

1

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

Tonight, a mystery that's haunted the world for almost 50 years.

2

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

One so terrifying, it spawned a tidal wave of books,

3

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

documentaries, and film.

4

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

They've endured what some of the family have defined as a circus act of paranormal activity.

5

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

They decide right then and there we are leaving in the dead of night.

6

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

Now we uncover the truth.

7

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

They decide right then and there we are leaving in the dead of night.

8

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

Now we uncover the top theories surrounding the most notorious house in America.

9

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

I don't think it was the murder that scared them away.

10

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

I think it was something much more devilish.

11

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

There are a couple of other things that indicate that there is another accomplice on the loose.

12

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

Can New Testimony finally reveal the answer?

13

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

Danny claimed that George's interest in the occult instigated the haunting.

14

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

Who or what is responsible for the Amityville horror?

15

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

The Amityville Horror Story

16

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

The Amityville Horror Story

17

00:01:10,000 --> 00:01:15,000

The Amityville Horror Story

18

00:01:15,000 --> 00:01:19,000

December 18th, 1975.

19

00:01:19,000 --> 00:01:23,000

Amityville, New York.

20

00:01:23,000 --> 00:01:26,000

George and Kathy Lutz, along with their three children,

21

00:01:26,000 --> 00:01:33,000

Danny, Christopher and Melissa move into their new home.

22

00:01:33,000 --> 00:01:36,000

It was a typical day by anybody's standards.

23

00:01:36,000 --> 00:01:38,000

The weather was fine.

24

00:01:38,000 --> 00:01:43,000

Everything was seemingly normal.

25

00:01:43,000 --> 00:01:49,000

But it's immediately clear that the Lutz's new house is anything but normal.

26

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

From the very first night of being in the house, they start to experience knocks,

27

00:01:54,000 --> 00:01:59,000

chills, so many things are happening.

28

00:01:59,000 --> 00:02:09,000

Gusta, when in a room that is sealed, George even believes that there is an invisible force in this house.

29

00:02:09,000 --> 00:02:14,000

As the days pass, patriarch George seems to be affected the most.

30

00:02:14,000 --> 00:02:18,000

George says he could never get warm.

31

00:02:18,000 --> 00:02:22,000

He's building fires all the time.

32

00:02:22,000 --> 00:02:25,000

He's not going into work.

33

00:02:25,000 --> 00:02:27,000

He stops bathing.

34

00:02:27,000 --> 00:02:30,000

He's very disheveled and unkempt.

35

00:02:30,000 --> 00:02:36,000

Soon, other members of the family are impacted as well.

36

00:02:36,000 --> 00:02:41,000

George's wife, Kathleen, comes down with a mysterious illness.

37

00:02:41,000 --> 00:02:48,000

The crescendo of horrors continues to build until one final night when it comes to an alarming peak.

38

00:02:48,000 --> 00:02:53,000

George reports a deafening sound coming from the living room, like a marching band at full volume,

39

00:02:53,000 --> 00:02:57,000

marching across the living room, windows are going up and down, doors are flying off the hinges.

40

00:02:57,000 --> 00:03:01,000

When they go to check, there's nothing there.

41

00:03:01,000 --> 00:03:07,000

They've been living in this house for 28 days and they've endured a onslaught

42

00:03:07,000 --> 00:03:13,000

and what some of the members of the family have defined as a circus act of paranormal activity.

43

00:03:13,000 --> 00:03:17,000

The Lutz's finally can't take it anymore.

44

00:03:17,000 --> 00:03:23,000

And at 7 a.m. on January 14th, 1976, they flee.

45

00:03:23,000 --> 00:03:26,000

They packed just a couple of changes of clothes.

46

00:03:26,000 --> 00:03:32,000

They grabbed the dog and literally leave or abscond in the van.

47

00:03:32,000 --> 00:03:33,000

And that's it.

48

00:03:33,000 --> 00:03:39,000

And they're at Kathy's mother's house and they said they will never, never go back there again.

49

00:03:39,000 --> 00:03:46,000

Why would this seemingly normal family abandon their brand new home in the dead of winter?

50

00:03:46,000 --> 00:03:50,000

What or who are they running from?

51

00:03:50,000 --> 00:04:02,000

While dozens of theories have risen over the years, the first is based on an actual horrific event that happened one year earlier.

52

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

Before the Lutz's purchase on 12 Ocean Avenue, the DeFeo family lived there.

53

00:04:07,000 --> 00:04:14,000

The members of the DeFeo family are Ronald DeFeo Sr. and his wife Louise Briganti DeFeo.

54

00:04:14,000 --> 00:04:16,000

They are 42 and 43 years old.

55

00:04:16,000 --> 00:04:23,000

They have five children, Ronald DeFeo Jr., who is known to his friends and family as Butch.

56

00:04:23,000 --> 00:04:35,000

His younger 18-year-old sister Dawn, followed by Allison, who's 13, and then the two youngest are Mark, 12, and John, 9 at the time.

57

00:04:35,000 --> 00:04:43,000

And they are a typical middle, upwardly mobile suburban family.

58

00:04:43,000 --> 00:04:50,000

For the DeFeo children coming from a small apartment in Brooklyn, moving to this lavish property had to be a dream come true.

59

00:04:50,000 --> 00:04:58,000

But that dream comes to an abrupt end on November 13, 1974.

60

00:04:58,000 --> 00:05:12,000

At 6.30 p.m., the crowd at Henry's Bar, just a few blocks from the DeFeo home, are enjoying their cocktails when suddenly Butch DeFeo, the eldest son, bursts in.

61

00:05:12,000 --> 00:05:20,000

He's very frantic, he's very upset, and he's telling everyone that his mom and dad have been shot and that he needs assistance.

62

00:05:20,000 --> 00:05:31,000

Initially, the patrons don't believe him. They think he's making it up, they think it's kind of a sick joke, but the more Butch goes on about that, the more they believe that he, in fact, is telling the truth.

63

00:05:31,000 --> 00:05:40,000

A couple of his friends, Bobby, John, Joey, and three other men, decide to leave the bar, go to Butch's house, and see what's going on.

64

00:05:40,000 --> 00:05:48,000

When the group gets to Butch's house, there's some discussion about who's going to go in. There's some concern, hey, is there suspect inside? What should they do?

65

00:05:48,000 --> 00:05:55,000

Bobby takes the lead, he's going in, he becomes the alpha dog in this group, and he's going to go in and find out what's going on.

66

00:05:55,000 --> 00:06:07,000

As the rest of the men come inside, the house is eerily quiet. The only sound is the barking of the DeFeo family dog, Shaggy.

67

00:06:07,000 --> 00:06:21,000

As they move up the stairs onto the second floor, they start to smell something. It's a smell that they associate with death. Nothing else in life smells like death.

68

00:06:21,000 --> 00:06:24,000

Once you smell it, you will always recognize it.

69

00:06:24,000 --> 00:06:27,000

Bobby heads straight to the master bedroom.

70

00:06:27,000 --> 00:06:33,000

Bobby goes inside, turns on the light, and this is when he discovers the first two murders.

71

00:06:37,000 --> 00:06:48,000

The father, Big Ronnie, he's laying face down, he's been shot a couple of times. And in the bed is Louise, the mother, she's curled up in a fetal position, and she's been shot a couple of times.

72

00:06:48,000 --> 00:06:56,000

This is more than Bobby can handle, to the point that two of the guys believe that he needs to be taken away from this scene and taken downstairs.

73

00:06:56,000 --> 00:07:03,000

One of the men in the group, John Altieri, he decides to stay on the second floor and investigate further.

74

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

Further down the hall, John Altieri stumbles upon another horrific scene.

75

00:07:09,000 --> 00:07:19,000

When he goes in that bedroom, he discovers Butch's two brothers. John, who's nine years old, he is found dead in bed, soaked with blood.

76

00:07:19,000 --> 00:07:26,000

In the same bedroom is his brother Mark, who's 12 years old. He too has been murdered in his bed.

77

00:07:26,000 --> 00:07:34,000

Altieri sees this, this is too overwhelming for him as well. He leaves the bedroom, he goes back downstairs.

78

00:07:34,000 --> 00:07:41,000

The men have found four victims, but the body count doesn't stop there.

79

00:07:41,000 --> 00:07:51,000

In another room, the two DeFeo daughters, Dawn and Allison, are dead as well.

80

00:07:52,000 --> 00:07:58,000

The police arrive at the scene and they start to interview the group.

81

00:07:58,000 --> 00:08:06,000

What these men find are six people, all family related, all murdered in their own home, in their own bed.

82

00:08:06,000 --> 00:08:11,000

As police begin to process the scene, a prime suspect emerges.

83

00:08:11,000 --> 00:08:20,000

On the outside of the residence, they find a Marlin rifle 35 caliber.

84

00:08:20,000 --> 00:08:26,000

This rifle is kind of unique. One of the rifles that Annie Oakley used to use in her competition.

85

00:08:26,000 --> 00:08:31,000

They learn that Butch is a gun guy, that he's a gun fanatic.

86

00:08:31,000 --> 00:08:38,000

In Butch's room, they find a box of 35 caliber rifle ammunition.

87

00:08:38,000 --> 00:08:43,000

Based on these discoveries, Butch is brought in for interrogation.

88

00:08:43,000 --> 00:08:51,000

He eventually breaks down and admits that he is responsible, saying that once he started, he couldn't stop.

89

00:08:51,000 --> 00:08:54,000

That he killed everyone in cold blood.

90

00:08:58,000 --> 00:09:03,000

Butch's trial begins on October 14th, 1975.

91

00:09:03,000 --> 00:09:11,000

And on his face is a pretty straightforward case. You have a confession, you have the murder weapon, you have lots of pieces of physical evidence.

92

00:09:11,000 --> 00:09:17,000

Butch goes through multiple lawyers before he finally decides on William Weber.

93

00:09:17,000 --> 00:09:21,000

William Weber and Butch decide on an insanity defense.

94

00:09:21,000 --> 00:09:34,000

Butch states that he was hearing voices, that he did these murders based on the voices that he heard, that these voices drove him insane, and that's why he killed his family.

95

00:09:34,000 --> 00:09:38,000

Butch also claims he was possessed.

96

00:09:38,000 --> 00:09:53,000

During the trial that prosecution brought out that Butch is a heavy user of LSD and heroin, LSD and heroin can both cause psychotic symptoms in the user individual during the time that they're in the body.

97

00:09:53,000 --> 00:10:03,000

While someone is under intoxication of LSD, they can have psychotic symptoms, including, but not limited to, feeling that they're possessed.

98

00:10:03,000 --> 00:10:12,000

If someone is possessed, they may not know what they're doing. Much like a hypnotist can get someone out of a crowd and hypnotize them and make them quack and walk like a duck.

99

00:10:12,000 --> 00:10:18,000

And then when they snap out of the hypnosis, they don't remember what they did.

100

00:10:18,000 --> 00:10:24,000

I find the insanity defense a little weak. And I'm not the only one that thought it was a little weak.

101

00:10:24,000 --> 00:10:35,000

The jury rejects the insanity argument. And on December 4th, 1975, Butch DeFeo is sentenced to 25 years to life.

102

00:10:35,000 --> 00:10:43,000

Most people in Amityville and Long Island in general thought that once Butch was put away, that that was the end of the story.

103

00:10:43,000 --> 00:10:51,000

That the house would be wiped of its dark past. And that life would move on. That was only the beginning.

104

00:10:51,000 --> 00:10:59,000

13 months after the murders, and just two weeks after Butch's sentencing, George and Kathleen Lutz buy the property.

105

00:10:59,000 --> 00:11:06,000

George and Kathy Lutz got it for the bargain basement price of \$80,000.

106

00:11:06,000 --> 00:11:19,000

They also purchased a great deal of the furniture, including the beds, the living room furniture,

you name it, because the DeFeo family wanted no part of it.

107

00:11:19,000 --> 00:11:31,000

But unfortunately, new owners don't mark a fresh start for the Amityville house.

108

00:11:31,000 --> 00:11:39,000

One month after they move into their new Amityville home, the Lutz family flees in terror.

109

00:11:39,000 --> 00:11:48,000

The question is, why? Some believe the property's dark past is to blame, but not everyone's convinced.

110

00:11:48,000 --> 00:11:56,000

I don't think it was the murders that scared them away. I think it was something much more devilish.

111

00:11:56,000 --> 00:12:06,000

According to the Lutz family's account, from the moment they arrive at the Amityville house, they face a host of terrifying events.

112

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

As practicing Catholics, the Lutz's bring in a priest, Father Ralph Pecoraro, to bless the home before they move in.

113

00:12:15,000 --> 00:12:28,000

The ritual and blessing is going through every room of the house, sprinkling holy water and reciting prayers of peace throughout the house.

114

00:12:28,000 --> 00:12:35,000

When Father Pecoraro goes inside of the house, everything is calm and peaceful.

115

00:12:35,000 --> 00:12:46,000

But when he enters the room of John and Mark DeFeo, he hears this voice say to him, get out.

116

00:12:46,000 --> 00:12:54,000

Pecoraro leaves the house as commanded, but he doesn't say anything about the ghostly voice he's just heard.

117

00:12:54,000 --> 00:13:05,000

He doesn't tell the Lutz is what he heard because he does not want them to think that he's crazy, but he does tell them to not sleep in that room.

118

00:13:05,000 --> 00:13:11,000

Soon after, the Lutz's begin having their own strange encounters.

119

00:13:11,000 --> 00:13:22,000

George starts this habit of waking up at 3.15 a.m. every morning because he's not able to sleep.

120

00:13:22,000 --> 00:13:32,000

3.15 is important because this is the time which DeFeo did his murders in the house.

121

00:13:32,000 --> 00:13:41,000

The Lutz's didn't even know this. They had to talk to the authorities to piece together a time frame of what took place.

122

00:13:41,000 --> 00:13:48,000

But it may be the Lutz's daughter, Melissa, who experiences the most bizarre terror.

123

00:13:48,000 --> 00:13:57,000

Melissa will missy as she was called at that time. She spends a lot of time in the room, which is typical for any child of that age.

124

00:13:57,000 --> 00:14:09,000

But when asked what she's doing, she's talking to an imaginary friend. This isn't your typical

imaginary friend. It's a red-eyed pig.

125

00:14:09,000 --> 00:14:20,000

It can supposedly change shape. Sometimes even as large as the house. And it currently has a name, Jody.

126

00:14:20,000 --> 00:14:23,000

And their troubles don't end there.

127

00:14:23,000 --> 00:14:33,000

They claim that there is green slime coming down from the ceilings and on the walls, an infestation of flies, which doesn't seem to make any sense.

128

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

They see objects moving and breaking.

129

00:14:40,000 --> 00:14:48,000

The Lutz's tried to contact Father Pecorot to do a second blessing to cleanse the house.

130

00:14:48,000 --> 00:15:02,000

But every time they try to call him, the phone shut off. It says if the house won't let them

contact Father Pecorot.

131

00:15:02,000 --> 00:15:06,000

I don't know how they survived four hours in that house, let alone four weeks.

132

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

Regardless, they never spent another night in their dream home, which is now nothing but a nightmare.

133

00:15:12,000 --> 00:15:22,000

To the Lutz's, one thing is clear. Evil lurks in their new house.

134

00:15:22,000 --> 00:15:31,000

Over the 140 years of parapsychology and psychical research, we have looked at a lot of possible explanations for what are called hauntings.

135

00:15:31,000 --> 00:15:36,000

These are repetitive experiences that people have.

136

00:15:36,000 --> 00:15:41,000

The DeFeo murders are definitely, to my mind, an environmental imprint.

137

00:15:41,000 --> 00:15:53,000

In hauntings like the Lutz family situation, they are picking up on an imprint that is tied to that environment, an event that happened that is completely negative, which is killings of his family.

138

00:15:53,000 --> 00:16:01,000

When the Amityville hauntings make national headlines, it catches the attention of two world-famous paranormal investigators.

139

00:16:01,000 --> 00:16:08,000

The war is our paranormal investigators who've done over 10,000 investigations.

140

00:16:08,000 --> 00:16:11,000

But they aren't ready for what lies ahead.

141

00:16:11,000 --> 00:16:18,000

When we went into the house that day, we didn't realize that it was diabolically infested.

142

00:16:18,000 --> 00:16:23,000

And on a scale of 1 to 10, I would have to say that Amityville was a 10.

143

00:16:27,000 --> 00:16:34,000

In January of 1976, the Lutz family claims their house is haunted.

144

00:16:36,000 --> 00:16:38,000

But can they prove it?

145

00:16:38,000 --> 00:16:46,000

The Lutz's were not nut jobs. They were very ordinary suburban middle-class people.

146

00:16:46,000 --> 00:16:52,000

Back in the mid-70s, you couldn't just go online and look things up.

147

00:16:52,000 --> 00:17:06,000

You actually had to have feet on the street, dig for information, look for people face to face, talk with the Lutz's, talk with the neighbors, and then go into the house and see what was happening.

148

00:17:06,000 --> 00:17:15,000

To help them gather evidence, the Lutz's call on world-renowned paranormal investigators, Ed and Lorraine Warren.

149

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

The war is our paranormal investigators who've done over 10,000 investigations with hauntings, poltergeist, exorcism. This is what they do.

150

00:17:25,000 --> 00:17:29,000

The real-life inspiration for the conjuring film franchise.

151

00:17:29,000 --> 00:17:40,000

This husband and wife team make a name for themselves in the late 1960s, when they investigate a doll supposedly possessed by the spirit of a little girl.

152

00:17:42,000 --> 00:17:44,000

Lorraine was psychic.

153

00:17:45,000 --> 00:17:54,000

She was a light-trans medium. She would go into a trance to try and connect with the other side.

154

00:17:54,000 --> 00:18:04,000

Ed was a self-styled demonologist. He would guide Lorraine through her trances, ask her questions, generally run the investigation.

155

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

In February 1976, Lorraine meets George Lutz at a local pizza parlor.

156

00:18:10,000 --> 00:18:17,000

George gives permission for the Warrens to enter the house, but he refuses to come along.

157

00:18:17,000 --> 00:18:29,000

George Lutz wouldn't even go to that home. He said, there's no way I'm going into the house. And when I asked him at this restaurant where we met him, I said, Mr. Lutz, what happened to you in that house?

158

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

He didn't say anything. He just looked at me. He said, you know.

159

00:18:33,000 --> 00:18:41,000

According to the Warrens, although the property is empty, they can tell they're not alone from the moment they arrive.

160

00:18:42,000 --> 00:18:51,000

Ed Warren is drawn to the cellar. And down here is where he believes that everything started.

161

00:18:52,000 --> 00:18:57,000

This home is haunted. I mean, they left behind everything, everything to eat, everything to drink.

162

00:18:57,000 --> 00:19:07,000

Within seconds, I could feel what I can only describe as being under a waterfall. Pressure, pushing me down to the floor.

163

00:19:07,000 --> 00:19:12,000

Then I could feel hundreds of pinpoints of electricity hitting my body.

164

00:19:12,000 --> 00:19:20,000

Ed leaves the basement to check on Lorraine upstairs. She also describes feeling a powerful, unseen force.

165

00:19:20,000 --> 00:19:29,000

Going up the stairs, I was going against a tremendous pressure. It was the worst feeling.

166

00:19:29,000 --> 00:19:33,000

In over their heads, the two quickly flee.

167

00:19:33,000 --> 00:19:40,000

I knew right at that point what we were dealing with. And I said to myself, I don't think I'll ever come back to this house again.

168

00:19:41,000 --> 00:19:45,000

But despite their misgivings, the Warrens don't give up.

169

00:19:46,000 --> 00:19:52,000

A few days later, they return to the house. But this time, they bring back up and cameras.

170

00:19:52,000 --> 00:20:03,000

There were five people from Channel 5, myself, Marvin Scott and the crew, two other reporters, the Warrens and their team, which was about seven people.

171

00:20:03,000 --> 00:20:13,000

Then there was another team of psychics and investigators. So all in all, I counted 21 people in the house that night.

172

00:20:14,000 --> 00:20:22,000

The Warrens and their team spend hours investigating the house. And it's not long before disturbing things start happening.

173

00:20:22,000 --> 00:20:31,000

It moves. And as it moves, it kind of, it says, I feel personally threatened or anything.

174

00:20:31,000 --> 00:20:40,000

It's whatever is here. Whatever is here.

175

00:20:41,000 --> 00:20:42,000

You're trying to harm them?

176

00:20:42,000 --> 00:20:43,000

Yes.

177

00:20:44,000 --> 00:20:51,000

We had a cameraman, Steve Petropoulos. Steve was in his 40s, about 5'10", a marathon runner.

178

00:20:51,000 --> 00:20:59,000

So in other words, he was in good shape. He starts up the stairs with his light meter to take light readings.

179

00:20:59,000 --> 00:21:04,000

And I'm standing at the bottom of the stairs with the other members of the crew.

180

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

He gets to the middle of the staircase and he turns around and he says to me, hey, there's a room at the left and it's one wall is filled with mirrors.

181

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

So he continues up the stairs. He gets to the top of the landing and he turns around and he looks at me strangely.

182

00:21:25,000 --> 00:21:33,000

And actually he says, I don't know how I knew that. And all of a sudden I can see the blood drain from his face.

183

00:21:33,000 --> 00:21:43,000

He goes ashen and he doubles over and he's clutching his chest and he's gagging. He's trying to get words out, but he can't.

184

00:21:43,000 --> 00:21:48,000

So our sound man and our lighting man run up the stairs to assist him down the stairs.

185

00:21:48,000 --> 00:22:04,000

One of the scientists that had come up from Duke University, he became so terrified in this home and the chair that he was sitting on actually went right backwards with him in it.

186

00:22:04,000 --> 00:22:11,000

They had a real hard time just stabilizing him emotionally in that home.

187

00:22:13,000 --> 00:22:16,000

The Warrens record their entire experience.

188

00:22:16,000 --> 00:22:25,000

That night the Warrens were accompanied by Gene Campbell, their photographer who had what for the time was advanced infrared equipment.

189

00:22:25,000 --> 00:22:36,000

He's hoping to pick up something, white noise, what have you. So he sets up the camera. He points it at that second floor landing, sets it, forgets it.

190

00:22:36,000 --> 00:22:41,000

He takes many photos that night, you know, well over a hundred.

191

00:22:41,000 --> 00:22:47,000

Once the infrared photos are processed, the team uncovers an unusual find.

192

00:22:49,000 --> 00:23:03,000

This image on the one picture peeking out of a doorway looks like it's a young boy. The eyes are sort of bright and glowing.

193

00:23:03,000 --> 00:23:13,000

There are no children present during the investigation. So who or what is the mysterious figure in the photograph?

194

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

It's what has come to be known as the ghost boy photo. And this has been the object of much curiosity and much controversy.

195

00:23:23,000 --> 00:23:32,000

People have said and speculated, oh, it's the youngest boy. Nine year old John DeFeo. It's his ghost.

196

00:23:33,000 --> 00:23:36,000

Ed Warren, however, thinks it's something different.

197

00:23:36,000 --> 00:23:48,000

Well, is that the spirit of the young boy? No, it is not the spirit of the young boy, but is a spirit of a diabolical nature in that room that appears in that home to confuse the investigators.

198

00:23:48,000 --> 00:23:59,000

The mysterious figure in the photo remains unidentified, but the Warrens agree that something is terrorizing the property and they're now armed with proof.

199

00:23:59,000 --> 00:24:09,000

I always consider myself an objective person and not given to flights of imagination or fancy.

200

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

But at the same time, there were many things that happened that night. There were subtle signs of what many paranormal investigators classify as infestation and some not so subtle things.

201

00:24:39,000 --> 00:25:01,000

They're moved to Amityville in 1975 was supposed to mark a fresh start for the blended Lutz family.

202

00:25:01,000 --> 00:25:13,000

Kathy had three children from a previous marriage. There was Daniel, Christopher and Melissa. At the time they lived in this house, Daniel was nine, Christopher seven and Melissa was five years old.

203

00:25:13,000 --> 00:25:23,000

George was actually their stepfather. These were very young, impressionable children, certainly subject to the feelings that were going on from the family.

204

00:25:24,000 --> 00:25:36,000

Elder son Daniel stays silent for decades. Then in 2009, he finally speaks publicly in a series of interviews.

205

00:25:36,000 --> 00:25:49,000

Daniel Lutz reached out to me wanting to tell his story at the beginning. I was very skeptical, but as soon as I saw photographs right away, the likeness to Kathy Lutz was so striking, I knew it was him.

206

00:25:50,000 --> 00:26:00,000

At that time, I began conversations with Daniel Lutz that really changed the paradigm of how I viewed this entire case.

207

00:26:01,000 --> 00:26:07,000

This is not something I enjoy discussing. I don't look forward to the ****.

208

00:26:08,000 --> 00:26:22,000

It's not easy to tell somebody how you got thrown up at staircase. It's not easy to tell somebody that your bed was bouncing off the ceiling. Once I start talking about it, I become stuck with it.

209

00:26:22,000 --> 00:26:36,000

I felt strongly sitting with him, the passion, the anger for living in the shadow of the story. His story had been told by everyone else but him. He felt that his voice had been silenced.

210

00:26:36,000 --> 00:26:42,000

And so it was almost a cathartic process to purge these demons of his past for him to have a say.

211

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

Daniel offers a dramatically different potential reason for the Amityville hauntings.

212

00:26:49,000 --> 00:27:10,000

When you walked into George's house, it wasn't inviting and welcoming. If you read his bookcase, it would range from satanic history, mind control type of books and hypnosis books.

213

00:27:10,000 --> 00:27:19,000

This guy was into some pretty dark stuff and I walked over to my mother and I said, you married this guy, you moved me to his house. What the hell is he into?

214

00:27:21,000 --> 00:27:28,000

Danny claimed that George's interest in the occult instigated the haunting, that it was like a magic trick that you couldn't shut off.

215

00:27:29,000 --> 00:27:40,000

Was an evil spirit invited to Amityville by George Lutz in a spell gone wrong? Daniel believes it was.

216

00:27:40,000 --> 00:27:48,000

Danny claimed that he felt he was possessed and that the only way to get away from it was to leave the family. And so that's what he did.

217

00:27:48,000 --> 00:27:53,000

In a lot of ways, I think Daniel was haunted by George and still is to this day.

218

00:27:54,000 --> 00:28:01,000

At the end of the day, something happened to his family and to him in that house that forever shaped them.

219

00:28:01,000 --> 00:28:13,000

Daniel's story isn't the only first-hand account from the Lutz family. 30 years earlier, his parents offer a very different and very public version of what happened in Amityville.

220

00:28:13,000 --> 00:28:20,000

After the Lutz's move out, they're telling people about the situation and they're not actually just trying to tell people to get help.

221

00:28:20,000 --> 00:28:27,000

They are actually telling people to try to sell the story somehow, to make some money, to make the money back that they paid for their house.

222

00:28:29,000 --> 00:28:37,000

So the Lutz's paid out \$80,000 with a large down payment for this particular house. George needed to recoup that loss.

223

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

You know, if it were me paying all that money, I'd be really concerned about how to provide for my family.

224

00:28:42,000 --> 00:28:46,000

And one way to do that would have been to try to sell the story somehow.

225

00:28:46,000 --> 00:28:50,000

At the time, the media was very interested in these kinds of stories.

226

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

They had covered the exorcist and looked for other types of cases like that.

227

00:28:55,000 --> 00:28:58,000

And so George may have seen an opportunity.

228

00:28:58,000 --> 00:29:05,000

So the Lutz is hire an attorney who turns out to be William Weber, who was the defense attorney for Butch to Fail.

229

00:29:07,000 --> 00:29:13,000

Weber agrees to help sell the family's story if they split the profits 50-50.

230

00:29:13,000 --> 00:29:19,000

George declines Weber's deal, but Weber goes out and sells the story anyway.

231

00:29:19,000 --> 00:29:26,000

So William Weber sells two articles to publications about the situation that George had described and that they had worked up in their conversation.

232

00:29:26,000 --> 00:29:30,000

George is enraged about this because it was done without his permission.

233

00:29:30,000 --> 00:29:34,000

At that point, George is so upset that he walks away from Weber.

234

00:29:34,000 --> 00:29:38,000

As a consequence, Weber files a lawsuit against the Lutz's.

235

00:29:38,000 --> 00:29:42,000

They eventually settle out of court, but the damage between the two of them is irreparable.

236

00:29:42,000 --> 00:29:50,000

The Lutz's ultimately move forward on a book deal with author Jay Anson, who agrees to a more reasonable partnership.

237

00:29:50,000 --> 00:29:55,000

In response, Weber makes a bold accusation.

238

00:29:56,000 --> 00:30:01,000

The Amityville hauntings are a hoax.

239

00:30:01,000 --> 00:30:12,000

Once the story got very popular and the book sales were high, William Weber started going out to the media and actually disputing the facts of the case as reported in the book.

240

00:30:12,000 --> 00:30:19,000

Weber was totally willing to say that everything was 100% true until it turned out that he couldn't cash in.

241

00:30:20,000 --> 00:30:25,000

To counter his claims, the Lutz's agree to a polygraph test.

242

00:30:25,000 --> 00:30:28,000

They pass.

243

00:30:28,000 --> 00:30:40,000

George, unless he was the Oracle of Delphi himself, had no way of predicting that even if he was hatching this grand master scheme, that it would come to fruition.

244

00:30:40,000 --> 00:30:47,000

Are you really going to bet your entire life savings on a ghost story?

245

00:30:47,000 --> 00:30:51,000

Well, some people might. I never bought into that.

246

00:30:51,000 --> 00:31:05,000

Whether it's a haunting, a summoning, an elaborate hoax, or the chilling aftermath of a family homicide, for the next several years, the Amityville case continues to puzzle the public.

247

00:31:06,000 --> 00:31:18,000

While many questions surround New York's infamous Amityville House of Horrors, at least one has long been assumed to be solved.

248

00:31:18,000 --> 00:31:23,000

Who committed the brutal murders that started it all?

249

00:31:23,000 --> 00:31:36,000

After a confession, a conviction, and a sentence of 25 years to life, it seems certain that Butch DeFeo single-handedly killed his family in 1974.

250

00:31:36,000 --> 00:31:45,000

But in 2000, Butch DeFeo makes an astonishing claim. He didn't act alone.

251

00:31:45,000 --> 00:31:52,000

Butch writes a letter from prison on May 1, 2000, with a shocking revelation.

252

00:31:52,000 --> 00:31:59,000

Butch mentions that he didn't kill his family by himself. He had help, and it wasn't even his idea.

253

00:31:59,000 --> 00:32:07,000

So this is interesting. If there's another killer out there, is that who was tormenting the Lutz's? Maybe it wasn't a haunting after all.

254

00:32:10,000 --> 00:32:18,000

At the time of the murders, Butch is 23, Dawn is 18, they're in the family basement with a few friends, drinking and smoking.

255

00:32:18,000 --> 00:32:21,000

This is an escape from their family, especially their father.

256

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

Their father, Big Ronnie, apparently lived up to his intimidating name.

257

00:32:27,000 --> 00:32:31,000

This family was not a happy one.

258

00:32:31,000 --> 00:32:41,000

For many years, Ronald Sr. in particular had inflicted domestic violence against Ronald Jr., Louise, the other children.

259

00:32:41,000 --> 00:32:47,000

There's been stories about how he had walked over and punched Louise in the face that she fell down.

260

00:32:48,000 --> 00:32:52,000

And that he had just gone back to dinner and said, we can eat in peace now.

261

00:32:52,000 --> 00:33:00,000

This type of occurrence encapsulates what life must have been like in that house for these children.

262

00:33:01,000 --> 00:33:08,000

But despite Butch's struggles with his father, he claims it's his sister Dawn that harbors the deepest resentment.

263

00:33:08,000 --> 00:33:17,000

She is 18 years old. She has a boyfriend that lives in Florida who happens to be 33 years old, a great age difference.

264

00:33:17,000 --> 00:33:23,000

Big Ronnie is very disapproving of this relationship. He belittles her, he berates her.

265

00:33:23,000 --> 00:33:29,000

Per Butch, Dawn comes up with a plan and the plan is to murder their parents.

266

00:33:30,000 --> 00:33:38,000

Dawn states that other siblings can be taken to grandmother's house in Brooklyn and they can live there.

267

00:33:38,000 --> 00:33:46,000

Mom and dad will be out of the way, kids will be taken care of, and everybody will live happily ever after if mom and dad are murdered.

268

00:33:46,000 --> 00:33:52,000

Apparently it wasn't hard for Dawn to convince Butch because the plans were set in motion pretty quickly.

269

00:33:52,000 --> 00:33:56,000

Butch says he recruits two friends to help.

270

00:33:57,000 --> 00:34:02,000

About one o'clock in the morning they sneak out of the basement and go into the interior of the house.

271

00:34:02,000 --> 00:34:06,000

They then go upstairs to the parents' bedroom.

272

00:34:06,000 --> 00:34:13,000

Butch is arming himself with the 35 caliber Marlin rifle. He makes no bones about that, that he has the rifle.

273

00:34:13,000 --> 00:34:21,000

Lit only by a night light in the second floor bathroom, the siblings open their parents' bedroom door and the massacre begins.

274

00:34:21,000 --> 00:34:31,000

Butch goes into the bedroom, fires the rifle twice into his father, and then fires the rifle twice into his mother, killing them both.

275

00:34:31,000 --> 00:34:40,000

Butch then says he and his two friends flee the Amityville house, leaving Dawn and their three other siblings inside alone.

276

00:34:40,000 --> 00:34:47,000

Butch relates that the plan was merely to kill the parents. It wasn't to kill the brothers and sisters.

277

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

He says Dawn, however, goes rogue.

278

00:34:51,000 --> 00:34:55,000

Butch returns inside the house.

279

00:34:55,000 --> 00:35:03,000

Dawn has done something horrible, butch says that she took it upon herself to murder the other brothers and sisters.

280

00:35:03,000 --> 00:35:09,000

Dawn believes that these children were a liability, certainly not an asset.

281

00:35:09,000 --> 00:35:14,000

This infuriates Butch. He explodes. This is more than he bargained for.

282

00:35:14,000 --> 00:35:18,000

He didn't want his siblings killed, he only wanted the parents killed.

283

00:35:18,000 --> 00:35:23,000

They get into a violent argument, and that argument turns into a struggle.

284

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

They struggle, he knocks her out, and then shoots her in the back of the head.

285

00:35:29,000 --> 00:35:37,000

Now whether Dawn was involved in these murders or not really has no influence about what the Lutz family went through.

286

00:35:37,000 --> 00:35:44,000

The bottom line, six people got murdered there. Whether Butch was the primary shooter or Dawn was the shooter really makes no difference.

287

00:35:44,000 --> 00:35:52,000

But what about the two other friends he claims were there that night? Were they involved in the

massacre?

288

00:35:52,000 --> 00:36:08,000

Butch DeFeo's jailhouse confession of an accomplice to his family's murder throws a twist into the case of the Amityville horror.

289

00:36:08,000 --> 00:36:13,000

For 25 years people believe Butch was the lone gunman in these multiple murders.

290

00:36:13,000 --> 00:36:20,000

In 2000, Butch reveals his sister Dawn was the mastermind behind the murders.

291

00:36:20,000 --> 00:36:28,000

We know that Butch kills Dawn, so we know that it's not her that's coming back and tormenting the Lutz's.

292

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

However, according to Butch's written affidavit, there may be yet another unknown killer.

293

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

Butch mentions two friends that he brought along as lookouts, but as soon as there's gunfire, they

panic, they leave, and he never mentioned them committing any violence.

294

00:36:45,000 --> 00:36:48,000

Butch mentions something curious in a letter.

295

00:36:48,000 --> 00:36:56,000

Quote, it was cold blooded murder, period, no ghosts, no demons, just three people of which I was one.

296

00:36:56,000 --> 00:37:07,000

So he says there's three people. We know there's two, Butch and Dawn, but who is this mysterious third person?

297

00:37:07,000 --> 00:37:19,000

Butch never names this third person, nobody follows up, they chalk it up to the ramblings of someone who's been in prison 20 years, maybe looking for a reduced sentence, or somebody's just looking for attention.

298

00:37:19,000 --> 00:37:29,000

Ronnie was running through every possible scenario he could in his mind to deflect away from the fact that he had committed these murders.

299

00:37:29,000 --> 00:37:39,000

Butch dies in March of 2021, taking any further details of a possible third killer to his grave.

300

00:37:39,000 --> 00:37:45,000

But some are convinced that this is the key to the Amityville hauntings.

301

00:37:45,000 --> 00:37:51,000

Beside Butch's letter, there are a couple of other things that indicate that there is another accomplice on the Lutz.

302

00:37:51,000 --> 00:37:54,000

The first thing happens at the time of the trial.

303

00:37:54,000 --> 00:38:03,000

Louis DeFeo's father hires a private investigator to look into the idea of there being more than one killer.

304

00:38:03,000 --> 00:38:09,000

The house is very big, it's three stories. The people that were murdered were spread out throughout the house.

305

00:38:09,000 --> 00:38:16,000

And so for someone to move around deliberately firing a rifle, which is very loud, could seem very puzzling to people.

306

00:38:16,000 --> 00:38:20,000

Why didn't somebody get up? Why didn't they get out of bed? Why didn't they flee? Why didn't they hide?

307

00:38:20,000 --> 00:38:29,000

I can understand how some people have difficulty believing that this was a single suspect killing all these folks.

308

00:38:29,000 --> 00:38:36,000

The private investigator also presents evidence that two guns may have been used in the murders.

309

00:38:36,000 --> 00:38:40,000

During the investigation, there is physical evidence called powder burns.

310

00:38:40,000 --> 00:38:48,000

And on Don's body, there were powder burns that some experts believed did not match what the murder weapon would be.

311

00:38:48,000 --> 00:38:57,000

And that there were some theories that there could very well be a second murder weapon based on the powder burn evidence on Don's person.

312

00:38:57,000 --> 00:39:03,000

But at the scene, detectives only find Butch's 35 caliber Marlin.

313

00:39:03,000 --> 00:39:13,000

That is until 2011, when a Long Island dive team goes searching in a canal near the Amityville house.

314

00:39:13,000 --> 00:39:17,000

The divers are following up on a documentary and the multiple killers theory.

315

00:39:17,000 --> 00:39:25,000

They fish out an old revolver in the canal behind the house that could easily have been dumped by somebody fleeing the murder scene.

316

00:39:25,000 --> 00:39:31,000

Police try to collect evidence from the handgun, but time and the elements have erased it.

317

00:39:31,000 --> 00:39:38,000

The answer to who or what lies behind the Amityville horrors remains just out of reach.

318

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

I think it's possible that Butch and Don had help, especially since no one else was arrested in the case.

319

00:39:43,000 --> 00:39:51,000

And if that's true, is that other person still out there? Is that who is tormenting the Lutzis? Will they be back for another haunting?

320

00:39:56,000 --> 00:40:04,000

Supernatural or not, one thing is certain. The Amityville house has experienced incredible tragedy.

321

00:40:05,000 --> 00:40:08,000

And while this story has captivated more than three generations,

322

00:40:08,000 --> 00:40:15,000

none of the four families who own the house after the Lutzis have reported any paranormal activity.

323

00:40:15,000 --> 00:40:16,000

Yet.

324

00:40:17,000 --> 00:40:23,000

I'm Lawrence Fishburne. Thank you for watching History's Greatest Mysteries.