

1

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

An historic jail steeped in infamy and horror.

2

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

Police were shocked and horrified.

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

A mighty railroad station with a sinister secret.

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

The place is a virtual temple of a cult imagery.

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

And a cryptic castle built by a Wild West swindler.

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

The entire thing, it's all a hoax.

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

Sometimes the greatest secrets lie in plain sight.

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

These are monumental mysteries.

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

Every day over one and a half million commuters enter the island of Manhattan.

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

And more than 700,000 of them pass through one of the city's best-loved and most majestic monuments.

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00:00:59,000 --> 00:01:06,000

The grand archways, vast domed ceilings and great horizontal spaces.

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00:01:06,000 --> 00:01:14,000

This is Grand Central Terminal, crowning splendor of the Beaux Arts architectural movement.

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00:01:14,000 --> 00:01:21,000

But as author Mitch Horowitz knows, hidden in its structure lies an extraordinary secret.

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00:01:21,000 --> 00:01:27,000

The Grand Central Station tells a more mysterious story than what first appears.

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00:01:27,000 --> 00:01:35,000

What sinister symbolism lies hidden within the walls of Grand Central?

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00:01:35,000 --> 00:01:38,000

New York City, 1913.

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00:01:38,000 --> 00:01:44,000

It's an era of unstoppable industrial progress in the burgeoning metropolis.

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00:01:44,000 --> 00:01:49,000

Commerce was bounding, electricity was starting to power buildings and street lights.

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00:01:49,000 --> 00:01:55,000

People were circulating into the city from all over the world and New York City lacked one thing.

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00:01:55,000 --> 00:02:00,000

And that was a grand railroad station, a great gateway to the world.

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

Enter one of the richest tycoons in the country, Cornelius Vanderbilt.

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

He sets about funding and constructing what will become Grand Central Terminal.

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00:02:11,000 --> 00:02:18,000

When the station opened in early 1913, people walked in and they were absolutely astounded.

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00:02:18,000 --> 00:02:23,000

And what really grabs their attention is the colossal astrological mural,

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00:02:23,000 --> 00:02:29,000

which spans the 40,000 square foot ceiling and features 2,500 stars.

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00:02:29,000 --> 00:02:33,000

They had never seen a zodiac mural that looked anything like this.

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00:02:33,000 --> 00:02:38,000

And the administrators of Grand Central proudly boasted that the arrangement of the constellations

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00:02:38,000 --> 00:02:43,000

was so accurate that it could be used to teach school children about the stars.

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00:02:43,000 --> 00:02:49,000

But one morning, soon after the terminal's grand opening, a surprising discovery is made.

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00:02:49,000 --> 00:02:56,000

A commuter who was also an amateur astronomer noticed that the stars on the ceiling were backwards.

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00:02:56,000 --> 00:03:02,000

The stars were represented in their mirror reversal.

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00:03:02,000 --> 00:03:08,000

And the reversed zodiac isn't the only oddity hidden in the building's design.

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

With the statues of Minerva and Hercules and in symbols of Mercury, Mercury's wand, the Caduceus,

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00:03:16,000 --> 00:03:21,000

the place is a virtual temple of a cult and mystical imagery.

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00:03:21,000 --> 00:03:27,000

And a crown at all, a further peculiarity to Grand Central's mural is observed.

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00:03:27,000 --> 00:03:35,000

Not only is the zodiac's design backwards, it also depicts a controversial astrological occurrence.

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00:03:35,000 --> 00:03:42,000

When you look up at that mural, you're actually seeing a transition from one spiritual age, the age of Christianity,

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00:03:42,000 --> 00:03:47,000

to another spiritual age, the new age, or the age of Aquarius.

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00:03:47,000 --> 00:03:54,000

At the turn of the century, many believed the age of Aquarius was expected to usher in a new world government,

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00:03:54,000 --> 00:04:00,000

run by a sinister covert group of the most powerful men in the world, the Illuminati,

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

of which Cornelius Vanderbilt is conjectured to be a leading member.

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00:04:05,000 --> 00:04:15,000

If this theory is true, then could the Grand Central Zodiac hold a hidden declaration of the Illuminati's bid for world domination?

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00:04:19,000 --> 00:04:24,000

The renowned tycoon was certainly no stranger to the supernatural.

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

Cornelius Vanderbilt was a committed follower of spiritualism.

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00:04:29,000 --> 00:04:32,000

He had a deep interest in the occult.

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00:04:33,000 --> 00:04:40,000

One of Vanderbilt's more outlandish habits was to commune with and seek advice from the spirit world.

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00:04:40,000 --> 00:04:49,000

He would write down questions and steal them in envelopes and give them to a spirit medium who would hold them up and foresee an answer.

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00:04:50,000 --> 00:04:56,000

And his spiritualism permeated everything he did, including his business decisions.

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00:04:56,000 --> 00:05:03,000

He was asked in 1870 by a newspaper reporter in New York City how people could follow his footsteps to fame and wealth,

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

and he said, do as I do, consult the spirits.

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

But some historians believe there is another explanation for the presence of so many occult figures and symbols on the walls of Grand Central Terminal.

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00:05:17,000 --> 00:05:26,000

In the early 1900s, American architects and designers saw themselves at the vanguard of a new industrial and technological era,

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00:05:26,000 --> 00:05:29,000

much like the Greeks and Romans thousands of years ago.

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00:05:30,000 --> 00:05:35,000

And to echo this, they incorporated numerous classical icons into their work.

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00:05:37,000 --> 00:05:43,000

As for the constellations appearing in reverse, it seems the designer of the mural, Paul Heliou,

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00:05:43,000 --> 00:05:52,000

may have been inspired by a medieval illustration of the firmament in which the stars are depicted from above, from the point of view of heaven.

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00:05:53,000 --> 00:06:00,000

Paul Heliou may very well have been trying to give the viewer the experience of viewing the stars from the heavens,

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

as if you were the God Mercury looking down from above.

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00:06:05,000 --> 00:06:09,000

Whether Vanderbilt was a follower of wider cultural trends,

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00:06:09,000 --> 00:06:14,000

or whether he really intended to embed in the ceiling of this great train terminal,

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00:06:14,000 --> 00:06:18,000

a secret message from the Illuminati may never be known.

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00:06:20,000 --> 00:06:24,000

But today, the throngs of commuters who pass through Grand Central

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00:06:24,000 --> 00:06:30,000

can gaze upon the portentous symbolism embodied in this masterpiece of architecture

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00:06:30,000 --> 00:06:37,000

and reflect on its creator, a man who communed with spirits and created a temple to the modern age.

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00:06:43,000 --> 00:06:52,000

In the heart of the Hawaiian archipelago on the lush island of Oahu, lies the spectacular seaside capital city of Honolulu.

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00:06:53,000 --> 00:06:57,000

The area is surrounded by more than a hundred world-renowned beaches,

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00:06:58,000 --> 00:07:04,000

but those lining the two-mile stretch of Waikiki along the South Shore are among its most popular.

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

Waikiki is known for a beautiful climate. It's where millions of people come every year for vacation.

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00:07:11,000 --> 00:07:17,000

And it's also known as a hub of Hawaii's signature sport, surfing.

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00:07:20,000 --> 00:07:23,000

But as historian De Soto Brown points out,

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00:07:24,000 --> 00:07:30,000

one looming figure along Waikiki's main strip reminds visitors that it wasn't always this way.

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00:07:31,000 --> 00:07:36,000

It is a man with arms outstretched. The man is nine feet tall, he's wearing swimming attire,

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00:07:36,000 --> 00:07:39,000

and behind him is a 12-foot tall surfboard.

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00:07:39,000 --> 00:07:45,000

This statue is the most famous Hawaiian man who ever lived, the father of surfing.

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00:07:46,000 --> 00:07:48,000

Who is this legendary athlete?

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00:07:48,000 --> 00:07:54,000

And how did his heroic actions invent a new use for the surfboard that is still with us today?

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00:07:57,000 --> 00:07:59,000

The 1920s, Hawaii.

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

Hawaiian native Duke Kahanamoku is riding high on a wave of fame and athletic achievement.

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

Duke Kahanamoku had won multiple swimming medals at the 1912 Olympics and was an extremely accomplished man.

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00:08:15,000 --> 00:08:19,000

But the islander's favorite aquatic passion is surfing.

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00:08:20,000 --> 00:08:25,000

And over the years, he proves to be as adept on a surfboard as he is in the pool.

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00:08:25,000 --> 00:08:32,000

One of Duke Kahanamoku's surfing achievements was riding a wave for approximately one mile off the shore of Waikiki,

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00:08:32,000 --> 00:08:35,000

and at that time, that was a big accomplishment.

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00:08:35,000 --> 00:08:43,000

And Duke's feats are all the more impressive, considering that the sport had long fallen out of favor on the Hawaiian islands.

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00:08:43,000 --> 00:08:50,000

The sport of surfing reached its peak before the 1700s, and after Westerners began to come here,

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00:08:50,000 --> 00:08:52,000

the sport began to die out.

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00:08:52,000 --> 00:08:56,000

Missionaries didn't approve of sports in general just for recreation.

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00:08:56,000 --> 00:09:01,000

So as a result, by about 1900, very few people were surfing anymore.

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00:09:03,000 --> 00:09:06,000

But all of that is about to change.

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00:09:06,000 --> 00:09:12,000

Once the charismatic Olympian begins traveling the world holding surfing exhibitions,

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00:09:14,000 --> 00:09:21,000

he shocks and thrills international audiences and ignites a trend that catches on like wildfire.

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00:09:21,000 --> 00:09:26,000

Duke introduced or helped popularize surfing in the places that he traveled to.

93

00:09:26,000 --> 00:09:28,000

He helped revive the sport of surfing.

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00:09:29,000 --> 00:09:37,000

And when Duke conducts demonstrations in California, the fad takes America by storm.

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00:09:37,000 --> 00:09:43,000

Duke Kahanamoku was very well known for introducing surfing on the west coast of the United States.

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00:09:43,000 --> 00:09:52,000

Then in 1923, the famous athlete moves to Los Angeles, lured by Hollywood producers and the California lifestyle.

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00:09:52,000 --> 00:09:59,000

Duke was hobnobbing with the stars. He signed a contract to be in the movies for Paramount Pictures.

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00:09:59,000 --> 00:10:04,000

It seems there's nothing that the hands of Hawaiian can't do.

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00:10:05,000 --> 00:10:14,000

But little does Duke know that in the summer of 1925, his surfing skills would be put to the ultimate test.

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00:10:19,000 --> 00:10:28,000

It's 1925. Hawaiian Islander Duke Kahanamoku has spent the last decade traveling the world promoting the lost art of surfing.

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00:10:28,000 --> 00:10:35,000

Now he's moved to Hollywood, where fueled by his celebrity, the sport is taking California by storm.

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00:10:35,000 --> 00:10:40,000

But the Duke's love of wave riding is about to be put to a treacherous test.

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00:10:42,000 --> 00:10:49,000

June 14th, California. Duke Kahanamoku is on Corona Del Mar Beach.

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00:10:50,000 --> 00:10:58,000

When he hears cries for help, it seems a massive wave has capsized a luxury fishing yacht,

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00:10:58,000 --> 00:11:04,000

throwing all 29 passengers into the treacherous waters over 100 yards from shore.

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

Without hesitation, Duke grabs his surfboard and rushes into the perilous ocean.

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00:11:13,000 --> 00:11:17,000

Duke as an experienced surfer knows how to get through waves.

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00:11:18,000 --> 00:11:23,000

And when he reaches the victims, he anchors them to his hefty surfboard.

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00:11:23,000 --> 00:11:34,000

This is a 140 pound solid wood surfboard. It's a very large, stable device that you can use to help people get aboard and get through the ocean.

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00:11:35,000 --> 00:11:39,000

Duke is able to paddle the victims safely back to shore.

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00:11:40,000 --> 00:11:48,000

And 12 passengers are ultimately saved from a watery death.

112

00:11:52,000 --> 00:12:00,000

And when word gets out about the stunning rescue, Duke Kahanamoku becomes more than a champion or a celebrity.

113

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

He becomes a hero.

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

People thought it was the most wonderful thing they'd ever seen.

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

The chief of police said, quote, Duke's performance was the most superhuman rescue act that I have ever seen in the world.

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00:12:17,000 --> 00:12:26,000

Duke's ingenious use of a surfboard in the valiant rescue garners national attention, and it soon becomes a standard tool for lifeguards everywhere.

117

00:12:27,000 --> 00:12:34,000

In the years that follow his herculean act of valor, Duke Kahanamoku continues on an extraordinary path,

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00:12:34,000 --> 00:12:41,000

winning another Olympic medal and even becoming the honorary sheriff of his hometown, Honolulu.

119

00:12:42,000 --> 00:12:51,000

I think Duke Kahanamoku in many people's eyes was kind of the personification of the Hawaiian Islands and someone who you could love.

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00:12:53,000 --> 00:13:02,000

In 1990, on the centenary of his birth, the city of Honolulu erects this statue in honor of one of its most beloved citizens.

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00:13:02,000 --> 00:13:08,000

Today, the open arms of Duke Kahanamoku still greet visitors to this Hawaiian island,

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00:13:09,000 --> 00:13:15,000

reminding everyone of the father of surfing who introduced the sport to a whole new generation.

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00:13:18,000 --> 00:13:25,000

Charleston, South Carolina is the cultural capital of the South and filled with antebellum charm.

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00:13:26,000 --> 00:13:35,000

But amid the colonial mansions that line the genteel streets is a stone, castle-like structure that is steeped in infamy and horror.

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00:13:37,000 --> 00:13:42,000

The building's ornate Romanesque features belie its dark and grim interior.

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00:13:43,000 --> 00:13:52,000

The inside tells a different story. There's a lot of iron bars, the conditions were horrific, it

was overcrowded, and many never left here alive.

127

00:13:53,000 --> 00:14:01,000

This is the Old Charleston Jail, a 19th century fortress constructed to house the city's most dangerous offenders.

128

00:14:03,000 --> 00:14:11,000

But it's the story of one unlikely female inmate that grips the imagination of tour guide John Laverne, more than any other.

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

It's a tale of bloodshed, disbelief, and haunting.

130

00:14:16,000 --> 00:14:22,000

It's the story of one woman's downfall who lived in this building and she's never left.

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00:14:25,000 --> 00:14:31,000

So who is the unquiet ghost that still wanders the halls of this infamous jail?

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00:14:34,000 --> 00:14:37,000

February 1819, Charleston, South Carolina.

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00:14:38,000 --> 00:14:42,000

The state's wealthiest city is bustling with traveling merchants.

134

00:14:43,000 --> 00:14:50,000

Among them is a fur trader named John Peoples, who is stopped at a roadside boarding house called the Six Mile Inn.

135

00:14:51,000 --> 00:14:58,000

I've been over 100 ships a day coming into this town and the Six Mile Inn catered typically to merchants that were coming in and out of the city.

136

00:14:59,000 --> 00:15:07,000

According to legend, Peoples is greeted by the hotel's stunning owner, a 27-year-old woman named LaVenía Fisher.

137

00:15:08,000 --> 00:15:12,000

Not only was she beautiful, she had a way with people that made him feel very comfortable.

138

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

LaVenía invites the weary traveler inside to join her and her husband John for a drink.

139

00:15:20,000 --> 00:15:27,000

But as the three chat, Peoples begins to notice that something about their hospitality seems a little off.

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00:15:28,000 --> 00:15:35,000

John Fisher kept asking him a lot of questions about his travels, who he was with and who was expecting them at home.

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00:15:36,000 --> 00:15:44,000

LaVenia's behavior also strikes Peoples as odd. She's unusually insistent that he should sample a cup of her tea.

142

00:15:45,000 --> 00:15:55,000

John really wasn't a tea drinker, but his host was so gracious and she was so pretty, so he takes the cup of tea and while nobody was watching, he was able to pour the tea out.

143

00:15:56,000 --> 00:16:06,000

Still feeling that something isn't quite right, Peoples heads to his room, but instead of sleeping on his bed, he keeps a watchful eye on the door.

144

00:16:07,000 --> 00:16:12,000

He sits in a chair and he aims it towards the door just in case something bizarre should happen.

145

00:16:13,000 --> 00:16:17,000

In spite of his efforts to stay awake, Peoples soon dozes off.

146

00:16:18,000 --> 00:16:24,000

But as the story goes, in the middle of the night he is startled wide awake by a loud slamming noise.

147

00:16:25,000 --> 00:16:34,000

Lo and behold, in front of him he sees that the bed had somehow disappeared into the floor and some kind of trap door apparatus.

148

00:16:35,000 --> 00:16:40,000

The terrified merchant immediately flees the inn and heads straight to the police.

149

00:16:40,000 --> 00:16:50,000

He tells this crazy story, this bed vanished right in front of me and they had this trap door and these people are really weird and the constables think, is there any validity to this?

150

00:16:51,000 --> 00:16:58,000

Upon hearing his bizarre tale, authorities quickly set out for the hotel to investigate his claims.

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00:16:59,000 --> 00:17:04,000

So what dark secrets are lurking in the depths of the six mile inn?

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00:17:05,000 --> 00:17:16,000

1819, police investigating an attempted abduction are called to the six mile inn on the outskirts of Charleston, South Carolina.

153

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

So what horrors awake them inside this lone roadside hotel?

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00:17:22,000 --> 00:17:26,000

Police descend on the fissures property and begin to search the place.

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00:17:27,000 --> 00:17:34,000

The constables had the gut feeling they knew that something was weird in there and they leave no stone unturned.

156

00:17:35,000 --> 00:17:41,000

And according to the story, officials soon find disturbing signs of what they fear must be foul

play.

157

00:17:43,000 --> 00:17:50,000

They uncover a series of trap doors and beds that disappear and underground tunnels.

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00:17:51,000 --> 00:17:57,000

Then they make another troubling discovery. Levinia's cupboard is stocked with oleander tea.

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00:17:58,000 --> 00:18:03,000

The tea is a powerful sedative which in large doses can lead to death.

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00:18:04,000 --> 00:18:13,000

But the worst is yet to come. Upon excavating the dirt floor in the basement, investigators unearth a gruesome sight.

161

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

Police were shocked and horrified. They found numerous bodies underneath the house.

162

00:18:22,000 --> 00:18:27,000

Police believe there may be 30 victims in the cache of remains.

163

00:18:28,000 --> 00:18:34,000

And that the entire hotel was rigged for the fissures devilish plot to kill and rob the traders.

164

00:18:36,000 --> 00:18:40,000

This was all orchestrated perfectly.

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00:18:40,000 --> 00:18:45,000

What the fissures were doing, they were selling the goods and the merchants were travelers.

166

00:18:46,000 --> 00:18:50,000

They may go months, even years without anybody knowing that anything ever happened to them.

167

00:18:51,000 --> 00:18:59,000

The fissures are immediately arrested, charged with assault with intent to murder and sent to a wait trial at the notorious Charleston City Jail.

168

00:19:01,000 --> 00:19:03,000

I was rat infested, disease-ridden.

169

00:19:03,000 --> 00:19:07,000

John and Levinia Fisher had to be scared out of their minds.

170

00:19:08,000 --> 00:19:14,000

And Levinia is the only female inmate and she's in a jail full of the worst criminals of the 19th century.

171

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

These are murderers and pirates and thieves.

172

00:19:21,000 --> 00:19:28,000

In January 1820, Levinia's request was granted to wear her bridal gown to the trial.

173

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

Kind of a, I don't know, a last-ditch effort, she decided to wear a wedding dress, a way of showing them how innocent and pure that she was.

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00:19:40,000 --> 00:19:45,000

But the ploy fails and both are found guilty and sentenced to be hanged.

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

And this gives Levinia the very special distinction of being America's first female serial killer.

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00:19:52,000 --> 00:19:56,000

As the story goes, John Fisher is executed first.

177

00:19:57,000 --> 00:20:01,000

And when it's Levinia's turn, she calmly marches forward to meet her end.

178

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

Here she is in this beautiful, long wedding dress and she walks up the steps of the gallows.

179

00:20:09,000 --> 00:20:15,000

And right before she is hanged, it's said that the notorious femme fatale shouts out her infamous last words.

180

00:20:16,000 --> 00:20:21,000

She yells out into the crowd, if any of y'all have a message, she's going to be the last one to go.

181

00:20:22,000 --> 00:20:26,000

If you have a message for the devil, give it to me and I'll deliver it to him personally.

182

00:20:27,000 --> 00:20:30,000

At that point, when she jumps off the stool, the road catches her neck.

183

00:20:31,000 --> 00:20:33,000

And she dies.

184

00:20:35,000 --> 00:20:39,000

And it's here at the jail where Levinia spent her final days.

185

00:20:40,000 --> 00:20:45,000

That many have reported seeing an angry spirit stalking these cells.

186

00:20:46,000 --> 00:20:51,000

They would swear up and down, they would see a figure of a lady in a dress floating through the walls.

187

00:20:53,000 --> 00:21:00,000

Could this be the unquiet ghost of Levinia Fisher, forever tormented by the wicked deeds she committed in her lifetime.

188

00:21:01,000 --> 00:21:04,000

And condemned to walk the halls of this dilapidated prison.

189

00:21:07,000 --> 00:21:17,000

Today, the old Charleston jail, now a national historic landmark, continues to be a haunting reminder of this charming city's darker past.

190

00:21:22,000 --> 00:21:24,000

Chicago, Illinois.

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00:21:25,000 --> 00:21:31,000

Just west of the towering skyline of this Midwestern metropolis is the century old Woodlawn Cemetery.

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00:21:35,000 --> 00:21:43,000

And as circus historian Pete Shrake points out, in the midst of the weathered headstones here is a tranquil corner known as Showman's Rest.

193

00:21:44,000 --> 00:21:47,000

That is marked by a distinctive granite monument.

194

00:21:48,000 --> 00:21:50,000

It's a rather cheerful looking elephant.

195

00:21:51,000 --> 00:21:53,000

Right foot is playfully resting on a circus ball.

196

00:21:54,000 --> 00:22:02,000

But the actual story associated with this site is one of tragedy, of negligence, and of sheer carnage.

197

00:22:03,000 --> 00:22:07,000

So what heart-rending accident is memorialized here?

198

00:22:08,000 --> 00:22:09,000

And could it have been avoided?

199

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

June 22nd, 1918.

200

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

Darkness settles on a 26-car train winding its way west along the shore of Lake Michigan en route to Hammond, Indiana.

201

00:22:24,000 --> 00:22:36,000

Midway through its summer touring season, the Hagenbeck Wallace Circus is barnstorming the country with a colorful array of aerialists, trick riders, clowns, and dancing girls.

202

00:22:36,000 --> 00:22:46,000

Circus work by its nature is particularly exhausting. You unload the train, set up the tents, have a show, repack up, and are traveling onto the next show within a day.

203

00:22:47,000 --> 00:22:56,000

On board the train on this night are some 400 weary circus workers and family members. Scores of exotic animals travel separately.

204

00:22:57,000 --> 00:23:02,000

A result of cutting costs, the train is an outdated piece of equipment.

205

00:23:03,000 --> 00:23:09,000

So it's no surprise when at 4 a.m., the engine grinds to a halt with a mechanical problem.

206

00:23:13,000 --> 00:23:22,000

One of the train crew members, by the name of Oscar Tim, once the train stops, his job is to walk behind the train and lay down cautionary flares.

207

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

As he jogs through the darkness, he is alert to any sign of oncoming train traffic.

208

00:23:27,000 --> 00:23:31,000

He is about 900 or so yards behind the caboose.

209

00:23:33,000 --> 00:23:41,000

Off in the not too far distance, he can see smoke emitting from the top of the trees. It isn't long before he sees the light.

210

00:23:42,000 --> 00:23:46,000

He quickly realizes that this is a fairly fast-moving train.

211

00:23:46,000 --> 00:23:59,000

Tim breaks into a run, furiously waving his flair. But incredibly, the approaching train, a state-of-the-art troop carrier made of heavy steel, does not appear to react.

212

00:24:02,000 --> 00:24:04,000

The steel monster keeps hurtling towards him.

213

00:24:05,000 --> 00:24:07,000

And with moments, the engine is passing him.

214

00:24:09,000 --> 00:24:11,000

Now all Tim can do is stand and watch.

215

00:24:12,000 --> 00:24:14,000

It's a runaway train. It's not going to stop.

216

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

With hundreds of men, women and children stranded helplessly in its track, is there any way to avert this impending catastrophe?

217

00:24:28,000 --> 00:24:31,000

It's the early morning of June 22, 1918.

218

00:24:32,000 --> 00:24:37,000

Oscar Tim is the breakman on a stalled circus train just outside Ivanhoe, Indiana.

219

00:24:38,000 --> 00:24:42,000

As he's laying down flares on the tracks, he notices another train speeding towards them.

220

00:24:43,000 --> 00:24:49,000

He desperately tries to signal the engineer to stop, but to no avail. Disaster seems inevitable.

221

00:24:52,000 --> 00:25:00,000

The breakman, Oscar Tim, stares in horror as the massive troop carrier plows into the stranded circus train.

222

00:25:02,000 --> 00:25:04,000

It must have been a thunderous crash.

223

00:25:05,000 --> 00:25:13,000

Fire breaks out amongst the wreckage, and within moments, it practically becomes a firestorm.

224

00:25:17,000 --> 00:25:24,000

When the sun rises, 86 people are found dead, and more than 180 are seriously wounded.

225

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

The Hagenbeck-Wallace circus train accounts for all of the casualties in the wreck.

226

00:25:31,000 --> 00:25:36,000

The question on Everman's mind at this point almost immediately is, what happened?

227

00:25:39,000 --> 00:25:46,000

All eyes turn to the surviving driver of the troop train, a veteran engineer named Alonzo Sargent.

228

00:25:48,000 --> 00:25:54,000

The story that ultimately unfolds is that Sargent is essentially overworked. He's had minimal amount of sleep.

229

00:25:54,000 --> 00:25:58,000

A cool breeze is coming off of Lake Michigan, and he starts to get a chill.

230

00:25:58,000 --> 00:26:04,000

He closes the window, and the heat from the engine starts to make him sleep.

231

00:26:07,000 --> 00:26:15,000

According to a report by the Interstate Commerce Commission, not only did Sargent sleep through the frantic signals of the breakman Oscar Tim,

232

00:26:15,000 --> 00:26:23,000

but he also missed at least two automatic stop signals a mile or so earlier, making the collision inevitable.

233

00:26:29,000 --> 00:26:40,000

And yet thanks to an aggressive defense by lawyers from the Michigan Central Railroad, Sargent is absolved of criminal responsibility.

234

00:26:40,000 --> 00:26:44,000

But his career on the rails is over.

235

00:26:47,000 --> 00:26:52,000

As for the surviving members of the Hagenbeck-Wallace circus, the show must go on.

236

00:26:53,000 --> 00:27:01,000

The troop is quickly reconstituted from other circuses around the country, and incredibly performing shows again within a matter of days.

237

00:27:01,000 --> 00:27:08,000

The Hagenbeck-Wallace circus only misses two shows that season, and it's really an utterly remarkable feat.

238

00:27:09,000 --> 00:27:18,000

But in spite of their resilience, the circus will forever mourn the performers who are buried here in unmarked graves in the corner of Woodlawn Cemetery.

239

00:27:18,000 --> 00:27:29,000

And while no animals died in the disaster, this peaceful site known as Showman's Rest is marked by a granite elephant, the eternal symbol of the circus trade.

240

00:27:30,000 --> 00:27:38,000

And today, this stately pachyderm serves as a powerful memorial to those who died on that warm summer night so long ago.

241

00:27:45,000 --> 00:27:53,000

On the western edge of the Arizona desert sits Lake Habosu City, a planned community on a man-made lake.

242

00:27:54,000 --> 00:28:05,000

Established in 1963, this modern-day oasis seems an odd setting for a 180-year-old monument of old world engineering.

243

00:28:05,000 --> 00:28:17,000

It is a large granite structure. It weighs 33,000 tons. It's 502 feet long. Our beautiful desert sun has bleached it to a rather soft gray color.

244

00:28:18,000 --> 00:28:30,000

According to historian Mike Riddle, this historic span that once bore the imperial carriages of kings and queens is now considered the world's largest collectible.

245

00:28:30,000 --> 00:28:37,000

It was brought into this country, and its custom declarations said, one, large antique.

246

00:28:37,000 --> 00:28:44,000

Where did this legendary bridge come from? And did it actually end up here? By mistake.

247

00:28:47,000 --> 00:28:57,000

Southern California, 1963. Los Angeles-based industrialist and wealthy oilman Robert McCulloch has a problem.

248

00:28:57,000 --> 00:29:04,000

The rising price of real estate around LA is cutting into the profits of his chainsaw and outboard motor business.

249

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

Searching for a new, more economical location to set up his factory, he comes across a remote oasis in the Arizona desert, where the damned Colorado River forms a 17-mile-long lake.

250

00:29:20,000 --> 00:29:33,000

Lake Habosu. Here, land is cheap, and the lake provides a perfect testing ground for his motors. But there is one snag. The area is devoid of people.

251

00:29:35,000 --> 00:29:48,000

But McCulloch is undeterred, convinced that he can attract workers to the site. On his own dime, he builds a new community in the desert sands and calls it Lake Habosu City.

252

00:29:48,000 --> 00:29:59,000

Lake Habosu City is in the middle of two deserts, the Sonoran and the Mojave. Most of the people that heard McCulloch's plan to build a city here thought he was just completely out of his mind.

253

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

McCulloch knows that families need a reason to settle down in his rootless desert town.

254

00:30:06,000 --> 00:30:13,000

So at that time, he began to think, how can we attract people? How can we keep them here? How can I build my city?

255

00:30:13,000 --> 00:30:20,000

One day, McCulloch receives word of an unusual prospect that he thinks will rejuvenate his faltering community.

256

00:30:21,000 --> 00:30:25,000

An auction is being held for an iconic British landmark.

257

00:30:26,000 --> 00:30:28,000

London Bridge.

258

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

Built in 1831, the well-trafficked conduit over the River Thames is apparently sinking into the riverbed.

259

00:30:36,000 --> 00:30:41,000

A problem familiar to those who have heard the classic nursery rhyme.

260

00:30:41,000 --> 00:30:55,000

It was overcrowded and it was very, very heavy. It couldn't be short up. There was a need to move it or destroy it.

261

00:30:55,000 --> 00:31:06,000

But McCulloch, instantly recognizing a publicity gimmick and a chance to give his fledgling city an air of permanence, pays over \$2.4 million for the structure.

262

00:31:07,000 --> 00:31:12,000

And he soon becomes the proud owner of the historic London Bridge.

263

00:31:12,000 --> 00:31:22,000

The task of deconstructing and transporting a 33,000-ton bridge over 5,000 miles to Lake Havasu City is a daunting prospect.

264

00:31:24,000 --> 00:31:28,000

It was carefully dismantled. Each part was taken down and numbered.

265

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

The parts are then transported across the ocean on container ships.

266

00:31:33,000 --> 00:31:44,000

It made a journey from Great Britain through the Panama Canal and up the coast to the port of Los Angeles where it was unloaded and then reloaded onto trucks.

267

00:31:46,000 --> 00:31:55,000

The components of the monument finally arrive in Arizona. And as the modest arches of the London Bridge slowly rise between the desert sand dunes,

268

00:31:56,000 --> 00:32:01,000

legend has it that Robert McCulloch becomes aware that something is amiss.

269

00:32:02,000 --> 00:32:11,000

It's said that McCulloch thought he was buying a different bridge, the soaring majestic symbol of London, which is actually the Tower Bridge.

270

00:32:12,000 --> 00:32:21,000

As the story goes, when the bridge arrived here, there were no towers, no drawbridge. And McCulloch was very surprised and thought he had been sold a white elephant bridge.

271

00:32:22,000 --> 00:32:27,000

So did Robert McCulloch really buy the wrong bridge?

272

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

It's October 1971. Businessman Robert McCulloch has successfully relocated the London Bridge to Lake Havasu, Arizona in hopes that it will attract new home buyers to his planned community.

273

00:32:45,000 --> 00:32:54,000

But many believe there's been a misunderstanding and that instead of the London Bridge, McCulloch thought he was getting the iconic Tower Bridge.

274

00:32:55,000 --> 00:33:01,000

So did this man really pay \$2.4 million for the wrong bridge?

275

00:33:04,000 --> 00:33:14,000

If one were discussing bridges in London, the Tower Bridge gets the high marks. It's the architecturally and probably engineering jewel of the Thames River.

276

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

And many people in Britain believe the rumor to be absolutely correct.

277

00:33:22,000 --> 00:33:25,000

So is there any truth to the tale?

278

00:33:26,000 --> 00:33:32,000

It does make a great story, but it's just that a story.

279

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

The truth is that McCulloch visited London in person to inspect his bridge and oversee the intricate plans to disassemble it and ship it overseas.

280

00:33:42,000 --> 00:33:46,000

Bob McCulloch knew exactly what he was buying and bringing to Arizona.

281

00:33:47,000 --> 00:33:50,000

So why does the false story persist?

282

00:33:53,000 --> 00:33:59,000

It's suggested that some British citizens struggled with the fact that they were no longer a superpower in the world.

283

00:34:00,000 --> 00:34:10,000

And that while they no longer held economic or political sway on the international stage, they could still sneer at their culturally inferior cousins across the pond.

284

00:34:11,000 --> 00:34:18,000

To the Brits, McCulloch plays the role of the archetypal Brash American with more money than cents.

285

00:34:20,000 --> 00:34:28,000

If those yanks were silly enough to move at 10,000 miles to the middle of the Arizona desert and reassemble it, let them have it.

286

00:34:29,000 --> 00:34:33,000

And to this day, many Londoners will insist that the story is true.

287

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

And that a gullible American millionaire really did buy London Bridge by mistake.

288

00:34:41,000 --> 00:34:43,000

That's maybe a little bit of jealousy.

289

00:34:44,000 --> 00:34:55,000

Viewed as the pride of Arizona, the Bridge helps McCulloch jumpstart the growth of Lake Havasu City and create a thriving community with more than 50,000 residents living there today.

290

00:34:56,000 --> 00:35:01,000

I think our granite bridge probably fits us a lot better.

291

00:35:02,000 --> 00:35:07,000

The Tower Bridge would be definitely imposing. It would also be a very, very large maintenance headache.

292

00:35:08,000 --> 00:35:18,000

And after the Grand Canyon, the graceful arches of the London Bridge draw more visitors to the state of Arizona than any other attraction.

293

00:35:19,000 --> 00:35:24,000

Death Valley National Park, California

294

00:35:25,000 --> 00:35:32,000

This vast desert expanse is famed for being both the driest and the lowest region in all of the United States.

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00:35:33,000 --> 00:35:38,000

The temperatures here can reach a sweltering 134 degrees Fahrenheit.

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00:35:40,000 --> 00:35:45,000

But the park is also renowned for an astonishing spectacle of architecture.

297

00:35:46,000 --> 00:35:55,000

Walking out of the blistering desert heat, one is greeted by a house that seems as if it could not exist in that location.

298

00:35:56,000 --> 00:36:02,000

This is the Death Valley Ranch, or as it's more commonly known, Scotty's Castle.

299

00:36:03,000 --> 00:36:09,000

A sprawling and opulent villa, which has long-fascinated visitors and historians alike.

300

00:36:09,000 --> 00:36:17,000

This remarkable structure sprang from one of the most bizarre friendships in the history of the American West.

301

00:36:18,000 --> 00:36:22,000

Who was the mysterious Scotty who gave the castle its name?

302

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

And what unlikely friendship led to the creation of this fantastical mansion?

303

00:36:30,000 --> 00:36:32,000

1902, Death Valley

304

00:36:33,000 --> 00:36:41,000

Gold rush fever grips the region. New mines open every day and ambitious prospectors arrive in droves.

305

00:36:43,000 --> 00:36:50,000

One of these is Walter Scott, aka Death Valley Scotty, who has had a colorful past.

306

00:36:51,000 --> 00:36:55,000

He traveled for 12 years with Wild West shows.

307

00:36:55,000 --> 00:37:03,000

He was an adventurer and he was a character who was hard to pin down what he actually did.

308

00:37:05,000 --> 00:37:11,000

After several months of digging, Scotty makes an announcement that has investors running to jump on board.

309

00:37:14,000 --> 00:37:16,000

He has found gold.

310

00:37:18,000 --> 00:37:22,000

And one such investor is Chicago tycoon Albert Johnson.

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

He invested initially thousands of dollars, as did many others.

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00:37:28,000 --> 00:37:36,000

They were told that their investment would ultimately be repaid tenfold once the mine was developed.

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00:37:38,000 --> 00:37:44,000

But when months pass and Johnson has seen no sign of gold, he presses Scotty for answers.

314

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

Eventually announcing his intention to travel down and see the mine for himself.

315

00:37:52,000 --> 00:37:59,000

When Johnson arrives in Death Valley, Scotty, accompanied by his brother, leads the businessman towards the gold mine.

316

00:38:01,000 --> 00:38:04,000

But unruly, they're ambushed by armed bandits.

317

00:38:05,000 --> 00:38:07,000

And Scotty's brother takes a bullet.

318

00:38:07,000 --> 00:38:11,000

In all the confusion, the visit to the gold mine is abandoned.

319

00:38:12,000 --> 00:38:16,000

Johnson returns home to Chicago without even a glimpse of his investment.

320

00:38:17,000 --> 00:38:23,000

And back in his native city, he begins to wonder, does this gold mine actually exist?

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00:38:28,000 --> 00:38:30,000

It's the early 1900s in California.

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00:38:30,000 --> 00:38:39,000

Gold prospector William Scott, aka Scotty, has convinced Chicago businessman Albert Johnson to invest in a gold mine he's discovered in Death Valley.

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00:38:40,000 --> 00:38:46,000

But two years in, Johnson has yet to see any return on his investment, and he's beginning to smell a rat.

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00:38:47,000 --> 00:38:51,000

So what's the truth behind Scotty's extravagant tales of gold in the desert?

325

00:38:54,000 --> 00:38:56,000

Johnson hires a private detainee.

326

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

Johnson hires a private detective to trail Scotty and investigate his activities.

327

00:39:04,000 --> 00:39:07,000

And the first discovery the agent makes is alarming.

328

00:39:08,000 --> 00:39:16,000

In the mine that Scotty claims to have found, he is apparently planting samples of gold.

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00:39:18,000 --> 00:39:19,000

But that's not all.

330

00:39:19,000 --> 00:39:27,000

When the detective questions local residents, he hears the tale of the notorious ambush from a different perspective.

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00:39:28,000 --> 00:39:35,000

The entire shootout was planned exclusively for the benefit of Johnson to dissuade him from going on.

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00:39:36,000 --> 00:39:43,000

But the staged shootout did not go quite as planned, and Scotty's brother was in fact gravely wounded.

333

00:39:44,000 --> 00:39:54,000

This dangerous ruse demonstrates the extremes Scotty was willing to go to, to disguise the fact that his lucrative gold mine didn't actually exist.

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00:39:55,000 --> 00:39:56,000

The entire thing, it's all a hoax.

335

00:39:58,000 --> 00:40:05,000

On learning that he's been duped, a furious Johnson returns to Death Valley to meet the con man face to face.

336

00:40:06,000 --> 00:40:10,000

But when he gets there, his reaction is not what people expect.

337

00:40:10,000 --> 00:40:21,000

He's fascinated by this remarkable character, and it was enough that he was willing to look past the fact that he had been tricked.

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00:40:22,000 --> 00:40:30,000

Admiring the brazen confidence of this savvy entrepreneur, Johnson strikes up an unlikely friendship with the swindler.

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00:40:31,000 --> 00:40:36,000

So much so that he decides to build a house on the land where the gold mine was supposed to have been.

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

He lavishes every luxury of his day on this mansion of truly epic proportions.

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00:40:45,000 --> 00:40:51,000

Over time, Johnson invites his down-of-the-heel friend to move into the lodging with him and his wife.

342

00:40:52,000 --> 00:40:55,000

And Scotty never won to miss a trick.

343

00:40:56,000 --> 00:40:57,000

Sets about spinning a new yarn.

344

00:40:58,000 --> 00:41:07,000

Scotty told locals, visitors, basically anybody who would listen, that this house was actually his house.

345

00:41:08,000 --> 00:41:11,000

And Johnson does nothing to refute Scotty's tall tales.

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00:41:12,000 --> 00:41:18,000

He actually plays along with it, describing himself to some visitors as Scotty's banker.

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00:41:19,000 --> 00:41:25,000

But a few years later, the stock market crash of 1929 drives Johnson into financial ruin.

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00:41:26,000 --> 00:41:31,000

And the expense of maintaining his huge mansion becomes too much to bear.

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

And at this moment, his unlikely savior is Scotty, who suggests that they can turn their location into an actual hotel.

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00:41:43,000 --> 00:41:50,000

The venture is a roaring success, with tourists, along with a slew of the era's biggest celebrities,

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00:41:50,000 --> 00:41:57,000

from Betty Gravel to Norman Rockwell, attracted to the legend of Death Valley Scotty and his opulent castle.

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00:41:59,000 --> 00:42:05,000

And today, Scotty's castle is owned by the National Park Service and open to the public for tours,

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00:42:06,000 --> 00:42:12,000

standing as a testament to one of the most peculiar friendships in the history of the Wild West.

354

00:42:13,000 --> 00:42:23,000

From a desert palace to a circus catastrophe, a superhero surfer to a colossal collectible.

355

00:42:24,000 --> 00:42:28,000

I'm Don Wildman and these are Monumental Mysteries.