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

A spectacular skyscraper at the heart of a bitter rivalry.

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

For months these two were jockeying over who's going to build the tallest building in the world.

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

The treacherous terrain that drove a young artist to an unknown fate.

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

The tracks seemed to just disappear.

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

And a statue to a most unlikely political figure.

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

He was held up as an example of Western democracy.

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

Sometimes the greatest secrets lie in plain sight.

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

These are monumental mysteries.

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

New York City.

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

With almost 600 buildings over 330 feet tall,

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

Manhattan boasts more skyscrapers than any other city in the U.S.

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

But one arctic giant with a spectacular gleaming terrace

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

is the city's crown jewel.

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

The skyscraper rises from the New York City skyline

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00:01:02,000 --> 00:01:06,000

made out of white-colored brick and stainless steel.

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00:01:06,000 --> 00:01:12,000

And then has a needle that rises from the top to bring it to over a thousand feet tall.

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00:01:12,000 --> 00:01:14,000

It's really something spectacular.

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00:01:14,000 --> 00:01:17,000

This is the Chrysler building.

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

But as historian Seth Camel knows,

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00:01:20,000 --> 00:01:24,000

at the heart of this majestic tower lies a bitter tale of envy,

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00:01:24,000 --> 00:01:26,000

ambition, and deceit.

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00:01:26,000 --> 00:01:31,000

The Chrysler building was part of a massive personal and professional rivalry

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00:01:31,000 --> 00:01:34,000

that kept New York City captivated for a year.

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00:01:34,000 --> 00:01:41,000

So what epic tale of dastardly deeds lies behind the construction of this iconic edifice?

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00:01:44,000 --> 00:01:47,000

New York City, the mid-1920s.

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00:01:47,000 --> 00:01:52,000

With limited space on the island of Manhattan and a booming population,

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00:01:52,000 --> 00:01:55,000

the era of the skyscraper is born.

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00:01:55,000 --> 00:01:58,000

You've got millions of people flooding into New York.

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

We're growing ever and ever taller and skyward.

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00:02:04,000 --> 00:02:11,000

Two of Gotham's most renowned architects are William Van Allen and H. Craig Severance.

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00:02:12,000 --> 00:02:16,000

For nearly a decade, the two partners have run a top-tier firm

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00:02:16,000 --> 00:02:19,000

designing prestigious buildings all over the city.

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00:02:20,000 --> 00:02:23,000

But their success comes at a price.

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00:02:23,000 --> 00:02:27,000

As the firm of Severance and Van Allen became more and more successful,

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00:02:27,000 --> 00:02:29,000

it became more and more tense.

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00:02:30,000 --> 00:02:35,000

Embroided in a bitter feud over credit for the firm's accomplishments,

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00:02:35,000 --> 00:02:39,000

the two dissolve their company and decide to start businesses of their own.

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00:02:40,000 --> 00:02:42,000

But little do the two architects know.

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00:02:42,000 --> 00:02:48,000

They will soon be pitted against each other in one of the most high-profile rivalries of all time.

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00:02:50,000 --> 00:02:52,000

1928.

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00:02:52,000 --> 00:02:57,000

With his new firm, Van Allen soon gets the commission of a lifetime

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00:02:57,000 --> 00:02:59,000

when automobile mogul Walter P. Chrysler

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

hires him to design a tower in Midtown Manhattan.

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00:03:04,000 --> 00:03:09,000

Chrysler tells Van Allen he wants his skyscraper to be the tallest in the world,

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00:03:09,000 --> 00:03:15,000

one that will eclipse the current record holder, the 792-foot Woolworth building.

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00:03:16,000 --> 00:03:20,000

Walter Chrysler wants the tallest building in the world to have his name on it.

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00:03:21,000 --> 00:03:26,000

He sees it as an icon for America and for his brand.

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

This is just the prestigious opportunity Van Allen has been looking for.

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00:03:32,000 --> 00:03:38,000

So he designs the Chrysler building to top off at an astounding 809 feet.

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00:03:39,000 --> 00:03:43,000

But his one-time ally and now bitter rival, Craig Severance,

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00:03:43,000 --> 00:03:46,000

is also working on a major new commission.

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00:03:48,000 --> 00:03:51,000

Craig Severance is asked to build 40 Wall Street for the Bank of Manhattan,

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00:03:52,000 --> 00:03:55,000

which is right in the heart financial core of New York.

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

And when Severance reads news of his arch rival's massive undertaking,

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

he decides to outbuild Van Allen and the Chrysler building.

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00:04:06,000 --> 00:04:10,000

Severance draws up plans for an 840-foot building,

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00:04:10,000 --> 00:04:14,000

over 30 feet taller than Van Allen's proposed structure.

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00:04:15,000 --> 00:04:21,000

As construction begins on the two skyscrapers, the race for the skies is on.

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00:04:22,000 --> 00:04:27,000

The rival refueled such a deep-seated bitterness.

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00:04:28,000 --> 00:04:33,000

When Van Allen hears of Severance's plans, he redesigns the Chrysler building,

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00:04:34,000 --> 00:04:38,000

this time to reach the staggering height of 925 feet.

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00:04:38,000 --> 00:04:43,000

For months, these two are jockeying over who's going to build the tallest building in the world.

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00:04:45,000 --> 00:04:51,000

By the fall of 1929, with the primary steelwork nearly complete on 40 Wall Street,

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00:04:52,000 --> 00:04:54,000

it appears that the Chrysler building has won the race.

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00:04:55,000 --> 00:04:57,000

At this point, 40 Wall Street's finished.

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00:04:58,000 --> 00:05:01,000

And the building's done. They'd already started taking down the scaffolding.

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

But Severance comes up with a clever way to outfox his rival.

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00:05:07,000 --> 00:05:14,000

Craig Severance added a 50-foot flagpole to his building to make him 2 feet taller,

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00:05:15,000 --> 00:05:18,000

which really was kind of sticking a needle in his former partner.

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00:05:19,000 --> 00:05:24,000

The flagpole pushes 40 Wall Street to 927 feet,

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00:05:25,000 --> 00:05:29,000

barely beating the Chrysler building's proposed height of 925 feet.

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00:05:30,000 --> 00:05:33,000

And because the steel framework appears finished on the Chrysler building,

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00:05:33,000 --> 00:05:37,000

a smug Severance assumes that Van Allen can't go any higher.

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

Craig Severance feels he can justify we say, I am the tallest in the world.

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00:05:43,000 --> 00:05:46,000

But the race for the skies is not over just yet.

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00:05:50,000 --> 00:05:52,000

William Van Allen had one more trick up his sleeve.

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

Little does Severance know Van Allen has been plotting for months.

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00:05:58,000 --> 00:06:02,000

He has secretly designed another addition to the Chrysler building.

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

A 185-foot spire.

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

Van Allen has the structure brought into one of the upper floors in five separate pieces.

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00:06:12,000 --> 00:06:17,000

There, the crew covertly assembles the 27-ton steel spire.

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00:06:20,000 --> 00:06:27,000

And he slams Severance by rising this magnificent piece of superstructure

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

to the top of the building that in a day topples Severance, topples 40 Wall Street,

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00:06:34,000 --> 00:06:36,000

and says, I win.

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00:06:40,000 --> 00:06:46,000

With the steel structure in place at 40 Wall Street, it's too late for Severance to go any higher.

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00:06:48,000 --> 00:06:55,000

Standing at 1046 feet, the Chrysler building claims the title of the world's tallest building.

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

But Van Allen's victory is destined to be short-lived.

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

The Empire State Building, finished just a year later, is 1,454 feet tall.

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00:07:09,000 --> 00:07:13,000

And today, the Chrysler building is the fourth tallest building in the city.

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00:07:14,000 --> 00:07:22,000

A glittering icon in the skyline, where it will always serve as a reminder of the dogged and ambitious race to the heavens.

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00:07:26,000 --> 00:07:30,000

Stanford University, California.

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00:07:31,000 --> 00:07:41,000

This sprawling 8,000-acre campus, the nation's largest, boasts a stunning array of beautiful buildings dedicated to higher learning.

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00:07:42,000 --> 00:07:50,000

And here, tucked away amidst a grove of trees, lies a monument which has long captivated archaeologist Laura Jones.

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00:07:51,000 --> 00:08:00,000

With its beautiful columns and then these mysterious sphinxes that looks not unlike a Grecian temple hidden in the forest.

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

This is the Stanford Mausoleum. This tomb holds the remains of the university's founding family, and most notably, the dynasty's matriarch, whose untimely death is shrouded in mystery.

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00:08:16,000 --> 00:08:21,000

The circumstances are so surprising, you couldn't have made it up as a story.

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00:08:22,000 --> 00:08:29,000

So what in the farthest tale of betrayal, deceit, and murder does the Mausoleum conceal?

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

Hawaii, 1905.

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00:08:37,000 --> 00:08:46,000

Jane Stanford, co-founder of Stanford University, is on vacation in Honolulu, where she is accompanied, as always, by her personal secretary, Bertha Burner.

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00:08:49,000 --> 00:08:54,000

On the night of February 28, Mrs. Stanford complains of an upset stomach.

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00:08:55,000 --> 00:09:00,000

At her request, Burner prepares a drink of bicarbonate of soda to settle her employer's stomach.

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00:09:01,000 --> 00:09:05,000

But the drink has a very different effect.

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

Stanford is suddenly seized by convulsions, and in the early hours of the morning is pronounced dead.

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00:09:15,000 --> 00:09:26,000

Upon hearing of the death of the well-loved matriarch, the university's president, a man named David Starr Jordan, prepares to sail to Hawaii to investigate what has happened.

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00:09:27,000 --> 00:09:33,000

He got on the steamship and came over to Hawaii and then telegraphed back to the university that Jane Stanford had died of heart failure.

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

But David Starr Jordan's announcement isn't strictly true.

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00:09:39,000 --> 00:09:49,000

When they did an autopsy of the body, they found a strychnine in her stomach and strychnine in the glass of medicine that she'd been taking before bed.

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00:09:50,000 --> 00:09:55,000

Strychnine is a highly toxic chemical that is commonly used in rat poison.

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

Even in small doses, it is fatal to humans.

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00:10:01,000 --> 00:10:06,000

With this startling new evidence, the authorities reach a sinister conclusion.

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00:10:07,000 --> 00:10:11,000

The coroner's jury ruled that she had been poisoned by a person whose name was unknown.

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00:10:12,000 --> 00:10:20,000

So was Jane Stanford the founder of Stanford University really murdered? And if so, by whom?

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00:10:25,000 --> 00:10:27,000

Honolulu, Hawaii, 1905.

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00:10:28,000 --> 00:10:37,000

Jane Stanford, co-founder of Stanford University and one of America's most powerful women, has died under mysterious circumstances.

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00:10:38,000 --> 00:10:44,000

The university's president, David Starr Jordan, claims that her death was a result of heart failure.

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00:10:45,000 --> 00:10:48,000

But the autopsy tells a different story, that she was poisoned.

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00:10:49,000 --> 00:10:54,000

So was Jane Stanford murdered? And if so, by whom?

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00:10:56,000 --> 00:11:02,000

Suspicions turn first towards the person who prepared the medicine that Jane Stanford drank the night she died.

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00:11:03,000 --> 00:11:06,000

Her personal secretary of 30 years, Bertha Burner.

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00:11:07,000 --> 00:11:12,000

She certainly had access to all of Jane's trunks and medicine and to Jane's room.

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00:11:13,000 --> 00:11:20,000

And Burner has not only the means, but also the motive, as she stood to inherit a large sum of money from her employer.

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00:11:21,000 --> 00:11:28,000

The \$15,000 that Bertha inherited was the largest bequest to any of the employees that Jane Stanford made.

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00:11:29,000 --> 00:11:34,000

But as they question Burner, investigators make a shocking new discovery.

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

Burner claims that someone tried to poison her employer just one month ago.

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00:11:40,000 --> 00:11:46,000

In circumstances that were frighteningly similar to those surrounding Jane Stanford's death.

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00:11:49,000 --> 00:11:54,000

One evening, in her mansion in San Francisco, Jane Stanford had gone to bed and she had mineral water next to her bed.

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00:11:55,000 --> 00:11:57,000

And went to drink it and it tasted bitter.

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00:11:58,000 --> 00:12:01,000

Leaving the water to be tainted, Stanford took immediate action.

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00:12:02,000 --> 00:12:04,000

She put her finger down her throat and caused herself to vomit.

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

Concerned that someone might be trying to poison her, Stanford had the water tested.

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

The chemist came back with the analysis that the water had contained rat poison.

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00:12:19,000 --> 00:12:27,000

But after interviewing Burner and hearing this revelation, investigators in Hawaii believe that she would not have been careless enough to try to poison her.

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00:12:28,000 --> 00:12:34,000

She had been poisoned and poisoned her employer twice, especially considering what a devoted friend she was to Mrs. Stanford.

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00:12:36,000 --> 00:12:42,000

And once detectives realized that many people could have had access to Stanford's medicine during her travels,

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00:12:44,000 --> 00:12:51,000

they soon turned their attention to another suspect, the man who initially claimed that Stanford had died of heart failure.

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00:12:53,000 --> 00:12:55,000

The university's president, David Starr Jordan.

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00:12:58,000 --> 00:13:02,000

The researchers have speculated that Jane's death was convenient for David Starr Jordan.

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00:13:03,000 --> 00:13:09,000

Some people think there was some friction between them on the issue of faculty hiring and faculty tenure decisions.

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00:13:10,000 --> 00:13:22,000

But that's not all. It's revealed that before the autopsy was even completed, Jordan had paid a local doctor a significant sum of money to say that Stanford had died of natural causes.

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00:13:23,000 --> 00:13:32,000

The doctor he hired asserts that Jane Stanford's heart had failed and then the university's official position was that Jane Stanford had died essentially of a heart attack.

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00:13:34,000 --> 00:13:41,000

This perplexing discovery leads some to conclude that Jordan orchestrated the murder and then tried to cover it up.

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00:13:42,000 --> 00:13:48,000

But with nothing more than circumstantial evidence, the investigators once again are at an impasse.

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00:13:49,000 --> 00:13:55,000

I think it is much more likely that his motive for the cover-up was that he was trying to protect the university's reputation.

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00:13:57,000 --> 00:14:04,000

So if neither David Starr Jordan nor Bertha Berner were the culprits, who did murder Jane Stanford?

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00:14:05,000 --> 00:14:13,000

Who benefited from her death? Who might have had motive to do it? More than a century since Jane's death, we still have this controversy.

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

And today, visitors to the Stanford family mausoleum can marvel at the strange tale of the founding matriarch's unnatural death.

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00:14:24,000 --> 00:14:30,000

As impenetrable a mystery as the mighty marble walls and sphinxes of the mausoleum itself.

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00:14:33,000 --> 00:14:40,000

Nestled amid the Bay Area's lush hills and scenic gorges is the quiet community of Sunol, California.

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00:14:41,000 --> 00:14:46,000

The historic rail town was once a key stop for Southern Pacific trains.

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00:14:48,000 --> 00:14:53,000

But Sunol's best kept secret is tucked away behind a clock in the village square.

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00:14:54,000 --> 00:14:57,000

It's an unassuming sculpture that stands just two feet tall.

152

00:14:58,000 --> 00:15:04,000

Cast in bronze, this small dark figure is a tribute to one of Sunol's best loved residents.

153

00:15:04,000 --> 00:15:11,000

You're sitting just looking over the town of Sunol with his trademark handkerchief around his neck. A big fat head and a tail.

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00:15:12,000 --> 00:15:21,000

This may look like your average mutt, but in fact this canine's incredible life story thrust this small town into the international spotlight.

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00:15:22,000 --> 00:15:29,000

So who is this heroic hound? And how did he become an unexpected force in world politics?

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00:15:30,000 --> 00:15:38,000

1981, Sunol, California. This unincorporated town has never had a mayor, but proud residents are seeking a public figure to represent their community.

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00:15:39,000 --> 00:15:49,000

At a local bar, two friends are discussing the race when another patron, Ingest, throws out the name of an unlikely candidate. A dog named Bosco.

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00:15:49,000 --> 00:15:52,000

He said, oh, heck, Bosco, but be both you guys.

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00:15:53,000 --> 00:15:59,000

Bosco has something most politicians envy, name recognition. The one year old mixed breed is a fixture around town.

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

Bosco would just hang out in front of the gas station and everybody around town knew and loved Bosco. He was a good dog.

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00:16:07,000 --> 00:16:09,000

He was a good dog.

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

As a joke, the canine candidate is entered into the race, but what happens next is as unprecedented as it is surprising.

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00:16:18,000 --> 00:16:26,000

Bosco is elected the country's first ever dog mayor and begins presiding over events all over town.

164

00:16:27,000 --> 00:16:29,000

The number of dogs in the country is growing.

165

00:16:30,000 --> 00:16:37,000

Bosco is elected the country's first ever dog mayor and begins presiding over events all over town.

166

00:16:38,000 --> 00:16:44,000

The novelty of a four legged elected official makes the media sit and take notice.

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00:16:45,000 --> 00:16:47,000

He was in the California papers and television shows.

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00:16:48,000 --> 00:16:56,000

But little do Sunolians know that their leaders newfound fame will soon embroil him in a global humanitarian crisis.

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

In 1981, the small town of Sunol, California, elects its first mayor, a dog named Bosco.

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00:17:09,000 --> 00:17:14,000

The canine quickly becomes an endearing symbol of the community as well as a darling of the press.

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00:17:15,000 --> 00:17:22,000

But Bosco's celebrity status is about to thrust him into the midst of a political firestorm on a global scale.

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00:17:24,000 --> 00:17:26,000

April 1989.

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00:17:26,000 --> 00:17:35,000

Like most of the world, the people of Sunol are transfixed by the events taking place nearly 6,000 miles away in China.

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00:17:36,000 --> 00:17:45,000

There, approximately a million Chinese citizens, fed up with corruption and repression, gather to demand change and a democratic government.

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00:17:46,000 --> 00:17:50,000

And the focal point of this movement is Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

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00:17:51,000 --> 00:18:01,000

As tensions boil, a newspaper called The People's Daily, an arm of the Communist propaganda machine, learns of Bosco's story and his post as mayor.

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00:18:02,000 --> 00:18:12,000

The outraged periodical makes Bosco the poster child of American democracy, declaring him to be proof of the folly of the West's dominant political system.

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00:18:13,000 --> 00:18:19,000

The Chinese wrote one of their newspapers that the United States, we were so stupid that we were electing dogs as city officials.

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00:18:21,000 --> 00:18:29,000

But the attempt to lampoon the West quickly backfires, causing the American media to lavish even more attention on the canine mayor.

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00:18:30,000 --> 00:18:39,000

And then, as demonstrations spring up across the U.S., some of the anti-communist protesters have an unconventional plan to make their point.

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00:18:40,000 --> 00:18:43,000

There was quite a few students that wanted Bosco to be a spokesman for him.

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00:18:44,000 --> 00:18:51,000

The canine appears at a San Francisco rally, where the protesters celebrate the freedom this lovable dog represents.

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00:18:52,000 --> 00:18:58,000

There probably are quite a few people in China that would just be very happy to have a dog for a mayor instead of what they've got.

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00:18:59,000 --> 00:19:08,000

For many, the Tiananmen Square crisis ends in tragedy, leaving the iconic moments of the protests seared in the world's collective memory.

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00:19:10,000 --> 00:19:21,000

And after Bosco's brief moment in the spotlight fades, the dog returns to a quiet life in Sunol, where he remains mayor until he peacefully passes away at age 15.

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00:19:22,000 --> 00:19:25,000

To this day, no successor has been found.

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00:19:26,000 --> 00:19:30,000

There's never been another mayor in Sunol. They realize they couldn't replace Bosco.

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00:19:34,000 --> 00:19:38,000

In 2008, a bronze sculpture is installed in the center of town.

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00:19:39,000 --> 00:19:42,000

A tribute to the first dog ever elected to office.

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00:19:43,000 --> 00:19:46,000

Bosco is immortalized as the one and only mayor of Sunol.

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00:19:47,000 --> 00:19:53,000

And today, his likeness continues to watch over the community that revered him as a symbol of freedom.

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00:19:54,000 --> 00:19:56,000

And of course, man's best friend.

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00:19:57,000 --> 00:20:03,000

Ten miles west of the New Jersey shore is the quaint town of Lakehurst.

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00:20:04,000 --> 00:20:09,000

Home to an active military base that was once the country's first international airport.

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

The century-old Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station.

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00:20:17,000 --> 00:20:22,000

Behind the hangars, in the middle of a windswept field of asphalt and gravel,

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00:20:22,000 --> 00:20:25,000

lies an odd concrete formation.

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

It's 60 feet long, 10 feet wide. It looks like a coffin.

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00:20:31,000 --> 00:20:34,000

It was here that an inferno fell from the sky.

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00:20:36,000 --> 00:20:39,000

This is a memorial to the infamous Hindenburg disaster.

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00:20:40,000 --> 00:20:44,000

A tragedy that looms large in the national consciousness to this day.

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00:20:46,000 --> 00:20:49,000

Yet as author Lee Christek can't help but wonder,

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00:20:50,000 --> 00:20:52,000

yet as author Lee Christek can attest,

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00:20:53,000 --> 00:20:57,000

75 years after the airship came crashing down on this very spot,

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00:20:58,000 --> 00:21:00,000

the cause remains a mystery.

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00:21:01,000 --> 00:21:05,000

Was it a design flaw? Was it the weather? Was it a sabotage?

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00:21:06,000 --> 00:21:09,000

What really brought down the mighty Hindenburg?

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00:21:13,000 --> 00:21:15,000

The 1930s.

209

00:21:16,000 --> 00:21:19,000

The world is in the midst of a new era of transatlantic travel,

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00:21:20,000 --> 00:21:23,000

powered by fleets of majestic airships called Zeppelins.

211

00:21:24,000 --> 00:21:30,000

These dirigibles are as elegant as any cruise ship, and nearly twice as fast.

212

00:21:31,000 --> 00:21:33,000

So the future belonged to the Zeppelin.

213

00:21:34,000 --> 00:21:37,000

They were the natural successors to the ocean liner.

214

00:21:38,000 --> 00:21:46,000

The most impressive of these wonders is the German airship LZ129, the Hindenburg.

215

00:21:47,000 --> 00:21:50,000

It's the largest object to ever soar through the sky.

216

00:21:52,000 --> 00:21:58,000

It's 804 feet long, 130 feet high, as high as a 13-story building.

217

00:21:59,000 --> 00:22:04,000

And the secret to its power is the lighter-than-air gas contained within its cavernous frame.

218

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

It's filled with 7 million cubic feet of hydrogen to lift it.

219

00:22:10,000 --> 00:22:14,000

But it's not just the technical specs that are designed to impress.

220

00:22:15,000 --> 00:22:20,000

The Hindenburg is a sky-born showcase of unparalleled opulence.

221

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

There were 70 passenger cabins, there was a restaurant,

222

00:22:25,000 --> 00:22:27,000

and there were two promenades and sets of windows.

223

00:22:28,000 --> 00:22:34,000

But for all its superlatives, this magnificent airliner will soon be mired in tragedy.

224

00:22:43,000 --> 00:22:46,000

May 6, 1937, 7 p.m.

225

00:22:48,000 --> 00:22:51,000

After being delayed by several hours by thunderstorms,

226

00:22:52,000 --> 00:22:58,000

the Hindenburg nears the end of a three-day journey from Frankfurt, Germany to Leikers, New Jersey.

227

00:22:59,000 --> 00:23:04,000

Among the 97 people on board are journalists, executives, and even a prized pet,

228

00:23:05,000 --> 00:23:10,000

a German shepherd belonging to a famous vaudeville comedian in Acrobat, Joseph Spa.

229

00:23:14,000 --> 00:23:19,000

But at 721, with the Hindenburg directly over Leikers Naval Air Station,

230

00:23:19,000 --> 00:23:21,000

something goes horribly wrong.

231

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

Suddenly, someone noses flames on the back of the ship.

232

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

Within seconds, the Zeppelin is engulfed in a terrifying fireball.

233

00:23:34,000 --> 00:23:37,000

The flames burn down to the side of the ship, the ship starts to sink.

234

00:23:38,000 --> 00:23:43,000

Passengers are having to make the choice of jumping out of the craft or dying in the flames.

235

00:23:44,000 --> 00:23:51,000

Some leap up to 200 feet in a desperate bid for survival, including Joseph Spa,

236

00:23:52,000 --> 00:23:55,000

whose athleticism helps him evade an almost certain death.

237

00:23:56,000 --> 00:24:02,000

He smashed the window and jumped out, hung from the side for a few moments, and then dropped the ground.

238

00:24:04,000 --> 00:24:10,000

But many are trapped in the giant inferno, and the horrifying spectacle of the Hindenburg nears the end.

239

00:24:13,000 --> 00:24:15,000

The entire event lasts just 37 seconds.

240

00:24:16,000 --> 00:24:19,000

When it's over, 36 people are dead.

241

00:24:20,000 --> 00:24:25,000

62 survive, but many are left with life-altering injuries.

242

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

The entire event lasts just 37 seconds.

243

00:24:32,000 --> 00:24:35,000

When it's over, 36 people are dead.

244

00:24:36,000 --> 00:24:40,000

62 survive, but many are left with life-altering injuries.

245

00:24:43,000 --> 00:24:50,000

U.S. and German officials open an investigation, sifting through the wreckage for clues as to the disaster's cause.

246

00:24:51,000 --> 00:24:56,000

But they didn't find anything that immediately indicated what the problem was, so they're left with a mystery.

247

00:24:58,000 --> 00:25:06,000

But strangely, their inquiry lasts only 18 days, a haste that arouses suspicion on both sides of the Atlantic.

248

00:25:06,000 --> 00:25:08,000

Some people think that was too quick.

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00:25:09,000 --> 00:25:14,000

Were the United States and Germany trying to sweep things on the rug to avoid an international incident?

250

00:25:15,000 --> 00:25:16,000

So was there a cover-up?

251

00:25:17,000 --> 00:25:20,000

And if so, what really brought down the Hindenburg?

252

00:25:26,000 --> 00:25:28,000

It's May 6, 1937.

253

00:25:29,000 --> 00:25:35,000

The Hindenburg airship has exploded and crashed in Lakehurst, New Jersey, killing 36 people and shocking the world.

254

00:25:36,000 --> 00:25:42,000

While many believe this disaster was just a freak accident, some suspect more sinister forces at work.

255

00:25:43,000 --> 00:25:45,000

So what really brought down the Hindenburg?

256

00:25:48,000 --> 00:25:57,000

While the Hindenburg's vast stores of hydrogen enabled the massive ship to float on air, it is also an extremely volatile substance.

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00:25:58,000 --> 00:26:01,000

They're setting on 7 million cubic feet of a highly explosive gas.

258

00:26:01,000 --> 00:26:10,000

One hypothesis is that lightning struck the zeppelin, causing the hydrogen to ignite.

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00:26:11,000 --> 00:26:15,000

Yet countless derogables have been hit by lightning before without bringing them down.

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00:26:16,000 --> 00:26:18,000

And there's another problem with this theory.

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00:26:19,000 --> 00:26:22,000

The strongest evidence against the lightning theory is simply the no-but season.

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00:26:23,000 --> 00:26:33,000

But even in the absence of lightning, some believe the Hindenburg may have picked up an electrical charge from the stormy skies, which could have sparked the explosion.

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00:26:35,000 --> 00:26:40,000

But others speculate a more sinister explanation is to blame.

264

00:26:41,000 --> 00:26:42,000

Sabotage.

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00:26:43,000 --> 00:26:51,000

In the years immediately preceding World War II, the giant zeppelin might have been an irresistible outlet for anti-German sentiment.

266

00:26:52,000 --> 00:26:57,000

If you wanted to strike at Nazi Germany, you would strike at the Hindenburg.

267

00:26:59,000 --> 00:27:02,000

But who would be bold enough to commit such an act?

268

00:27:03,000 --> 00:27:06,000

Several surviving crew members point to a possible culprit.

269

00:27:07,000 --> 00:27:09,000

The Acrobat, Joseph Spa.

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00:27:10,000 --> 00:27:15,000

They claim that Spa made anti-Nazi jokes throughout the transatlantic journey.

271

00:27:16,000 --> 00:27:20,000

He also made several trips to see his dog, who was being held in the stern.

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00:27:20,000 --> 00:27:25,000

He's the only passenger who has access to the rear of the ship by himself.

273

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

He was also an acrobat, which may have allowed him to climb up into the sections where they believed the fire started.

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00:27:34,000 --> 00:27:39,000

Some theorize that Spa could have planted an explosive device in the ship's stern.

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00:27:42,000 --> 00:27:47,000

But in spite of these accusations, investigators never found bomb fragments in the wreckage.

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00:27:47,000 --> 00:27:51,000

Nor any incriminating evidence to link Spa to such a plot.

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00:27:52,000 --> 00:27:56,000

There were a lot of people who were anti-Nazi. That doesn't necessarily mean you were Saboteur though.

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00:27:59,000 --> 00:28:04,000

And without conclusive evidence, the exact reason for the tragedy may never be known.

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00:28:05,000 --> 00:28:11,000

But one thing is certain. The Hindenburg disaster brought the age of the zeppelin to an end.

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00:28:12,000 --> 00:28:16,000

After this point, nobody's going to get on a potential bomb like this.

281

00:28:17,000 --> 00:28:19,000

They closed out the era of the airship.

282

00:28:22,000 --> 00:28:27,000

And today, this eerie outlying at the Naval Air Engineering Station in Lakehurst, New Jersey,

283

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

remains a solemn tribute to the victims of a tragedy the world will never forget.

284

00:28:42,000 --> 00:28:45,000

Los Angeles, California.

285

00:28:46,000 --> 00:28:54,000

Renowned as the entertainment capital of the world, it's estimated that one in every six of the city's residents works in a creative industry.

286

00:28:56,000 --> 00:29:04,000

And at Tinseltown's heart lies a celebrated sidewalk, spanning one of the most popular boulevards on the planet.

287

00:29:04,000 --> 00:29:16,000

Millions of people from around the world come just to walk it. It features three foot by three foot squares, which feature a five point star.

288

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

Talked among the world famous stars on Hollywood's Walk of Fame is one that museum curator Jeffrey Richardson has a special interest in.

289

00:29:26,000 --> 00:29:37,000

He belongs to Hedy Lamar, the legendary actress of the 1930s and 40s, who famously starred in the Cecil B. DeMille epic, Samson and Delilah.

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00:29:40,000 --> 00:29:45,000

But there was far more to this silver screen icon than most moviegoers ever knew.

291

00:29:46,000 --> 00:29:52,000

She was known as one of the most beautiful women in the world, but her greatest contribution was her intellect.

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00:29:53,000 --> 00:29:59,000

What unusual accomplishment helped this Hollywood glamour queen change the course of history?

293

00:30:03,000 --> 00:30:14,000

Hollywood, California. European actress Hedy Lamar bursts onto American movie screens with a head turning role in the 1938 film *Al Gears*,

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00:30:15,000 --> 00:30:20,000

and is subsequently cast in a string of movies as an exotic seductress.

295

00:30:20,000 --> 00:30:29,000

This is at a time when there were really great starlets of the golden age of Hollywood, but her beauty really put her at the forefront.

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

But Lamar doesn't only want to be known for her appearance.

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00:30:35,000 --> 00:30:41,000

The one thing most people did not recognize is that she was also extremely intelligent.

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00:30:42,000 --> 00:30:49,000

As a child in Austria, she was enthralled by her father's explanations of how street cars and printing presses work,

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00:30:50,000 --> 00:30:56,000

and developed a keen interest in mathematics, a passion she never outgrew, even with her increased fame.

300

00:30:58,000 --> 00:31:09,000

Over the years, she becomes a prolific tinkerer, developing dozens of small-time inventions, from a light-up dog collar to a bullion cube that could carbonate water.

301

00:31:11,000 --> 00:31:21,000

And although the starlet is at the peak of her movie career, Lamar also finds time to devote her intellect to combating the greatest threat to freedom the world has ever known.

302

00:31:24,000 --> 00:31:30,000

1940, World War II. German U-boats are attacking the Atlantic convoys.

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

But when the U.S. Navy tries to sink them, the U-boats manage to jam the torpedo's guidance systems to evade a direct hit.

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00:31:39,000 --> 00:31:42,000

And the ingenious Lamar is determined to come up with a solution.

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00:31:44,000 --> 00:31:49,000

Hedy Lamar was trying to focus on ways that would allow torpedoes to hit their mark.

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00:31:51,000 --> 00:32:00,000

Together with a fellow tinkerer named George Antheal, Lamar realizes that by transmitting radio signals along rapidly changing frequencies,

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00:32:01,000 --> 00:32:05,000

radio-guided torpedoes would be far less susceptible to jamming by German forces.

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00:32:06,000 --> 00:32:16,000

The two map out a design and get a patent for this secret communication system, all the while keeping the precise details and purpose out of the public eye.

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00:32:17,000 --> 00:32:22,000

It was of such importance to national security that they couldn't even discuss the specifics of it.

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

U.S. officials read over the designs, but are as skeptical of its value as they are of the movie icon's ability as an inventor.

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00:32:33,000 --> 00:32:39,000

As a result of their limited background in scientific, technical matters, the Navy turns it down.

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00:32:40,000 --> 00:32:49,000

Hedy Lamar is devastated, but little does she know that her invention will play a vital role in another potentially deadly conflict.

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00:32:50,000 --> 00:32:53,000

It's 1940, Los Angeles.

314

00:32:54,000 --> 00:33:05,000

Movie star turned inventor Hedy Lamar has designed a top secret torpedo guidance system that she thinks will change the course of World War II.

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00:33:06,000 --> 00:33:10,000

But the U.S. Navy rejects the idea, leaving the actress devastated.

316

00:33:11,000 --> 00:33:16,000

So can this movie icon convince the military that her invention actually works?

317

00:33:17,000 --> 00:33:31,000

In the early 1950s, Lamar's movie career goes into decline, and the actress, whose stunning beauty and screen presence once captivated directors and audiences alike, slowly fades from the public view.

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00:33:32,000 --> 00:33:38,000

And with World War II long over, her patent languishes in the Navy archives.

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00:33:39,000 --> 00:33:54,000

Then in 1959, as Cold War tensions mount, U.S. military officials find themselves in desperate need for a covert means of communication to outfox Russian intelligence.

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00:33:55,000 --> 00:34:02,000

And sifting through naval archives, an engineer unearths an expired patent that he thinks just might work.

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00:34:03,000 --> 00:34:05,000

Hedy Lamar's secret communication system.

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00:34:06,000 --> 00:34:12,000

The United States Navy comes to recognize its really revolutionary ramifications.

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00:34:13,000 --> 00:34:23,000

Using the latest transistors and electronics, the Navy updates Lamar's original design and employs the technology to communicate secretly between its warships.

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00:34:26,000 --> 00:34:30,000

And in 1962, the system proves its worth.

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00:34:30,000 --> 00:34:37,000

Not in torpedoes as they originally had envisioned, it really finds a practical use during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

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00:34:38,000 --> 00:34:44,000

The updated version of Lamar's original secret communication system cannot be cracked by enemy forces.

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00:34:46,000 --> 00:34:56,000

And over the ensuing decade, the U.S. employs it in various military communications, allowing them to outmaneuver the Russians and keep the world safe from nuclear war.

328

00:34:57,000 --> 00:35:01,000

But Lamar's legacy doesn't stop there.

329

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

Today, her breakthrough concept remains an integral part of everyday life.

330

00:35:08,000 --> 00:35:11,000

We see this invention in most notably Bluetooth technology.

331

00:35:12,000 --> 00:35:19,000

The same Bluetooth that you use on your phone is a direct result of what Hedy Lamar had proposed decades before.

332

00:35:20,000 --> 00:35:34,000

And here, on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Hedy Lamar's star still shines bright, commemorating a woman whose beauty and brains influenced not only the silver screen, but the course of history itself.

333

00:35:38,000 --> 00:35:46,000

In southeast Utah, near the small town of Escalante, are two million acres of breathtaking wilderness.

334

00:35:47,000 --> 00:35:54,000

This vast maze of red rock, canyon sprawls across one of the most remarkable landscapes in North America.

335

00:35:55,000 --> 00:36:04,000

This is the Grand Staircase Escalante, the largest and, according to some, most spectacular national monument in the United States.

336

00:36:06,000 --> 00:36:15,000

But few realize that this vast, mesmerizing terrain holds the secret to one of the most baffling disappearances of all time.

337

00:36:16,000 --> 00:36:24,000

And it's here that a young man vanished off the face of the earth, one of the great mysteries in the history of the American West.

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00:36:25,000 --> 00:36:28,000

So what happened in the depths of this forbidding wilderness?

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00:36:30,000 --> 00:36:33,000

1930, Oakland, California.

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00:36:34,000 --> 00:36:43,000

While millions of Americans are in the grips of the Great Depression, 16-year-old artist Everett Roos determines to shape his own destiny.

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00:36:44,000 --> 00:36:58,000

Inspired by landscape photographer Ansel Adams, Roos decides to explore the most remote regions of America, recording his experiences through his watercolor painting and his ever-present diary.

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00:36:59,000 --> 00:37:05,000

His desire to see the most spectacular places of the West grew into an obsession.

343

00:37:05,000 --> 00:37:12,000

For four years, Everett treks through the West's most rugged landscapes.

344

00:37:13,000 --> 00:37:15,000

From Yosemite to the Grand Canyon.

345

00:37:18,000 --> 00:37:24,000

And by the winter of 1934, the vagabond arrives in stunning southern Utah.

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00:37:27,000 --> 00:37:34,000

Before heading into the expanse of region, now known as the Grand Staircase Escalante, Everett writes to his family.

347

00:37:36,000 --> 00:37:44,000

He informs them that the next post office he expects to pick up mail from is 200 miles away in Marble Canyon, Arizona.

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00:37:45,000 --> 00:37:52,000

The next morning, Everett sets off into the wilderness, equipped with two burrows to carry his gear.

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00:37:55,000 --> 00:38:01,000

Almost three months go by when Everett's family receives an alarming item of mail.

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00:38:02,000 --> 00:38:08,000

A packet of letters they had sent to Everett in Marble Canyon has been returned to them, marked as unclaimed.

351

00:38:09,000 --> 00:38:15,000

Immediately they have this sense that something is seriously wrong.

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00:38:17,000 --> 00:38:24,000

Desperate to track Everett down, his family dispatches a search party from Escalante to follow in his footsteps.

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00:38:25,000 --> 00:38:28,000

And on the outskirts of town, they get their first lead.

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

The search party yielded a pretty spectacular clue, his two burrows.

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

So this appeared to be Everett's camp.

356

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

There were tracks all around the campsite, but the tracks seemed to just disappear.

357

00:38:46,000 --> 00:38:49,000

It seemed as if he had literally vanished.

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00:38:50,000 --> 00:38:58,000

After exhaustive searches throughout the region, Everett Roos is finally presumed dead.

359

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

His story could easily have been forgotten.

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00:39:03,000 --> 00:39:08,000

Were it not for his family, who publishes a collection of their son's letters in 1940,

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00:39:09,000 --> 00:39:14,000

and his evocative prose captivates the public in a way no one expected.

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00:39:15,000 --> 00:39:20,000

He had done things that many people wished they had.

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00:39:21,000 --> 00:39:26,000

He became an almost mythical figure in the American Southwest.

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00:39:30,000 --> 00:39:34,000

As Everett's cult status grows, and based in part on his writings,

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00:39:35,000 --> 00:39:41,000

some assert that the young man deliberately chose the wilds of Escalante as the place to take his own life.

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00:39:44,000 --> 00:39:49,000

At the heart of the theories of his disappearance was he just chose such a dangerous location,

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00:39:50,000 --> 00:39:53,000

because he didn't want to ever come back.

368

00:39:54,000 --> 00:39:59,000

But others wonder if Roos could have simply succumbed to the violence of the wild west.

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

There were local Neridwells who prowled around the Escalante region.

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

One of the theories was they killed him and then hid his body somewhere.

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00:40:11,000 --> 00:40:16,000

With no concrete evidence, it appears the truth may never be known.

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00:40:19,000 --> 00:40:26,000

But in May 2008, 75 years after his disappearance, a surprising new lead emerges.

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00:40:27,000 --> 00:40:32,000

The FBI is called in to investigate a gravesite found near Bluff Utah.

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

Are these the remains of Everett Roos?

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00:40:41,000 --> 00:40:46,000

In the mid 1930s, 20 year old artist and wanderer Everett Roos disappears

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00:40:47,000 --> 00:40:50,000

while trekking in the vast wilderness surrounding Escalante, Utah.

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00:40:51,000 --> 00:40:57,000

For the next 75 years, people all around the world speculate on what might have happened to the young vagabond.

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00:40:58,000 --> 00:41:03,000

Then in 2008, a new lead emerges that could solve the mystery once and for all.

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00:41:04,000 --> 00:41:14,000

After the FBI investigates an anonymous gravesite, DNA tests on the remains are compared to samples procured from Everett's relatives.

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00:41:15,000 --> 00:41:22,000

The circumstances seemed to conclusively show that this was the skeleton of Everett Roos.

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00:41:23,000 --> 00:41:26,000

A very big mystery finally solved.

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00:41:27,000 --> 00:41:31,000

But just two months later, those hopes are dashed.

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00:41:33,000 --> 00:41:39,000

It turns out that due to a software glitch, the original DNA tests were wrong.

384

00:41:40,000 --> 00:41:43,000

The body was not that of Everett Roos.

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00:41:45,000 --> 00:41:49,000

To this day, no one knows what became of the young vagabond.

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

It's an enduring mystery. Everett Roos remains one of the most completely vanished people of the 20th century.

387

00:41:58,000 --> 00:42:10,000

Today, the grand staircase Escalante is now a national monument that will always serve as a reminder of the legendary young man who disappeared without a trace.

388

00:42:13,000 --> 00:42:21,000

From a race to the skies to an airborne disaster, a marble crypt to a Hollywood star.

389

00:42:21,000 --> 00:42:27,000

I'm Don Wildman and these are Monumental Mysteries.