each week, they ride with Cato and the Green Hornet

400

00:35:28,000 --> 00:35:31,000

on their relentless fight against crime.

401

00:35:31,000 --> 00:35:33,000

But despite his star billing,

402

00:35:33,000 --> 00:35:36,000

Bruce is treated as a second-class citizen.

403

00:35:36,000 --> 00:35:38,000

He didn't want to play the part of Cato initially.

404

00:35:38,000 --> 00:35:41,000

He had to play the houseboy to a white guy.

405

00:35:41,000 --> 00:35:42,000

I'm with you, boss.

406

00:35:42,000 --> 00:35:44,000

He was telling me how disappointed he was.

407

00:35:44,000 --> 00:35:47,000

You know, not being used as the main character.

408

00:35:47,000 --> 00:35:49,000

But I guess back in the 60s, you know,

409

00:35:49,000 --> 00:35:51,000

there's still discrimination going on.

410

00:35:51,000 --> 00:35:55,000

Cato strikes with the deadly art of kung fu.

411

00:35:55,000 --> 00:35:58,000

He was paid the worst of any of the actors,

412

00:35:58,000 --> 00:36:01,000

even though he was the second lead in the show.

413

00:36:01,000 --> 00:36:04,000

He got paid half of what the secretary,

414

00:36:04,000 --> 00:36:07,000

who had no lines on the Green Hornet, got paid.

415

00:36:07,000 --> 00:36:10,000

The ratings start off pretty good, but then they take a nosedive,

416

00:36:10,000 --> 00:36:12,000

and then they're like,

417

00:36:12,000 --> 00:36:14,000

it's not good, but then they take a nosedive,

418

00:36:14,000 --> 00:36:16,000

and it gets canceled.

419

00:36:16,000 --> 00:36:18,000

After just 26 episodes,

420

00:36:18,000 --> 00:36:21,000

Bruce's first taste of U.S. stardom is over.

421

00:36:21,000 --> 00:36:24,000

He is now another jobless actor in L.A.

422

00:36:24,000 --> 00:36:26,000

But as a non-white male,

423

00:36:26,000 --> 00:36:28,000

he finds it difficult to land the lead roles

424

00:36:28,000 --> 00:36:30,000

he feels his talent deserves.

425

00:36:30,000 --> 00:36:34,000

Back in 69, he only had \$50 left in the bank.

426

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

That's what Bruce told her.

427

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

So he decided that maybe he should get a job

428

00:36:39,000 --> 00:36:42,000

as a security guard.

429

00:36:42,000 --> 00:36:45,000

But then they said, no, no, no, you cannot do that,

430

00:36:45,000 --> 00:36:47,000

because once you start doing that,

431

00:36:47,000 --> 00:36:49,000

Hollywood will not use you anymore,

432

00:36:49,000 --> 00:36:53,000

because, you know, you've really gone downhill.

433

00:36:53,000 --> 00:36:58,000

But there is opportunity on the other side of the Pacific.

434

00:36:58,000 --> 00:37:01,000

Raymond Chow offers Bruce Lee a movie deal

435

00:37:01,000 --> 00:37:04,000

with his new studio, Golden Harvest in Hong Kong.

436

00:37:04,000 --> 00:37:08,000

Bruce Lee very much was worried that he would make a movie

437

00:37:08,000 --> 00:37:11,000

that was terrible, and so he wanted control

438

00:37:11,000 --> 00:37:14,000

of the script and the martial arts choreography

439

00:37:14,000 --> 00:37:15,000

in the movie.

440

00:37:15,000 --> 00:37:17,000

And Raymond Chow said, I'll give you whatever you want,

441

00:37:17,000 --> 00:37:19,000

because Raymond Chow was desperate.

442

00:37:19,000 --> 00:37:23,000

Bruce jumps at the chance to return to Hong Kong.

443

00:37:23,000 --> 00:37:27,000

But could this choice be linked to his death?

444

00:37:30,000 --> 00:37:32,000

Philip Chan wants to understand

445

00:37:32,000 --> 00:37:35,000

if Bruce Lee's short fuse made him enemies

446

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

in 1970s Hong Kong.

447

00:37:41,000 --> 00:37:44,000

On his return to the city, Bruce instantly struck up

448

00:37:44,000 --> 00:37:46,000

close relationships with his stuntmen,

449

00:37:46,000 --> 00:37:50,000

socializing with them both on and off set.

450

00:37:50,000 --> 00:37:53,000

One of them was Ah Bee.

451

00:37:53,000 --> 00:37:56,000

Ah Bee, when you did Enter the Dragon,

452

00:37:56,000 --> 00:37:59,000

you were very, very young.

453

00:37:59,000 --> 00:38:00,000

How old were you?

454

00:38:00,000 --> 00:38:02,000

You know, we were 18 years old.

455

00:38:02,000 --> 00:38:04,000

We didn't have a bank.

456

00:38:04,000 --> 00:38:06,000

You were really young?

457

00:38:06,000 --> 00:38:07,000

Of course.

458

00:38:07,000 --> 00:38:09,000

In this castle, there was a ballroom.

459

00:38:09,000 --> 00:38:11,000

We were playing pool.

460

00:38:11,000 --> 00:38:13,000

When we were young, we would play basketball

461

00:38:13,000 --> 00:38:15,000

all the time.

462

00:38:15,000 --> 00:38:18,000

The Po Hing Snooker Club was a place where movie stars

463

00:38:18,000 --> 00:38:20,000

rubbed shoulders with members of Hong Kong's

464

00:38:20,000 --> 00:38:23,000

organized crime gangs, the Triads.

465

00:38:23,000 --> 00:38:26,000

These mobsters controlled much of the city,

466

00:38:26,000 --> 00:38:29,000

from nightclubs, bars and movie theaters,

467

00:38:29,000 --> 00:38:32,000

to gambling, massage parlors and opium.

468

00:38:32,000 --> 00:38:35,000

They were infamous for handing out brutal and often fatal

469

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

beatings to anyone who stood in their way.

470

00:38:39,000 --> 00:38:43,000

In 1970s, Hong Kong's not the wild west,

471

00:38:43,000 --> 00:38:45,000

it was the wild east.

472

00:38:45,000 --> 00:38:48,000

I mean, Sam Oh Hong, who Bruce Lee had fought

473

00:38:48,000 --> 00:38:50,000

at the beginning of Enter the Dragon,

474

00:38:50,000 --> 00:38:56,000

has a unique round scar between his nose and his mouth.

475

00:38:56,000 --> 00:38:59,000

And that's actually the shape of a coke bottle

476

00:38:59,000 --> 00:39:02,000

that had been broken off and then driven into his face

477

00:39:02,000 --> 00:39:05,000

like that during a gang fight.

478

00:39:05,000 --> 00:39:09,000

Hong Kong in the 70s was rough and chaotic,

479

00:39:09,000 --> 00:39:12,000

and this violent atmosphere extended to movie sets,

480

00:39:12,000 --> 00:39:15,000

where Bruce Lee seemed wary of everyone.

481

00:39:15,000 --> 00:39:18,000

Hong Kong's name is a name for the movie.

482

00:39:18,000 --> 00:39:21,000

Hong Kong's name is a name for the movie.

483

00:39:21,000 --> 00:39:24,000

Hong Kong's name is Hong Kong's name.

484

00:39:24,000 --> 00:39:27,000

Hong Kong's name is Hong Kong's name.

485

00:39:27,000 --> 00:39:30,000

Actually, he's lose control.

486

00:39:58,000 --> 00:40:02,000

According to a close friend, Bruce Lee was getting into fights

487

00:40:02,000 --> 00:40:04,000

in the months before his death.

488

00:40:04,000 --> 00:40:08,000

Could this be the smoking gun Phillip Chan has been looking for?

489

00:40:08,000 --> 00:40:12,000

A head injury sustained in a fight could fit the fatal brain swelling

490

00:40:12,000 --> 00:40:14,000

that claimed Bruce Lee's life.

491

00:40:14,000 --> 00:40:17,000

But who would dare take on Bruce Lee?

492

00:40:17,000 --> 00:40:20,000

And who would have a motive?

493

00:40:20,000 --> 00:40:24,000

One suspect, a director Bruce Lee publicly quarreled with,

494

00:40:24,000 --> 00:40:26,000

Low Way.

495

00:40:26,000 --> 00:40:28,000

According to multiple witnesses,

496

00:40:28,000 --> 00:40:32,000

10 days before Bruce Lee's death, their feud turned violent.

497

00:40:32,000 --> 00:40:36,000

Bruce pulls out a knife, threatens that if Low Way says anything

498

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

or does anything, he's going to stick it in Low Way's neck.

499

00:40:43,000 --> 00:40:48,000

Former detective Phillip Chan has learned from a personal friend of Bruce Lee

500

00:40:48,000 --> 00:40:51,000

that the film star was getting into fights on movie sets

501

00:40:51,000 --> 00:40:53,000

shortly before his death.

502

00:40:54,000 --> 00:40:56,000

He said,

503

00:40:56,000 --> 00:40:59,000

he will really get into fights.

504

00:40:59,000 --> 00:41:04,000

A blow to the head sustained in a fight could trigger swelling of the brain,

505

00:41:04,000 --> 00:41:06,000

the known cause of Bruce's death.

506

00:41:06,000 --> 00:41:09,000

But who would want to hurt Bruce?

507

00:41:09,000 --> 00:41:14,000

In the past, suspicion rested on Bruce Lee's business partner and producer Raymond Chow.

508

00:41:14,000 --> 00:41:18,000

And Bruce's alleged mistress, actress Betty Ting Pei.

509

00:41:18,000 --> 00:41:21,000

But Chan has unearthed another person of interest

510

00:41:21,000 --> 00:41:24,000

who had a fraught relationship with Bruce Lee,

511

00:41:24,000 --> 00:41:27,000

the film director, Low Way.

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00:41:27,000 --> 00:41:30,000

It is well known that Low Way and Bruce Lee had a long running,

513

00:41:30,000 --> 00:41:32,000

often very public feud.

514

00:41:32,000 --> 00:41:36,000

This feud had been running like a sole opera.

515

00:41:36,000 --> 00:41:42,000

In 1971, Low Way was the director on Bruce's first martial arts film with Golden Harvest,

516

00:41:42,000 --> 00:41:44,000

The Big Boss.

517

00:41:44,000 --> 00:41:46,000

From the start, their relationship was hostile.

518

00:41:46,000 --> 00:41:50,000

Low Way was an egomaniac, and Bruce Lee was an alpha male,

519

00:41:50,000 --> 00:41:53,000

and they clashed as you would expect.

520

00:41:56,000 --> 00:41:59,000

But Big Boss broke box office records in Hong Kong.

521

00:41:59,000 --> 00:42:04,000

In 1972, the pair reunited to make a second movie, Fist of Fury.

522

00:42:04,000 --> 00:42:06,000

The film is an even bigger success,

523

00:42:06,000 --> 00:42:10,000

but their relationship deteriorates to name-calling and sniping in the press.

524

00:42:10,000 --> 00:42:16,000

Low Way had done interviews in the media where he played down Bruce's ability

525

00:42:16,000 --> 00:42:19,000

and played up his own directorial skill.

526

00:42:20,000 --> 00:42:23,000

Low Way thought Bruce Lee was a snotty, little disrespectful actor

527

00:42:23,000 --> 00:42:25,000

who wasn't giving him enough face,

528

00:42:25,000 --> 00:42:30,000

and Bruce Lee thought Low Way was a, you know, a know-nothing, second-rate hack

529

00:42:30,000 --> 00:42:35,000

with a too big of an ego and unprofessional behavior on set.

530

00:42:35,000 --> 00:42:38,000

And they both were probably right about each other.

531

00:42:38,000 --> 00:42:40,000

Just 10 days before Bruce's death,

532

00:42:40,000 --> 00:42:43,000

Hong Kong's newspapers reported that his feud with Low Way

533

00:42:43,000 --> 00:42:47,000

had escalated beyond insults and name-calling.

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00:42:47,000 --> 00:42:49,000

When I was digging through all this material,

535

00:42:49,000 --> 00:42:52,000

I found something very intriguing, an incident

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00:42:52,000 --> 00:42:55,000

which took place on the 10th of July, 1973.

537

00:42:55,000 --> 00:43:00,000

Now, here's the headline, which is in Chinese, my translation.

538

00:43:00,000 --> 00:43:03,000

A conflict broke out between Low Way and Bruce Lee

539

00:43:03,000 --> 00:43:06,000

during a screening at the Golden Harvest Studio.

540

00:43:06,000 --> 00:43:10,000

It almost developed into a bloody incident, but friends intervened.

541

00:43:10,000 --> 00:43:15,000

Police had to be called to the scene to end the film studio storm.

542

00:43:15,000 --> 00:43:16,000

That's what they called it.

543

00:43:16,000 --> 00:43:18,000

Bruce pulls out a knife,

544

00:43:18,000 --> 00:43:21,000

threatens that if Low Way says anything or does anything,

545

00:43:21,000 --> 00:43:23,000

he's going to stick it in Low Way's neck.

546

00:43:23,000 --> 00:43:27,000

Low Way, then, having been threatened with a knife, calls the police.

547

00:43:28,000 --> 00:43:31,000

Low Way would have lost a lot of faith in that incident.

548

00:43:31,000 --> 00:43:33,000

Would it have triggered an act of revenge?

549

00:43:33,000 --> 00:43:36,000

I cannot rule that out as a possibility.

550

00:43:38,000 --> 00:43:44,000

I'm afraid I have to put Mr. Low Way as one of the key persons of interest.

551

00:43:46,000 --> 00:43:49,000

Supposedly, Low Way had a dark side.

552

00:43:51,000 --> 00:43:55,000

In the late 70s, he was contracted to direct Jackie Chan's first films.

553

00:43:55,000 --> 00:43:59,000

There was a falling out, and Jackie refused to work with him anymore.

554

00:43:59,000 --> 00:44:03,000

According to Jackie, Low Way sent mobsters to intimidate him

555

00:44:03,000 --> 00:44:05,000

until he came back on set.

556

00:44:05,000 --> 00:44:11,000

In Hong Kong, mobsters mean only one thing, the feared and violent tryouts.

557

00:44:12,000 --> 00:44:17,000

In the 1970s, there were tens of thousands of tryout gang members in Hong Kong.

558

00:44:17,000 --> 00:44:22,000

Coming into contact with organized crime was a fact of life for the city's residents.

559

00:44:27,000 --> 00:44:31,000

And Low Way wasn't the only one of Philip Chan's suspects

560

00:44:31,000 --> 00:44:33,000

with alleged connections to the mob.

561

00:44:33,000 --> 00:44:39,000

Bruce was found unconscious in the bed of 26-year-old actress Betty Ting Pei.

562

00:44:40,000 --> 00:44:45,000

Betty was running with a fast crowd. She was gambling, she was drinking too much.

563

00:44:45,000 --> 00:44:50,000

So that meant that Bruce sometimes had to stamp in and pick up the pieces when stuff fell apart.

564

00:44:51,000 --> 00:44:56,000

Betty's fast lifestyle reportedly drew her into the seedy world of the tryouts.

565

00:44:56,000 --> 00:45:03,000

Betty had run up a lot of debts, gambling, and some triad thug was demanding she pay him back.

566

00:45:03,000 --> 00:45:08,000

Bruce and Betty met this guy and his henchmen in some shadowy back street.

567

00:45:09,000 --> 00:45:14,000

And the guy got paid by Bruce, then he's been all cocky like you see even.

568

00:45:14,000 --> 00:45:17,000

The great Bruce Lee has to pay Big Brother so and so.

569

00:45:17,000 --> 00:45:23,000

And in response, Bruce takes out a coke can, takes a finger, stabs it through the can,

570

00:45:23,000 --> 00:45:28,000

and the carburetor beverage sprays all over henchmen number one.

571

00:45:28,000 --> 00:45:32,000

And Bruce throws that down, gets in the car, and he and Betty leave.

572

00:45:33,000 --> 00:45:39,000

He was not intimidated by anybody and he felt as he famously said to tell you the truth,

573

00:45:39,000 --> 00:45:41,000

I could beat anybody in the world.

574

00:45:47,000 --> 00:45:53,000

Could disrespect for the triads or a feud with Low Way have made Bruce Lee a target?

575

00:45:53,000 --> 00:45:59,000

Through his contacts in the movie industry, Chan has received a previously unheard audio recording

576

00:45:59,000 --> 00:46:05,000

of a retired actor who Chan knows had connections to the criminal underworld.

577

00:46:08,000 --> 00:46:14,000

The actor claims the official verdict is wrong. Bruce didn't die in Betty Ting Pei's apartment.

578

00:46:29,000 --> 00:46:31,000

I was a kid.

579

00:46:31,000 --> 00:46:33,000

I was a kid.

580

00:46:33,000 --> 00:46:35,000

I was a kid.

581

00:46:35,000 --> 00:46:37,000

I was a kid.

582

00:46:37,000 --> 00:46:39,000

I was a kid.

583

00:46:39,000 --> 00:46:41,000

I was a kid.

584

00:46:41,000 --> 00:46:43,000

I was a kid.

585

00:46:43,000 --> 00:46:45,000

I was a kid.

586

00:46:45,000 --> 00:46:47,000

I was a kid.

587

00:46:47,000 --> 00:46:49,000

I was a kid.

588

00:46:49,000 --> 00:46:51,000

I was a kid.

589

00:46:51,000 --> 00:46:53,000

I was a kid.

590

00:46:53,000 --> 00:46:55,000

I was a kid.

591

00:46:55,000 --> 00:46:57,000

I was a kid.

592

00:46:57,000 --> 00:46:59,000

I didn't die.

593

00:47:01,000 --> 00:47:07,000

Chan knows from years of experience that brutal beatings fit with the triads' modus operandi,

594

00:47:07,000 --> 00:47:13,000

but would the organized crime gangs really have targeted someone as high-profile as Bruce Lee?

595

00:47:13,000 --> 00:47:18,000

He can only be certain by talking directly to a self-confessed triad.

596

00:47:18,000 --> 00:47:20,000

A■u t breathing into the house?

597

00:47:20,000 --> 00:47:22,000

You're dead.

598

00:47:27,000 --> 00:47:30,000

In his investigation into Bruce Lee's death,

599

00:47:30,000 --> 00:47:33,000

Phillip Chan has unearthed a new lead.

600

00:47:33,000 --> 00:47:35,000

I'm going to talk to him.

601

00:47:35,000 --> 00:47:38,000

People are taking the blood and the blood.

602

00:47:38,000 --> 00:47:40,000

The blood is not well.

603

00:47:40,000 --> 00:47:44,000

A recording that alleges Bruce was beaten to death

604

00:47:44,000 --> 00:47:46,000

by triads with metal bars.

605

00:47:46,000 --> 00:47:50,000

Chan has discovered Bruce had reportedly clashed with the mob.

606

00:47:50,000 --> 00:47:53,000

Bruce takes out a coat can, takes a finger,

607

00:47:53,000 --> 00:47:55,000

stabs it through the can,

608

00:47:55,000 --> 00:48:00,000

and the carbonated beverage sprays all over Penchman number one.

609

00:48:00,000 --> 00:48:04,000

And 10 days before his death, Bruce had threatened director Lo Way,

610

00:48:04,000 --> 00:48:07,000

a man with suspected links to the criminal underworld.

611

00:48:07,000 --> 00:48:09,000

Bruce Lee got into Lo Way's face

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00:48:09,000 --> 00:48:11,000

and essentially physically threatened him

613

00:48:11,000 --> 00:48:14,000

if he talked smack about him to the press.

614

00:48:17,000 --> 00:48:21,000

In the 1970s, organized crime activity in Hong Kong

615

00:48:21,000 --> 00:48:24,000

was centered in the seedy area of Mong Kok.

616

00:48:24,000 --> 00:48:26,000

Phillip Chan was a detective

617

00:48:26,000 --> 00:48:29,000

trying to keep law and order in this neighborhood.

618

00:48:29,000 --> 00:48:33,000

He knows triads are secretive and rarely speak in public.

619

00:48:33,000 --> 00:48:37,000

But he has convinced a former gang member to talk.

620

00:48:37,000 --> 00:48:42,000

Today, Chan Y. Mann is a wine importer.

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00:48:42,000 --> 00:48:47,000

In the 1970s, he was a martial arts film star in his own right.

622

00:48:47,000 --> 00:48:51,000

He had learned his fighting skills as the personal bodyguard

623

00:48:51,000 --> 00:48:54,000

of one of the most feared triads,

624

00:48:54,000 --> 00:48:57,000

the heroine kingpin, Fat Boy Kwon.

625

00:49:16,000 --> 00:49:20,000

As an actor, Chan Y. Mann worked with both Bruce Lee

626

00:49:20,000 --> 00:49:22,000

and his arch enemy, the director Lo Way,

627

00:49:22,000 --> 00:49:25,000

a man with a known connection to the triads.

628

00:49:25,000 --> 00:49:29,000

Phillip asks about the altercation Bruce Lee had with Lo Way

629

00:49:29,000 --> 00:49:31,000

just 10 days before his death.

630

00:49:31,000 --> 00:49:34,000

We're told that Bruce Lee went into Lo Way's office one day

631

00:49:34,000 --> 00:49:39,000

and brandished a spring knife and threatened to beat him up.

632

00:49:39,000 --> 00:49:41,000

Did you know about this?

633

00:49:50,000 --> 00:49:54,000

I was afraid that he would be so scared.

634

00:49:54,000 --> 00:49:57,000

I didn't mean to beat Lo Way.

635

00:49:57,000 --> 00:49:59,000

I thought that would be the case.

636

00:49:59,000 --> 00:50:03,000

Lo Way told me that he would beat me up.

637

00:50:03,000 --> 00:50:08,000

Maybe he would have died if he had beaten Lo Way.

638

00:50:09,000 --> 00:50:13,000

According to Chan Y. Mann, Lo Way brushed off this altercation

639

00:50:13,000 --> 00:50:15,000

as nothing more than a clash of egos.

640

00:50:15,000 --> 00:50:19,000

He is adamant the director had nothing to do with Bruce Lee's death.

641

00:50:19,000 --> 00:50:22,000

But how about the infamous triads?

642

00:50:22,000 --> 00:50:25,000

Since Bruce Lee was such a great fighter,

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00:50:25,000 --> 00:50:29,000

would any triad who wanted to advance

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00:50:29,000 --> 00:50:31,000

want to challenge him?

645

00:50:31,000 --> 00:50:35,000

And if you defeat Bruce Lee, you immediately make yourself famous.

646

00:50:35,000 --> 00:50:37,000

You rise from the ranks.

647

00:50:49,000 --> 00:50:51,000

You don't want to be famous.

648

00:50:51,000 --> 00:50:53,000

You want to be famous, right?

649

00:50:53,000 --> 00:50:57,000

Or no one wants to do that?

650

00:50:57,000 --> 00:51:02,000

The black society is trying to make it possible.

651

00:51:02,000 --> 00:51:04,000

It's impossible.

652

00:51:12,000 --> 00:51:14,000

A man at the very heart of the triads

653

00:51:14,000 --> 00:51:18,000

is categorical that the gangs had no interest in harming Bruce Lee.

654

00:51:18,000 --> 00:51:23,000

His status as an idol and symbol of power to Chinese people around the globe

655

00:51:23,000 --> 00:51:25,000

meant he was untouchable.

656

00:51:25,000 --> 00:51:28,000

Philip Chan is aware this is only one man's opinion,

657

00:51:28,000 --> 00:51:33,000

but he knows it is in line with the information in Bruce Lee's death vials.

658

00:51:33,000 --> 00:51:37,000

The triads are renowned for carrying out violent beatings and attacks.

659

00:51:37,000 --> 00:51:40,000

But could Bruce Lee have succumbed to this?

660

00:51:41,000 --> 00:51:44,000

One thing I would expect to see is if a person is attacked,

661

00:51:44,000 --> 00:51:49,000

he would raise his arms to defend himself and deflect the punches.

662

00:51:49,000 --> 00:51:52,000

That would surely leave Bruce Marx on his arms.

663

00:51:52,000 --> 00:51:54,000

Here's the out-of-the-sea report.

664

00:51:54,000 --> 00:51:57,000

First of all, on the very front page it says,

665

00:51:57,000 --> 00:52:00,000

there are no signs of injury.

666

00:52:00,000 --> 00:52:02,000

This is vital evidence.

667

00:52:02,000 --> 00:52:05,000

Then further down here, it notes that his scalp is free of bruising

668

00:52:05,000 --> 00:52:10,000

and his scalp shows no evidence of fracture or injury.

669

00:52:10,000 --> 00:52:13,000

It says Bruce Lee's ribs are not fractured.

670

00:52:13,000 --> 00:52:17,000

Now none of this is consistent with a violent attack.

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00:52:17,000 --> 00:52:22,000

I have to conclude that there's no evidence to suggest that Bruce Lee was ambushed

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00:52:22,000 --> 00:52:24,000

and attacked by the triads.

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00:52:26,000 --> 00:52:31,000

It is time for Philip to share this new information with Bruce's brother, Robert.

674

00:52:31,000 --> 00:52:32,000

Hey, Philip.

675

00:52:32,000 --> 00:52:34,000

Hi, time for an update.

676

00:52:34,000 --> 00:52:35,000

Okay.

677

00:52:35,000 --> 00:52:38,000

Do you remember our old friend, the triad guy?

678

00:52:38,000 --> 00:52:40,000

Chen Weiman?

679

00:52:40,000 --> 00:52:41,000

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

680

00:52:41,000 --> 00:52:49,000

I tend to believe his analysis that Bruce wasn't involved in any triad attack

681

00:52:49,000 --> 00:52:54,000

or any triad ambush or any triad animosity at all.

682

00:52:54,000 --> 00:52:55,000

Does that go to here?

683

00:52:55,000 --> 00:52:57,000

Of course he was well loved by the triads.

684

00:52:57,000 --> 00:52:58,000

Yes, yes.

685

00:52:58,000 --> 00:53:04,000

So we can cast those things aside, you know, when it comes to foul play.

686

00:53:04,000 --> 00:53:08,000

But Robert isn't satisfied that murder can be ruled out.

687

00:53:08,000 --> 00:53:15,000

A friend who worked at the funeral parlor that prepared Bruce Lee's body noticed a strange detail.

688

00:53:15,000 --> 00:53:23,000

Well, come to think of it, I mean, I met one of our family friends who was family owned the funeral parlor

689

00:53:23,000 --> 00:53:26,000

that Bruce's service was carried in.

690

00:53:26,000 --> 00:53:31,000

And she told me that, you know, she noticed that his nails were black.

691

00:53:32,000 --> 00:53:37,000

Were Bruce Lee's black fingernails a sign of foul play?

692

00:53:37,000 --> 00:53:43,000

It matches a popular theory of how Bruce Lee died, but one that has never been proven.

693

00:53:43,000 --> 00:53:46,000

One possibility is that, you know, he was poisoned.

694

00:53:52,000 --> 00:53:56,000

Martial arts superstar Bruce Lee died from swelling of the brain.

695

00:53:56,000 --> 00:54:01,000

The official verdict, it was triggered by an allergic reaction to aspirin.

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00:54:01,000 --> 00:54:07,000

But a new investigation by former police detective Phillip Chan has raised doubts.

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00:54:08,000 --> 00:54:13,000

Basically what you're seeing is that Bruce Lee did not die because of this taking aspirin.

698

00:54:13,000 --> 00:54:18,000

The autopsy report shows no evidence that there was an allergic reaction.

699

00:54:18,000 --> 00:54:23,000

Now Bruce's brother Robert has brought up an alternative possibility.

700

00:54:23,000 --> 00:54:25,000

Bruce's fingernails were black.

701

00:54:25,000 --> 00:54:27,000

They said, why could that possibly be?

702

00:54:27,000 --> 00:54:31,000

One possibility is that, you know, he was poisoned.

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00:54:31,000 --> 00:54:37,000

Some poisons starve the victim of oxygen, which can lead to blackening of the fingernails.

704

00:54:37,000 --> 00:54:42,000

And poisons can trigger swelling of the brain, the cause of Bruce Lee's death.

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00:54:42,000 --> 00:54:49,000

But this information is from one witness who saw Bruce's body at the funeral parlor in 1973.

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

Chan searches Bruce Lee's death vials for other evidence that Bruce Lee was poisoned.

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

He finds a potential clue in a statement by Bruce Lee's business partner Raymond Chow.

708

00:55:00,000 --> 00:55:04,000

This is on 10th of May 1973, just 10 weeks before his death.

709

00:55:05,000 --> 00:55:14,000

Raymond Chow describes how one of his workers rushes into the room and tells him that Bruce has collapsed in a sound studio.

710

00:55:15,000 --> 00:55:23,000

Raymond describes Bruce struggling to breathe, pale, drenched in sweat, and convulsing.

711

00:55:24,000 --> 00:55:29,000

He then rings the doctor and orders four of his employees to carry Bruce Lee into his own car.

712

00:55:29,000 --> 00:55:32,000

Then he drives him to the Baptist hospital.

713

00:55:33,000 --> 00:55:36,000

And here we have exhibits eight and nine.

714

00:55:38,000 --> 00:55:40,000

Police statements from two doctors.

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00:55:42,000 --> 00:55:50,000

In these statements from 1973, the doctors describe Bruce as completely unresponsive and showing little sign of life.

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00:55:50,000 --> 00:55:53,000

They diagnose him with swelling of the brain.

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00:55:53,000 --> 00:55:57,000

The same condition that kills him just 10 weeks later.

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00:55:59,000 --> 00:56:04,000

As one doctor trained remarks, he was very close to his death medically on that day.

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00:56:04,000 --> 00:56:07,000

Now that sounds like a very serious condition.

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00:56:08,000 --> 00:56:15,000

The doctors inject a drug called mannitol, which reduces the swelling and saves Bruce's life.

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00:56:16,000 --> 00:56:22,000

The medics suspect the swelling of Bruce's brain was triggered by toxicity or poisoning from drugs.

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00:56:25,000 --> 00:56:30,000

This is intriguing. Bruce cheated that once, but on the second occasion he wasn't that lucky.

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00:56:32,000 --> 00:56:42,000

Within a 10-week period, he has two collapses and one near-death experience and one fatal experience from cerebral edema.

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00:56:42,000 --> 00:56:47,000

So my logical conclusion is those two things are linked.

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00:56:47,000 --> 00:56:59,000

And if you want to understand the reason he died on July 20th, 1973, you need to look more closely at what happened on May 10th, 1973, 10 weeks earlier.

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00:56:59,000 --> 00:57:04,000

And if you can explain what happened that day, you can explain why Bruce Lee died.

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00:57:05,000 --> 00:57:14,000

A poisoning link between the two events was investigated in 1973 and the spotlight fell on one illegal drug.

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00:57:15,000 --> 00:57:25,000

Cannabis was found in Bruce's autopsy and as official records reveal, he admitted to eating some moments before he collapsed on May 10th.

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00:57:26,000 --> 00:57:36,000

There is no known medical link between cannabis and swelling of the brain, but could this lethal condition have been caused by something else in the marijuana Bruce consumed?

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00:57:37,000 --> 00:57:44,000

I think the question is, was his cannabis in some way tainted on those two special occasions?

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00:57:44,000 --> 00:57:52,000

And if it was tainted, was it somebody had intentionally tainted the cannabis to hurt, to weaken him or even to kill him?

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00:57:56,000 --> 00:57:58,920

The

733

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

Cann returns to forensic pathologist Dr. Baer to see if there was anything at Bruce Lee's autopsy that points to poisoning.

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00:58:09,000 --> 00:58:17,000

So this is the toxicology report. They look for alcohol in case he drank a lot that wasn't there.

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00:58:17,000 --> 00:58:27,000

Morphine, we know morphine is common in heroin. They found nothing. They did a lot of other tests, heavy metals.

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00:58:27,000 --> 00:58:37,000

So quite a common way of poisoning people and particularly arsenic is one. Lead would be another one that's common.

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00:58:37,000 --> 00:58:39,000

Those were found.

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00:58:39,000 --> 00:58:46,000

Can we say conclusively that there's nothing in the autopsy which suggested that there was an administering of poison on Bruce?

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00:58:46,000 --> 00:58:58,000

A lot of the poisons that you feed someone are irritants. So the stomach would show bleeding or they might be vomiting or having diarrhea.

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00:58:58,000 --> 00:59:02,000

So we're not seeing that. We're not getting that history.

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00:59:02,000 --> 00:59:10,000

There is no hard evidence that Bruce took poison cannabis or that he was killed by any toxic substance.

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00:59:10,000 --> 00:59:25,000

Everything that we have in terms of the toxicology report, the autopsy report, the way Bruce was supposed to have died doesn't support really poisoning.

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00:59:29,000 --> 00:59:37,000

Previously, Chan had ruled out a physical attack as the reason why Bruce Lee died. Now he has eliminated poison.

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00:59:37,000 --> 00:59:52,000

With no evidence of foul play, he can exonerate his three suspects in the case. Bruce's business partner, Raymond Chow, his alleged mistress, Betty Ting Pei, and the director of his first martial arts movies, Lo Wei.

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00:59:52,000 --> 01:00:00,000

But if Bruce Lee wasn't murdered and if he wasn't killed by an allergic reaction to aspirin, why did he die at just 32 years of age?

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

Could the answer to this mystery lie with Bruce himself? Could he have been secretly suffering from a medical problem? And could it have been self-inflicted?

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01:00:10,000 --> 01:00:15,000

I was rather shocked to discover Bruce had had his sweat glands removed.

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01:00:16,000 --> 01:00:32,000

In his investigation into the death of Bruce Lee, Philip Chan has eliminated the official verdict that he died from an allergy to the aspirin in a painkiller. And he has found no evidence that Bruce Lee was a victim of foul play.

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01:00:32,000 --> 01:00:43,000

Everything that we have in terms of the toxicology report, the autopsy report doesn't support really poisoning.

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01:00:44,000 --> 01:00:55,000

Now Chan is returning to an event that happened 10 weeks before Bruce's death. On May 10th, Bruce collapsed because of swelling of the brain, the same condition that claims his life in July.

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01:00:55,000 --> 01:01:09,000

On the first occasion, his life is saved by fast-thinking doctors. Bruce jetted to Los Angeles for a full medical checkup. While in California, he visited his younger brother, Robert.

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01:01:09,000 --> 01:01:21,000

When he came back to LA in May 1973, did he mention about his condition in the hospital and the emergency of that situation, that particular time?

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01:01:21,000 --> 01:01:33,000

No, I mean, he just brushed all those details aside because to him, I mean, he said that it wasn't a big deal.

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

Bruce Lee may have told his brother it wasn't serious, but according to the doctors, he had stopped breathing and was extremely close to death. Why would he pass off this episode so lightly?

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01:01:45,000 --> 01:01:55,000

If he had a health problem, let's presume, would he be the kind of person to just keep it within himself and not tell anybody or would he confide into anyone at all?

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01:01:55,000 --> 01:02:08,000

You know, he... Okay, first of all, his pain threshold is pretty high because I remember he was shooting Marlowe, one of the movies that he was doing with James Carter.

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01:02:08,000 --> 01:02:24,000

And in between shots, he was showing people his flying kick. And one... I mean, some muscles pulled one of the ribs and it broke the rib, okay?

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01:02:24,000 --> 01:02:32,000

So they took him to the hospital and lo and behold, I mean, come afternoon, after lunch, they were shooting again.

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01:02:32,000 --> 01:02:35,000

Yeah, he would bear the pain and...

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01:02:35,000 --> 01:02:41,000

Anything he can just, you know, continue doing, he'll do, you know?

761

01:02:41,000 --> 01:02:53,000

If Bruce Lee had a history of ignoring medical issues, was he keeping a condition secret that caused his collapse in May and led to his death 10 weeks later?

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01:02:53,000 --> 01:03:04,000

As purely as an exercise in logic, you would say, he collapsed in May, he died in July. What links these two events?

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01:03:04,000 --> 01:03:09,000

Could there be a clue in the task Bruce was doing on the day of his first collapse?

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01:03:09,000 --> 01:03:16,000

What happened on May 10th is that Bruce Lee was redubbing lines from Enter the Dragon.

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01:03:16,000 --> 01:03:28,000

The day was the hottest day of May in tropical Hong Kong summer and they turned off the air conditioning and people there describe it, the room is becoming like a sauna.

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01:03:28,000 --> 01:03:41,000

So while Bruce Lee is doing these lines, he starts to feel dizzy, he needs to take a break, he walks out of this superheated room, he goes to the bathroom and he ends up collapsing on the floor.

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01:03:41,000 --> 01:03:45,000

Did he collapse because of something he'd done to himself?

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01:03:46,000 --> 01:03:59,000

Once I looked at May 10th, I was rather shocked to discover that six months earlier on November 15th, 1972, Bruce had had his sweat glands removed.

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01:03:59,000 --> 01:04:08,000

There was no medical reason for this extreme surgery. Bruce had the sweat glands removed from his armpits because he was a perfectionist.

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01:04:08,000 --> 01:04:15,000

He had been doing all these martial arts scenes with his shirt off and they kept having to kind of wipe him down between takes.

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01:04:15,000 --> 01:04:24,000

And he was like, he went to the doctor and said, can you do anything about this? And they said, well, actually we can remove your sweat glands.

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01:04:25,000 --> 01:04:37,000

That sweat glands is a symptom of that idea of like, you know, if I need to achieve a goal, I don't

mind what it costs, I don't mind what's involved with it, I'm going to do it.

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01:04:37,000 --> 01:04:40,000

If nobody else has done it, that's fine. I'm going to be the first one.

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01:04:40,000 --> 01:04:51,000

Did Bruce's decision to have the sweat glands removed from his armpits leave him unable to control a critical biological process regulating his own body temperature?

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01:04:51,000 --> 01:04:57,000

Bruce's collapse on May 10th bears the classic hallmarks of a medical condition that can be fatal.

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01:04:57,000 --> 01:05:08,000

There are certain symptoms of heat stroke that are common throughout. One is faintness, dizziness, headache, collapse, convulsion, and cerebral edema.

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01:05:10,000 --> 01:05:16,000

But how about on the day he dies? Does he have symptoms on July 20th?

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01:05:16,000 --> 01:05:24,000

He is at the apartment of Betty Ting Pei on a day, which when we look back at the records was the

hottest day of the month of July.

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01:05:25,000 --> 01:05:33,000

And when I spoke to Raymond Chow, Raymond Chow said that Bruce Lee had been demonstrating kung fu scenes from his upcoming movie.

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01:05:33,000 --> 01:05:39,000

And at a certain point, Bruce complained of being dizzy and feeling like he had a headache.

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01:05:39,000 --> 01:05:51,000

Betty Ting Pei gives him one of her pain medications. He takes it, he lies down, and he never gets back up again.

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01:05:52,000 --> 01:05:59,000

On the day he dies, Bruce does have some symptoms that match heat stroke, which can cause fatal swelling of the brain.

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01:06:01,000 --> 01:06:04,000

Could this explain Bruce's sudden death?

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01:06:05,000 --> 01:06:14,000

Chan returns to the office of Dr. Bear to scour the autopsy for other evidence that Bruce died from heat stroke.

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01:06:15,000 --> 01:06:21,000

Interesting question. Let me answer the sweat glands first.

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01:06:21,000 --> 01:06:27,000

Your armpit sweat glands or the axillary sweat glands, they're not that important.

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01:06:28,000 --> 01:06:36,000

Because we have sweat glands all over our skin for temperature control, they're not critical at all.

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01:06:38,000 --> 01:06:42,000

Humans lose most heat via the sweat glands on their chest and back.

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01:06:42,000 --> 01:06:48,000

Our armpits play virtually no role in regulating our body temperatures.

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01:06:48,000 --> 01:06:52,000

I don't think that surgery is important.

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01:06:52,000 --> 01:07:04,000

But to be sure, if we look at the autopsy report and here we have it, here it talks about the microscopy of the kidneys.

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01:07:04,000 --> 01:07:08,000

So it's looking down the microscope, looking at the kidneys.

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01:07:08,000 --> 01:07:15,000

One of the things with heat-related deaths is that your muscles, the cells die.

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01:07:16,000 --> 01:07:22,000

The protein in the muscles actually would leak out and get into your bloodstream.

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01:07:22,000 --> 01:07:29,000

And this protein actually will clog up your kidneys, but it's not that.

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01:07:29,000 --> 01:07:35,000

The histology of the kidney here is entirely normal.

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01:07:35,000 --> 01:07:41,000

The autopsy contains no evidence of kidney damage, meaning heat stroke can be ruled out.

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01:07:41,000 --> 01:07:47,000

But Chan has uncovered that Bruce had a history of hiding medical problems.

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01:07:47,000 --> 01:07:53,000

Maybe there was another health issue that the martial arts superstar was keeping quiet.

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01:07:54,000 --> 01:08:00,000

Could there be clues hiding in plain sight in this fight scene from Enter the Dragon?

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01:08:00,000 --> 01:08:10,000

Bruce had lost even more weight and looked significantly skinnier in that footage, which was the last thing Bruce ever shot.

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01:08:12,000 --> 01:08:18,000

Just a few months before his death, Bruce Lee was filming Enter the Dragon.

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01:08:18,000 --> 01:08:23,000

Some have said the final scene filmed in the movie holds clues to his death.

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01:08:23,000 --> 01:08:33,000

From the photographic record that we have and the film record that we have, Bruce maintained a certain fighting weight throughout the bulk of the shoot of Enter the Dragon,

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01:08:33,000 --> 01:08:36,000

where he was ripped up, cut.

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01:08:36,000 --> 01:08:41,000

Well, if you look at him in the underground fighting chamber when he fights with all the guards underground,

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01:08:41,000 --> 01:08:46,000

you just see every part of his physique popping out against that black background.

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01:08:46,000 --> 01:08:55,000

A month after filming has finished, studio executives watch a screening and agree they want to see more of Bruce at the beginning of the film.

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01:08:55,000 --> 01:09:02,000

So they decided to pay for the fight sequence between Bruce Lee and Sam Orhang, which was the last thing shot for the film,

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01:09:02,000 --> 01:09:07,000

the last thing Bruce ever shot that we know of in this lifetime.

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01:09:07,000 --> 01:09:14,000

And by the time they came to shoot it, Bruce looked significantly skinnier in that footage.

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01:09:26,000 --> 01:09:32,000

Phillip Chan wants to know if this is a trick of the camera or if Bruce Lee really had lost weight.

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01:09:32,000 --> 01:09:39,000

And if so, could this be linked to his sudden death?

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01:09:46,000 --> 01:09:51,000

Bruce Lee was famous for making strong friendships with his stuntman,

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01:09:51,000 --> 01:09:57,000

and appeared in many of his films, including the last scenes Bruce ever shot, is Yen Wah.

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01:10:08,000 --> 01:10:12,000

Yen Wah was Bruce's stunt double in Enter the Dragon.

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01:10:21,000 --> 01:10:29,000

Unlike Bruce, Yen Wah trained in Chinese opera which placed emphasis on acrobatics.

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01:10:29,000 --> 01:10:35,000

His superior tumbling skills are apparent in Enter the Dragon, if you know where to look.

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01:10:35,000 --> 01:10:40,000

So this, they shot the opening scene at the end of the shoot.

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01:11:05,000 --> 01:11:09,000

The finished movie is edited so it looks like Bruce does everything in the scene.

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01:11:09,000 --> 01:11:13,000

But according to Yen Wah, that wasn't the case.

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01:11:24,000 --> 01:11:28,000

This wasn't the only time in the scene that Yen Wah doubled for Bruce Lee.

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01:11:35,000 --> 01:11:40,000

It might look like a piece of Bruce Lee magic, but it isn't totally of his own making.

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01:12:05,000 --> 01:12:16,000

Do you see anything very, very different in his physique and his mentality compared to the beginning of the shoot?

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01:12:35,000 --> 01:12:40,000

Chan has confirmation Bruce Lee did lose weight during the last months of his life.

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01:12:40,000 --> 01:12:44,000

Yet Yen Wah doesn't think this signaled a physical health problem.

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01:12:59,000 --> 01:13:02,000

But was the result of Bruce oversteering himself?

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01:13:05,000 --> 01:13:26,000

He believes the stress of trying to make Enter the Dragon a success was the root cause of Bruce's weight loss.

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01:13:26,000 --> 01:13:35,000

He was already getting into his 30s and perhaps if we wanted to read something more poetic into it, he had a sense that time was running out.

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01:13:35,000 --> 01:13:42,000

I think he was driven and obsessive and, you know, and utterly committed day by day to achieving his goals.

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01:13:57,000 --> 01:14:06,000

Bruce's autopsy backs up Yen Wah's opinion that the weight loss was caused by stress rather than a deadly medical condition.

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01:14:06,000 --> 01:14:12,000

Bruce's heart is normal. There are no signs of disease or evidence of a heart attack.

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01:14:12,000 --> 01:14:17,000

All of his other internal organs, except his brain, are noted as being in good shape.

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01:14:17,000 --> 01:14:24,000

There are no signs of any disease that could account for Bruce's weight loss in the last months of his life.

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01:14:27,000 --> 01:14:34,000

With this final piece of evidence, Phillip Chan can discount a medical condition as the cause of Bruce Lee's death.

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01:14:34,000 --> 01:14:42,000

He has already eliminated poisoning, a hit by the triads, and the official verdict of fatal allergic reaction to aspirin.

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01:14:42,000 --> 01:14:44,000

He is running out of options.

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01:14:45,000 --> 01:14:51,000

But could the mystery of Bruce's passing finally be solved by a brand new theory?

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01:14:51,000 --> 01:14:55,000

I wasn't expecting that answer, but I accepted.

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01:15:02,000 --> 01:15:06,000

In Enter the Dragon, Bruce Lee announced himself on the world stage.

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01:15:06,000 --> 01:15:10,000

He brought martial arts to a global audience for the first time.

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01:15:10,000 --> 01:15:18,000

The movie is one of the most profitable ever made and proved that a Chinese American could be the hero in a Hollywood film.

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01:15:18,000 --> 01:15:25,000

For anybody who has felt like they're the underdog, Bruce was like a hero in that respect because you could be like,

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01:15:25,000 --> 01:15:32,000

oh wow, look at this five foot seven guy who weighs maybe 120 pounds.

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01:15:32,000 --> 01:15:42,000

Beating up all of these villains and he's able to do it with grace, he's able to do it with dignity, and he's able to do it with a sense of style.

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01:15:42,000 --> 01:15:48,000

You're like, I can be that too. And that's the power of representation.

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01:15:48,000 --> 01:15:54,000

As well as breaking down barriers, Enter the Dragon is one of the most influential movies in the history of cinema.

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01:15:54,000 --> 01:16:02,000

When you watch a movie like The Matrix or Jason Bourne, what you see is Bruce Lee-type choreography.

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01:16:02,000 --> 01:16:09,000

It's high impact. It's like hyper realism. And yet it's grounded in a certain kind of messy reality.

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01:16:09,000 --> 01:16:20,000

It's bloody. It's bloody. It's brutal. It's not dance choreography. All of our fight choreography in the West is Bruce Lee fight choreography.

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01:16:20,000 --> 01:16:25,000

But cruelly, Bruce never knew of the movie's cultural and financial success.

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01:16:25,000 --> 01:16:33,000

One day he was alive and well and he was being Bruce Lee and he was on the verge of achieving everything he'd ever dreamed of.

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01:16:33,000 --> 01:16:35,000

And the next he just was gone.

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01:16:35,000 --> 01:16:40,000

Leaving the people of Hong Kong in disbelief at the loss of their hero.

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01:16:40,000 --> 01:16:45,000

They had already in the newspaper Bruce Lee was dead. They had to come to the funeral to be absolutely sure.

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01:16:45,000 --> 01:16:53,000

It just didn't feel like it could be possible. And you see the massive throng of crowds outside.

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01:16:53,000 --> 01:16:56,000

And then you see the mass of people inside the funeral home.

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01:16:56,000 --> 01:17:03,000

And you get a sense of the loss and a communal sharing of grief.

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01:17:05,000 --> 01:17:09,000

Those who knew him personally struggled for answers.

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01:17:09,000 --> 01:17:15,000

It's hard for people to believe. So much for the loss of his hero.

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01:17:15,000 --> 01:17:22,000

Shocking. How come the age is still young and very strong and very famous? Why?

862

01:17:22,000 --> 01:17:28,000

I don't know. It's really unfair to him.

863

01:17:28,000 --> 01:17:33,000

He's a genius. A genius. A genius of kung fu.

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01:17:33,000 --> 01:17:39,000

There is one person who has never fully come to terms with Bruce's passing.

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01:17:39,000 --> 01:17:52,000

After his death so many stories floated around. I wish somebody could really prove to me the real truth.

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01:17:52,000 --> 01:17:59,000

Bruce's brother Robert has asked his friend and ex-detective Phillip Chan to reinvestigate.

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01:17:59,000 --> 01:18:05,000

But he has struggled to find a cast iron reason for Bruce's death.

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01:18:05,000 --> 01:18:13,000

Now he is returning to forensic pathologist Dr. Baer who has spotted something unusual on the night that Bruce Lee died.

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01:18:13,000 --> 01:18:23,000

Now as far as the information I gather from all the documents you have, the equagistic that Betty gave Bruce.

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01:18:23,000 --> 01:18:27,000

It wasn't something that Bruce took regularly.

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01:18:27,000 --> 01:18:31,000

Equagisic is the painkiller Bruce takes to combat a headache.

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01:18:31,000 --> 01:18:37,000

It contains aspirin but also another drug called meprobamate.

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01:18:37,000 --> 01:18:43,000

Realistically the discussion boils down to the aspirin and the meprobamate.

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01:18:43,000 --> 01:18:48,000

In 1973 the official verdict was Bruce Lee was killed by the aspirin.

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01:18:48,000 --> 01:18:52,000

But there is no scientific evidence that he reacted to this drug.

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01:18:52,000 --> 01:19:02,000

Aspirin is so common now. People take it for prevention of stroke, for prevention of heart attacks.

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01:19:02,000 --> 01:19:06,000

So that leaves us with this, with meprobamate.

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01:19:06,000 --> 01:19:12,000

Meprobamate is a tranquilizer which was very popular in the US during the 1950s.

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01:19:12,000 --> 01:19:18,000

Under the name Miltown, it was prescribed to millions as a reliever of stress and anxiety.

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01:19:18,000 --> 01:19:24,000

But in recent years the drug has been banned in numerous countries because of its harmful side effects.

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01:19:24,000 --> 01:19:35,000

There are reports of people having idiosyncratic reactions to meprobamate and it possibly causing death.

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01:19:36,000 --> 01:19:42,000

These idiosyncratic reactions are hard to predict as they only happen in a handful of people.

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01:19:42,000 --> 01:19:46,000

Dr. Baer thinks Bruce was one of the unlucky ones.

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01:19:46,000 --> 01:19:53,000

The probamate caused this swelling of the brain in Bruce Lee leading to him dying.

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01:19:53,000 --> 01:19:59,000

So Bruce Lee was killed by idiosyncratic reaction to one tablet.

886

01:19:59,000 --> 01:20:01,000

Yep, sadly.

887

01:20:02,000 --> 01:20:07,000

This is a brand new theory.

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01:20:07,000 --> 01:20:11,000

Meprobamate has never before been put forward as Bruce Lee's killer.

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01:20:11,000 --> 01:20:18,000

But the emergence of new scientific evidence in the years since Bruce died makes it a prime suspect.

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01:20:18,000 --> 01:20:26,000

Just as in 1973 the conclusion is that Bruce Lee's death was a tragic accident, his fate was sealed.

891

01:20:26,000 --> 01:20:30,000

The moment he chose to take a single equa-jizic tablet.

892

01:20:33,000 --> 01:20:35,000

Would his death be pinnace?

893

01:20:35,000 --> 01:20:47,000

Well, from what we know of the scene, the description was he looked like he was in deep sleep, lying there peacefully.

894

01:20:47,000 --> 01:20:55,000

And probably because of the cerebral swelling he was unconscious so again probably no pain either.

895

01:20:57,000 --> 01:21:03,000

For Chan this marks the end of the investigation.

896

01:21:03,000 --> 01:21:06,000

But there's one more person he needs to talk to.

897

01:21:06,000 --> 01:21:10,000

Bruce's brother, Robert Lee.

898

01:21:10,000 --> 01:21:11,000

Robert.

899

01:21:11,000 --> 01:21:12,000

Yes.

900

01:21:12,000 --> 01:21:14,000

Are you ready for my conclusion?

901

01:21:14,000 --> 01:21:15,000

Yes.

902

01:21:17,000 --> 01:21:18,000

Okay.

903

01:21:18,000 --> 01:21:25,000

First of all I would like to tell you that your brother didn't die of an allergy to aspirin.

904

01:21:26,000 --> 01:21:31,000

And there was no evidence of Bruce being the victim of foul play.

905

01:21:32,000 --> 01:21:46,000

Now, despite your brother's reluctance to review medical problems to you or anybody else, you know, I can't find a link between a medical condition and his death at all.

906

01:21:46,000 --> 01:21:49,000

We actually, we left no stone unturned.

907

01:21:49,000 --> 01:21:50,000

Okay.

908

01:21:51,000 --> 01:21:58,000

I returned to what happened on that, on the night of 20th of July 1973.

909

01:21:58,000 --> 01:22:11,000

The only thing out of the ordinary was that he took that, that one single tablet of equa-jizic, okay, and contains aspirin but aspirin isn't the only thing in that.

910

01:22:11,000 --> 01:22:15,000

There's another chemical called myobermin now.

911

01:22:15,000 --> 01:22:26,000

In recent years, medical findings have discovered that this particular element could have a fatal effect on some patients, although it wasn't known at the time.

912

01:22:26,000 --> 01:22:33,000

The conclusion that I reached therefore is that your brother seemed to have reacted to myobermin.

913

01:22:33,000 --> 01:22:37,000

And this, this was the only thing that killed him.

914

01:22:37,000 --> 01:22:41,000

So it was a very tragic accident.

915

01:22:45,000 --> 01:22:55,000

Well, I wasn't expecting that answer, but coming from you, I accepted, I accepted.

916

01:22:55,000 --> 01:23:09,000

It's very unfortunate. I can, I can share your feelings now that we've been involved in this for a while and at least we can get a lot of the other so-called mysteries out of the way and do him the justice he deserves.

917

01:23:09,000 --> 01:23:18,000

But I can tell you one thing, there was no pain. He passed away peacefully.

918

01:23:18,000 --> 01:23:23,000

Yeah, yeah. Thank you. Thank you, Philip.

919

01:23:23,000 --> 01:23:30,000

I was expecting to get an answer that will make me fall off my chair, but instead it didn't.

920

01:23:30,000 --> 01:23:55,000

But I felt good and peaceful about it because I was hoping that it will not be foul play, that it will not be some freak weird person trying to kill Bruce, you know, this so solid and scientific and answer that I can really accept.

921

01:23:55,000 --> 01:24:08,000

Bruce passed away when he was 32 years old, when he was at the prime, at the peak of his physique and at the peak of his intelligence.

922

01:24:08,000 --> 01:24:18,000

And he did something that nobody can achieve. And I think I have closure now.

923

01:24:18,000 --> 01:24:20,000

Bruce will always be with us.

924

01:24:20,000 --> 01:24:25,000

Yep, he will always be with us. Yep, that's right.

925

01:24:28,000 --> 01:24:33,000

Bruce Lee's death has always been surrounded by mystery and subject to wild conspiracy theories.

926

01:24:33,000 --> 01:24:39,000

Now this investigation has forensically searched through the evidence and arrived at a new conclusion.

927

01:24:39,000 --> 01:24:49,000

After almost five decades of hurt, Robert Lee finally has an answer for how his brother, the greatest martial arts movie star of all time, really died.

928

01:24:50,000 --> 01:24:54,000

Thank you for watching History's Greatest Mysteries.