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

A dramatic statue of fierce and unlikely heroine.

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

What she was facing that night was a very strong possibility of death.

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

The most notorious storage shed in America.

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

It was Bedlam, Boston Sirens, and emergency vehicles.

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

And an epic memorial to a vessel that mysteriously vanished beneath the waves.

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

Why did she go down? Was she attacked?

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

Sometimes the greatest secrets lie in plain sight.

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

These are monumental mysteries.

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

Deep in the remote highlands of northwest Arkansas is a charming and picturesque town,

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

which is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

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

There are no two dwellings alike. There are no two streets alike.

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

The whole place is very romantic.

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

But according to local history expert Keith Scales,

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00:01:04,000 --> 00:01:11,000

this secluded Ozark community owes its unlikely existence to a unique geological feature.

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00:01:11,000 --> 00:01:18,000

There was no reason for a town to be here at all except for the springs, the magic springs.

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00:01:18,000 --> 00:01:24,000

Named for its supposedly curative waters, used to treat every manner of ailment,

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00:01:24,000 --> 00:01:28,000

this is the landmark town of Eureka Springs.

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00:01:30,000 --> 00:01:34,000

But of the many stories that have arisen from this therapeutic mecca,

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

there is one that had a truly tragic ending.

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00:01:37,000 --> 00:01:43,000

Thousands of people came here on the hope that they could be cured by something terribly wrong.

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00:01:44,000 --> 00:01:50,000

What appalling scandal shook the foundation of this mountain retreat to its very core.

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00:01:51,000 --> 00:01:54,000

The 1930s, Eureka Springs.

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00:01:56,000 --> 00:02:01,000

For more than 50 years, the mineral-rich waters of this Arkansas mountain town

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00:02:01,000 --> 00:02:05,000

have drawn countless visitors in search of health and vitality.

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00:02:05,000 --> 00:02:10,000

And one of the biggest local enterprises in the town is the Crescent Hotel.

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00:02:11,000 --> 00:02:19,000

But as the Great Depression hits, the Grand Hotel, along with the rest of the town of Eureka Springs, falls on hard times.

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00:02:20,000 --> 00:02:24,000

When the depression came along, the hotel just closed down.

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00:02:25,000 --> 00:02:30,000

Until one day, when an elegant stranger arrives at the derelict hotel.

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00:02:31,000 --> 00:02:33,000

His name is Norman Baker.

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00:02:34,000 --> 00:02:43,000

He said that he would like to buy this building and that he promised to restore Eureka Springs to its position as a famous place of healing.

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00:02:44,000 --> 00:02:52,000

When the deal goes through, Baker throws an extravagant party for local dignitaries on the grounds of the former hotel.

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00:02:53,000 --> 00:02:56,000

And there he reveals his ambitious scheme.

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

He plans to open a hospital on the site, and one he claims will revolutionize medical science.

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

He came to Eureka Springs to cure the most deadly ailments of humanity of all, cancer.

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

Claiming conventional medicine is futile.

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00:03:14,000 --> 00:03:19,000

Baker describes the miracle cure with which he intends to base his treatments.

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00:03:19,000 --> 00:03:22,000

Its name? Secret Remedy Number 5.

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00:03:23,000 --> 00:03:32,000

And thanks to an ambitious direct mail campaign, within months, hundreds of cancer sufferers are flooding into the town of Eureka Springs.

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

And each new patient is anxious to begin their regimen of injections of Secret Remedy Number 5.

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00:03:40,000 --> 00:03:43,000

He very quickly filled his hospital.

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00:03:43,000 --> 00:03:49,000

So suddenly Eureka Springs rose from the dust, and everybody was making money, and everybody loved Norman Baker.

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00:03:51,000 --> 00:03:55,000

But the town of Eureka Springs is in for a shocking revelation.

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00:03:57,000 --> 00:04:06,000

One of the local officials who supported Norman Baker in his bid to open his cancer hospital is the influential Arkansas Congressman Claude Fuller.

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

And one day the Congressman receives a troubling letter.

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

It is from the daughter of one of Baker's former patients.

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00:04:14,000 --> 00:04:20,000

The letter accuses Baker of peddling false hope to the desperate victims of the deadly disease.

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00:04:21,000 --> 00:04:29,000

Fuller started to wonder if perhaps the man was actually a charlatan who was doing a lot more harm to his patients than he was doing good.

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00:04:29,000 --> 00:04:36,000

Determined to get at the truth, Congressman Fuller launches an inquiry into the hospital and its owner, Norman Baker.

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00:04:37,000 --> 00:04:40,000

What investigators uncover is surprising.

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00:04:41,000 --> 00:04:47,000

Not only had he never set foot in medical school in his life, but his original success had been in Waterville.

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00:04:48,000 --> 00:04:52,000

It had been 10 years on a Waterville stage doing magic acts and levitating people.

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00:04:53,000 --> 00:05:05,000

And when they study the content of his secret remedy number five, what they find is actually a mixture of ground-up watermelon seeds, brown corn silk, peppermint, and carboly acid.

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00:05:06,000 --> 00:05:11,000

A bizarre concoction that seems to hold little prospect of curing anything.

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00:05:12,000 --> 00:05:18,000

Although his actions appear despicable, it's not clear whether Baker has actually broken the law.

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00:05:19,000 --> 00:05:21,000

But Congressman Fuller is determined to act.

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00:05:22,000 --> 00:05:24,000

Fuller had been a lawyer, a prosecuting attorney.

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00:05:25,000 --> 00:05:31,000

And I think when he decided to go after Baker, he had to be definitive.

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

It couldn't be something that Baker could wriggle out of.

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00:05:34,000 --> 00:05:41,000

They eventually charged him with a federal crime, misuse of the US mail's fraudulent purposes.

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00:05:43,000 --> 00:05:50,000

Baker has been suing prospective cancer patients through a constant stream of letters, filled with categorical guarantees of a cure.

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00:05:51,000 --> 00:05:55,000

And since the claims are provably false, Baker has committed fraud.

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00:05:56,000 --> 00:05:57,000

Mail fraud.

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

And although it seems like a minor charge in light of the horrific facts of the case, the charges stick.

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

On January 24th, 1940, three years after he arrived in Eureka Springs, Norman Baker is found guilty.

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

He was given four years in Livermore's prison and a \$4,000 fine.

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00:06:22,000 --> 00:06:27,000

There's no way to know for certain how many victims perished under his care.

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00:06:28,000 --> 00:06:34,000

But there are chilling rumors of how he may have concealed the dismal results of his bogus treatments from other patients.

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00:06:36,000 --> 00:06:39,000

There is an annex that was essentially a pain ward.

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00:06:39,000 --> 00:06:44,000

This is where he would put people who were in so much suffering, they were disturbing other people in other parts of the building.

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

And the story is that he had steel shutters on the end of those wards to kind of contain the sounds.

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00:06:50,000 --> 00:06:56,000

It's said that the bodies of the dead were wheeled out of this ward late at night and incinerated.

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

In the end, the fraudulent administrator is believed to have fleeced more than \$4 million from his patients' pockets, or \$65 million in today's currency.

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00:07:10,000 --> 00:07:18,000

After serving out his four-year term in prison, Norman Baker moves to Florida, where he meets a most ironic fate.

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00:07:18,000 --> 00:07:21,000

His cause of death is cancer of the liver.

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00:07:23,000 --> 00:07:30,000

Six years after Baker's hospital is closed down, the Grand Crescent Hotel reopens for business.

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00:07:31,000 --> 00:07:38,000

And today, the landmark town of Eureka Springs stands as a symbol of gracious southern hospitality,

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00:07:38,000 --> 00:07:45,000

but will be forever remembered for the sideshow swindler who peddled hope, but delivered only grief.

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00:07:49,000 --> 00:07:55,000

Founded in 1795, the town of Carmel, New York overlooks the majestic Lake Glenita.

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00:07:56,000 --> 00:08:01,000

And amidst the sometimes snowy hills that line the shores of this pristine reservoir,

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

is a larger-than-life bronze statue that depicts an unlikely heroine riding side saddle on a galloping steed.

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00:08:09,000 --> 00:08:17,000

The statue is of a young girl bent over, fair-slope on her face, stick in hand. Obviously a girl on a mission.

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00:08:18,000 --> 00:08:26,000

As author Vincent DeQuino knows, despite her diminutive stature, this girl possessed colossal amounts of courage.

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00:08:26,000 --> 00:08:30,000

She took her life in her hands for her country, for freedom.

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

So who was this brave young girl, and what role did she play in battling the most formidable army of the day?

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00:08:39,000 --> 00:08:49,000

1777. The War of Independence is in full swing, as the North American colonies seek to free themselves from the shackles of the British.

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00:08:50,000 --> 00:08:56,000

One of the key strategic locations in this conflict is the New York Hudson River Valley,

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

a rebel stronghold which connects the colonies in the north to the mid-Atlantic region.

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

If that area was attacked, it would have cut off the zone between Connecticut and New York.

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00:09:10,000 --> 00:09:15,000

Among those protecting the area is Colonel Henry Luddington of Dutchess County.

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00:09:16,000 --> 00:09:22,000

He was in charge of a volunteer force of 400 men.

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00:09:23,000 --> 00:09:29,000

April 26th. A messenger arrives at the Colonel's home with alarming news.

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

British troops have made an assault on Danbury, Connecticut, 15 miles away, and are laying waste to everything in their path.

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00:09:40,000 --> 00:09:47,000

What was crucial about Danbury was that flour, weapons, guns were hidden in homes.

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00:09:47,000 --> 00:09:51,000

So they burned homes down. They killed citizens.

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

To have any chance of holding on to the Hudson Valley, the Colonel must rouse the local militia and fast.

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

But it's late at night, and the messenger is not familiar with the area.

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00:10:05,000 --> 00:10:12,000

He didn't know where these men lived. The Colonel had 400 men tucked away in little dirt rolls.

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00:10:13,000 --> 00:10:16,000

But help comes from a most unexpected quarter.

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00:10:17,000 --> 00:10:21,000

His daughter, Sybil, said father, send me.

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00:10:23,000 --> 00:10:29,000

16-year-old Sybil Luddington is the Colonel's oldest daughter and known as a highly skilled horsewoman.

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00:10:30,000 --> 00:10:36,000

She was the only one who knew where to go. There was no one else who could have made that journey that night.

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00:10:37,000 --> 00:10:42,000

But the young Patriots offer immediately strikes terror in her conflicted father's heart.

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00:10:42,000 --> 00:10:47,000

What she was facing that night was a very strong possibility of death.

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00:10:47,000 --> 00:10:51,000

Yet with Danbury burning, the Colonel knows he has no choice.

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00:10:53,000 --> 00:10:59,000

As tough of a decision was, he had to take the chance of sacrificing his oldest daughter.

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

Sybil mounts her horse and rides off into the night.

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00:11:05,000 --> 00:11:08,000

There is no question about the difficulty of what she was about to do.

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00:11:08,000 --> 00:11:13,000

But her father, her neighbors, her family's lives were at stake.

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00:11:14,000 --> 00:11:19,000

Will Sybil rouse the militia in time to stave off the marauding British?

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00:11:23,000 --> 00:11:28,000

It's April 26th, 1777, the height of the Revolutionary War.

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00:11:29,000 --> 00:11:36,000

British troops have landed at Danbury, Connecticut and laid waste to the town, vowing to root out the rebels and try them for treason.

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00:11:37,000 --> 00:11:43,000

When 16-year-old Sybil Luddington, whose father is a Colonel in the Revolution, hears of the raid.

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00:11:43,000 --> 00:11:48,000

She leaps on her horse and makes a desperate bid to rouse the region's militia.

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00:11:48,000 --> 00:11:50,000

So will Sybil make it through?

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00:11:52,000 --> 00:11:56,000

Sybil rides through the darkness, stopping at farms and homesteads along the way.

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

And at each, she gives the same urgent cry.

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00:12:01,000 --> 00:12:04,000

Quickly, muster at the parade grounds.

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00:12:04,000 --> 00:12:06,000

Colonel Luddington needs you.

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00:12:06,000 --> 00:12:08,000

Danbury is burning.

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00:12:08,000 --> 00:12:14,000

From Carmel to Mayopic to the village of Stormville, Sybil rides to rally the troops.

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00:12:15,000 --> 00:12:18,000

Finally, all 400 men were alerted.

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00:12:19,000 --> 00:12:24,000

One of the most amazing things about this ride is that Paul Revere went 12 miles.

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00:12:24,000 --> 00:12:25,000

Sybil went 40.

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

Paul Revere was 40-something. Sybil was barely 16.

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00:12:31,000 --> 00:12:38,000

And when her journey is complete, she returns home to find hundreds of soldiers gathered on the grounds, ready to march.

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00:12:39,000 --> 00:12:44,000

It must have been magnificent. Those men had to be screaming, who's that?

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

And her father, who saw his daughter alive and well, her mission accomplished.

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00:12:52,000 --> 00:12:59,000

Colonel Luddington and his men, joined by three other colonial regiments, press on toward Danbury.

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00:12:59,000 --> 00:13:03,000

They blocked British troops and forced them back to their ships.

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00:13:04,000 --> 00:13:10,000

Luddington and his men pushed him back, and Sybil Luddington helped us to achieve that.

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00:13:12,000 --> 00:13:17,000

In 1961, a statue of Sybil Luddington is erected in Carmel.

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00:13:17,000 --> 00:13:21,000

Just one of the many towns she bravely rode through that night.

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00:13:23,000 --> 00:13:28,000

Sybil Luddington traveled as far and as fast as Paul Revere.

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00:13:28,000 --> 00:13:32,000

She deserves her place in our American history.

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00:13:33,000 --> 00:13:43,000

And today, the imposing sculpture of the fierce, tiny figure, endures as a testament to her remarkable courage in the face of unimaginable danger.

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00:13:48,000 --> 00:13:55,000

The remote Rocky Mountain town of Netherland, Colorado, stands at more than 8,000 feet above sea level.

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00:13:56,000 --> 00:14:00,000

We have a beautiful view of the Indian Peaks Wilderness area.

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

The continental divide is our backdrop of our community.

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00:14:06,000 --> 00:14:15,000

But Netherland is best known not for its spectacular vistas, but rather this pedestrian structure that sits on the outskirts of town.

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00:14:15,000 --> 00:14:16,000

A shed.

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00:14:17,000 --> 00:14:22,000

It's maybe 150 square feet, but there is something special about this shed.

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

This simple hut has inspired media frenzies, legal struggles, and even festivals.

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00:14:32,000 --> 00:14:35,000

So what lies within the Netherland shed?

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00:14:37,000 --> 00:14:39,000

The 1990s, Netherland, Colorado.

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00:14:40,000 --> 00:14:46,000

For years, this high-altitude haven has boasted a colorful array of local characters.

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00:14:46,000 --> 00:14:55,000

We do attract a certain element of people who feel like perhaps they're misfits in the rest of the world, but they're going to be accepted here in Netherland.

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00:14:57,000 --> 00:15:05,000

And no one fits this description more than Norwegian immigrant Odd Morstal, who lives alone in a house on the outskirts of town.

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00:15:06,000 --> 00:15:10,000

In 1994, Odd applies for a building permit to enlarge her home.

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

But before it can be granted, town officials must conduct an inspection of the property.

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00:15:16,000 --> 00:15:22,000

What they found was less of a house and more of something that looked like a fortress.

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00:15:23,000 --> 00:15:30,000

There was no running water and no electricity, but it was built to withstand the apocalypse.

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00:15:31,000 --> 00:15:35,000

In violation of zoning laws, the property is condemned by town officials.

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

And Odd is served with an eviction notice.

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00:15:39,000 --> 00:15:42,000

But the eccentric Scandinavian appeals the decision.

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00:15:43,000 --> 00:15:49,000

And when her case is heard at a town board meeting, she makes a bizarre and disturbing statement.

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00:15:50,000 --> 00:15:54,000

She'd said, but who will take care of the bodies?

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00:15:55,000 --> 00:15:57,000

Mayhem erupted.

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00:15:57,000 --> 00:16:00,000

What bodies is she talking about?

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00:16:01,000 --> 00:16:09,000

Stunned by her claim that there are bodies on her property, town officials immediately dispatched the local police to investigate.

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00:16:10,000 --> 00:16:14,000

It was bedlam, lots of sirens and emergency vehicles.

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00:16:15,000 --> 00:16:21,000

After conducting an extensive search of her home, police find a brown storage shed in the backyard.

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00:16:23,000 --> 00:16:26,000

And they open up the doors.

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00:16:27,000 --> 00:16:28,000

To see what's inside.

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00:16:29,000 --> 00:16:34,000

Inside, they find a large styrofoam box about the size of a bed.

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00:16:35,000 --> 00:16:38,000

When they lift the lid, they make an alarming discovery.

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00:16:39,000 --> 00:16:43,000

And what they find is a frozen dead body.

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00:16:44,000 --> 00:16:49,000

So what bizarre deeds have been performed in this humble Colorado shed?

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00:16:50,000 --> 00:16:53,000

It's 1994 in Nederland, Colorado.

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00:16:54,000 --> 00:16:58,000

64-year-old Norwegian immigrant Odd Morshto is in a heap of trouble.

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00:16:59,000 --> 00:17:03,000

Police have found something astonishing in the shed in her backyard.

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

A frozen corpse.

172

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

So what's this eccentric woman up to?

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00:17:11,000 --> 00:17:15,000

Inside Odd's shed, police make another shocking discovery.

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

A second frozen body.

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

Police are horrified and they demand to know what's going on.

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00:17:23,000 --> 00:17:29,000

Under interrogation, Odd confesses that one of the bodies is that of her very own father, Brado

Morshtal.

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00:17:32,000 --> 00:17:39,000

The story began five years earlier in Norway, when Brado Morshtal died suddenly of a heart attack.

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00:17:39,000 --> 00:17:46,000

His distraught grandson, Trig Fibaga, who had long believed that medical science would eventually make it possible to resurrect frozen dead bodies, makes a rather unconventional decision.

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00:17:47,000 --> 00:17:53,000

To ship the body to the trans-time cryonics facility in California to be cryonically preserved.

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

A process that uses liquid nitrogen to keep the remains frozen at about negative 200 degrees Celsius.

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

But preserving grandpa Brado in California proved to be expensive.

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

So eventually, Trig V and his mother, Odd, decided to move the body to Chile, Netherlands,

Colorado, to do the preserving themselves.

183

00:18:15,000 --> 00:18:22,000

The family is so intrigued with cryonics, they decided to move the body to the trans-time cryonics facility in California.

184

00:18:22,000 --> 00:18:29,000

And so, as Odd informs police, the second body found in her shed belongs to their first customer, a man named Al from Chicago, who had requested that his body be frozen in his will.

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00:18:31,000 --> 00:18:36,000

After Odd's death, Brado Morshtal, who was a doctor, says that his body was frozen in his will.

186

00:18:37,000 --> 00:18:40,000

He says that his body was frozen in his will.

187

00:18:41,000 --> 00:18:44,000

He says that his body was frozen in his will.

188

00:18:44,000 --> 00:18:49,000

A man named Al from Chicago, who had requested that his body be frozen in his will.

189

00:18:51,000 --> 00:18:58,000

After Odd's extraordinary confession, it appears at the very least that she has violated local zoning regulations.

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00:19:01,000 --> 00:19:11,000

And while Al's body is sent home to his family in Chicago, the town council eventually determines to allow Odd to keep grandpa Brado in her shed in Netherlands.

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00:19:12,000 --> 00:19:18,000

People of the town came to grandpa's defense and said, hey, no, we want him to stay. This is cool. We want him here.

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00:19:20,000 --> 00:19:32,000

Odd has since moved back to Norway, but the family continues to pay for fresh deliveries of ice to the shed in Netherlands, which is now famous as one of the most unusual mausoleums in America.

193

00:19:32,000 --> 00:19:41,000

We knew that the stigma was never going to go away. We were the place where the frozen dead guy was.

194

00:19:42,000 --> 00:19:51,000

And in 2002, the town launches what is now one of the top small town festivals in the country. Frozen Dead Guy days.

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00:19:52,000 --> 00:19:58,000

We have the antique hearse parade, coffin races. It's so much fun.

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00:19:59,000 --> 00:20:14,000

And every March when the festival takes place, pilgrims visit the scenic hilltop on the outskirts of town to pay tribute to grandpa Brado, who still resides in his frosty bed inside this now famous storage shed.

197

00:20:15,000 --> 00:20:34,000

Edwards, California, home of the Edwards Air Force Base. For more than 70 years, these high desert flatlands have served as an ideal testing ground for the nation's most iconic aircraft.

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

From U-2 spy planes to the early space shuttle modules.

199

00:20:42,000 --> 00:20:51,000

But far from the earsplitting runways here, in a grove of cottonwood trees stands a monument to a simple man and a great American hero.

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00:20:52,000 --> 00:20:58,000

It's a figure wearing an Air Force uniform. It's made of bronze, so it weighs about 500 pounds.

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00:20:59,000 --> 00:21:07,000

According to aerospace historian Peter Merlin, the statue celebrates one of the most important figures in modern aviation history.

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00:21:08,000 --> 00:21:14,000

The statue is a fine tribute to a man who changed the face of aerospace forever.

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

What role did this man play in a daring experiment that revolutionized modern flight?

204

00:21:22,000 --> 00:21:34,000

1941, Hamlin, West Virginia. In this rugged coal mining town deep in the Appalachian Mountains, lives an inquisitive teenager named Chuck Yeager.

205

00:21:35,000 --> 00:21:41,000

When he's not dismantling engines in his father's garage, Yeager is dreaming of speed.

206

00:21:42,000 --> 00:21:50,000

Chuck Yeager developed an early love of aviation and wanted to be a pilot. And as it turned out, his best route into flying was through the military.

207

00:21:51,000 --> 00:22:01,000

In 1941, three months before America entered World War II, Yeager joins the U.S. Army Air Corps, where he quickly impresses his commanding officers.

208

00:22:02,000 --> 00:22:09,000

Yeager was a natural pilot. He didn't have a college degree, but he really understood aerodynamics and flight.

209

00:22:10,000 --> 00:22:16,000

By 1943, at the age of 20, Yeager is a fighter pilot in the European theater.

210

00:22:17,000 --> 00:22:23,000

And during the course of World War II, he becomes one of the most decorated flyers in the U.S. Army Air Corps.

211

00:22:24,000 --> 00:22:32,000

A fighter pilot needs to shoot down at least five enemy planes to become an ace. Yeager shot down five in a single day.

212

00:22:32,000 --> 00:22:42,000

When the war ends, Yeager re-enlists with the U.S. Army Air Corps and is quickly promoted to test pilot on a top-secret project.

213

00:22:44,000 --> 00:22:50,000

To design and test the fastest plane in history, the Bell X-1.

214

00:22:51,000 --> 00:22:57,000

The X-1 was designed for one mission and one mission only, to fly faster than speed of sound.

215

00:22:58,000 --> 00:23:10,000

Until this point, pilots who flew at speeds approaching 700 miles per hour, the approximate speed at which sound travels, had reported some disturbing phenomena.

216

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

As they entered this trans-sonic region, their planes encountered disruptive shockwaves, causing many aircraft to break apart in flight.

217

00:23:19,000 --> 00:23:26,000

This hazardous speed, above which no plane was known to have survived, became known as the sound barrier.

218

00:23:27,000 --> 00:23:35,000

The Air Force designed an airplane that could fly into the supersonic region, and to be the first one to do it was to take a great risk.

219

00:23:36,000 --> 00:23:41,000

But the risk doesn't bother Chuck Yeager. In fact, he thrives on it.

220

00:23:42,000 --> 00:23:49,000

Flying is exciting. There's no question about it, and the kind of flying he was doing is probably the greatest adrenaline rush of all.

221

00:23:50,000 --> 00:24:01,000

Over the course of numerous test flights, the 24-year-old pilot gradually increases his flight speeds, until he is finally ready to try and break the sound barrier.

222

00:24:03,000 --> 00:24:07,000

October 14, 1947 was Chuck Yeager's date with destiny.

223

00:24:08,000 --> 00:24:13,000

But two days before the landmark attempt, disaster strikes.

224

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

Yeager breaks two of his ribs in a horse-riding accident.

225

00:24:19,000 --> 00:24:26,000

The ambitious young pilot knows that if the Air Force catches wind of his injury, they will oust him from the mission.

226

00:24:27,000 --> 00:24:31,000

So to what lengths will Chuck Yeager go to make the historic flight?

227

00:24:35,000 --> 00:24:39,000

October 1947, Lancaster, California.

228

00:24:39,000 --> 00:24:43,000

Test pilot Chuck Yeager is preparing to try and break the sound barrier.

229

00:24:44,000 --> 00:24:49,000

But two days before his historic flight, he fractures his ribs in a horseback-riding accident.

230

00:24:50,000 --> 00:24:57,000

Despite the excruciating pain, he's determined to hide his injury from the Air Force and complete his landmark mission.

231

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

But how will he do it?

232

00:25:01,000 --> 00:25:08,000

While Yeager is confident that he can fly the plane effectively, there is one aspect of the mission that he is concerned about.

233

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

With two broken ribs, it will be nearly impossible for him to close the heavy hatch on the X-1 cockpit.

234

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

He didn't have the full range of motion in his arm, so he needed a little something extra to get that hatch closed.

235

00:25:23,000 --> 00:25:30,000

To give himself the leverage he will need, Yeager conceals a makeshift tool in his flight suit, a sawed-off broom handle.

236

00:25:31,000 --> 00:25:37,000

Once he squeezes into the cockpit and sits down, he uses the broom handle to torque that hatch closed and locked.

237

00:25:37,000 --> 00:25:41,000

It's probably a great relief for him to finally settle down on the seat.

238

00:25:42,000 --> 00:25:44,000

But he's not out of the woods yet.

239

00:25:45,000 --> 00:25:51,000

The X-1 is designed to be released mid-flight from beneath the belly of a modified B-29 bomber.

240

00:25:52,000 --> 00:25:58,000

So as the massive mother ship nears 20,000 feet, Yeager girds himself for separation.

241

00:25:59,000 --> 00:26:03,000

They did a countdown and when they got to zero, the X-1 dropped away.

242

00:26:04,000 --> 00:26:10,000

Yeager flipped on the switches to ignite the four-chamber rocket engine and climbed to altitude.

243

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

Leveling off at more than 40,000 feet, Yeager fires his third rocket chamber.

244

00:26:18,000 --> 00:26:25,000

And as he enters the turbulent trans-sonic region, the pilot's injured right side begins to throb with pain.

245

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

The compression shock built up in front of the aircraft.

246

00:26:28,000 --> 00:26:31,000

Pretty soon, the control surfaces began to shake and rattle.

247

00:26:32,000 --> 00:26:36,000

Yeager would have felt that through the control stick and through his busted ribs as well.

248

00:26:38,000 --> 00:26:46,000

On the ground, the Air Force brass watch anxiously as the distant orange speck, the X-1, streaks across the clear blue sky.

249

00:26:47,000 --> 00:26:57,000

All they saw was the contrails the plane went over and then a few minutes later, they felt that sonic boom shock wave for the first time ever.

250

00:26:58,000 --> 00:27:00,000

And they knew he'd done it.

251

00:27:03,000 --> 00:27:10,000

The first person ever to accomplish this, Yeager was the fastest man alive and he was truly a hero.

252

00:27:11,000 --> 00:27:16,000

Yeager later confides to a friend about his broken ribs and days later, his commanders find out.

253

00:27:17,000 --> 00:27:20,000

But by then, they offer only their admiration.

254

00:27:21,000 --> 00:27:26,000

The 24-year-old country boy from the hills of West Virginia would take his place in the history books.

255

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

Chuck Yeager goes on to have a long and storied career in the Air Force, retiring in 1975 at the rank of Brigadier General.

256

00:27:37,000 --> 00:27:44,000

And today, this lifelike monument stands in the aptly named Sound Barrier Park on Yeager Boulevard,

257

00:27:45,000 --> 00:27:52,000

reminding visitors to Edward's Air Force base of one man's remarkable courage and the lengths he went to achieve his dream.

258

00:27:56,000 --> 00:28:02,000

A hundred miles from the mouth of the Mississippi River is the historic port city of New Orleans.

259

00:28:03,000 --> 00:28:10,000

Here, the architecture derives from an eclectic mix of Spanish, Greek revival and French origins.

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00:28:13,000 --> 00:28:22,000

And perhaps no landmark embodies this diversity more than this set of red brick structures in the city's beloved French Quarter.

261

00:28:23,000 --> 00:28:31,000

The buildings are really classical Greek buildings, but because of the iron lace, they don't have the forbidding exterior.

262

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

People in New Orleans today don't realize how innovative they were and how they set the standard for all the ironwork of the city.

263

00:28:41,000 --> 00:28:45,000

They really cause New Orleans to look the way it looks.

264

00:28:46,000 --> 00:28:52,000

These are the Pantalba buildings, said to be the oldest apartment complex in the United States.

265

00:28:53,000 --> 00:28:59,000

And the tale of how they came to be here is one of the strangest in New Orleans history.

266

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

Behind these lovely buildings, there lies an ugly story of greed, tragedy and psychological torment.

267

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

What bizarre series of events led to the construction of the magnificent Pantalba buildings.

268

00:29:20,000 --> 00:29:32,000

1811. French nobleman Baron Pantalba is eagerly anticipating the wedding of his son Celestin to a wealthy young New Orleans heiress named Mikhaela Almenester.

269

00:29:32,000 --> 00:29:42,000

Everybody thought it was just going to be a perfect marriage. They were infatuated with each other. The groom was beautiful and the bride was rich.

270

00:29:44,000 --> 00:29:52,000

The bride in fact is very rich and stands to inherit a vast portfolio of her family's money and property in New Orleans.

271

00:29:53,000 --> 00:30:10,000

After the wedding, Baron Pantalba, whose wealth pales in comparison to that of the Almenesters, whisks Mikhaela and Celestin to France to live with him at the family's ancestral home in Saint-Lise, Chateau Mont-Levec.

272

00:30:11,000 --> 00:30:16,000

But no sooner has the couple arrived than the Baron receives a nasty surprise.

273

00:30:17,000 --> 00:30:27,000

He had expected to receive a hefty dowry from Mikhaela's family. But when the dowry is paid, it turns out to be a fraction of what he had expected.

274

00:30:28,000 --> 00:30:34,000

So the greedy Baron resorts to more extreme means to access her fortune.

275

00:30:35,000 --> 00:30:45,000

Pantalba began to try to extort more and more of Mikhaela's property and her husband Celestin acquiesced in everything his father did.

276

00:30:46,000 --> 00:30:55,000

At times the Baron even confines the young bride to the Chateau and threatens to refuse to let her leave unless she signs away her inheritance.

277

00:30:56,000 --> 00:30:58,000

But the young heiress is resolute.

278

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

She stood up to him. She refused to give over more of her New Orleans property.

279

00:31:06,000 --> 00:31:10,000

As the years go by, the Baron's actions become increasingly cruel.

280

00:31:12,000 --> 00:31:20,000

After the couple's second child is born, the baby boy is removed from her care and the Baron refuses for a time to disclose his location.

281

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

Mikhaela endures decades of torment.

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00:31:28,000 --> 00:31:34,000

Then one day in 1834, the ugly familial feud boils over.

283

00:31:37,000 --> 00:31:45,000

As the story goes, a maid servant working in the Pantalba household sees the enraged Baron enter Mikhaela's quarters.

284

00:31:46,000 --> 00:31:54,000

The maid heard him lock each door from the inside. Then she heard shots.

285

00:31:55,000 --> 00:32:00,000

What terrible fate awaits the much-belined heiress and her greedy father-in-law.

286

00:32:03,000 --> 00:32:06,000

It's 1834 in Songlyce, France.

287

00:32:07,000 --> 00:32:14,000

For years, New Orleans heiress Mikhaela Pantalba has lived under the cruel and abusive hand of her father-in-law, Baron Xavier Pantalba,

288

00:32:15,000 --> 00:32:20,000

who's persistently demanded that she hand over her family's New Orleans property and fortune.

289

00:32:20,000 --> 00:32:25,000

One day, a servant overhears a fearsome argument between Mikhaela and the Baron.

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00:32:26,000 --> 00:32:31,000

Then there are gunshots. So what has become of this persecuted heiress?

291

00:32:34,000 --> 00:32:42,000

As Mikhaela stumbles through the doorway and falls, her maid realizes that she is gravely wounded, with several gunshots to the torso.

292

00:32:43,000 --> 00:32:48,000

Mikhaela was very, very near death and excruciating pain.

293

00:32:50,000 --> 00:32:58,000

Then, apparently overcome by the horror of his deed, the Baron turns the weapon on himself and dies.

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

But Mikhaela, after lingering in a critical state for weeks, miraculously survives.

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00:33:06,000 --> 00:33:12,000

As the heiress gradually recovers, she becomes determined to re-establish her independence.

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00:33:12,000 --> 00:33:20,000

In 1848, at the age of 53, she moves with her now grown children back to her family's home in New Orleans.

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00:33:21,000 --> 00:33:29,000

She staggered away from that awful marriage and she was free. She could do whatever she wanted to with her money.

298

00:33:30,000 --> 00:33:40,000

But once back in New Orleans, which had been devastated by a recent financial crash, Mikhaela is shocked by the dilapidated condition of her native French quarter.

299

00:33:42,000 --> 00:33:50,000

It was a slum and she thought, I can revive this, I can make this the center of the city and a beautiful center.

300

00:33:52,000 --> 00:34:05,000

Electing to use her vast wealth to help rebuild and restore beauty to the city she loved as a child, the entrepreneurial heiress sets her mind to constructing a magnificent block of apartments on Jackson Square.

301

00:34:05,000 --> 00:34:17,000

This girl had architecture in her soul. She was a lay genius and she constructed the gorgeous Pantalba buildings.

302

00:34:19,000 --> 00:34:30,000

As the years pass, the Pantalba buildings of Jackson Square and their iron mesh balconies form a unique template which is replicated throughout the French quarter.

303

00:34:31,000 --> 00:34:41,000

Although Mikhaela returned to Paris for the final decades of her life, she will be forever memorialized in New Orleans by these splendid buildings.

304

00:34:42,000 --> 00:34:59,000

Mount Pleasant, South Carolina is a quiet community on the Charleston Harbor and is home to the Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum, which boasts an impressive fleet of national historic landmark ships.

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00:35:01,000 --> 00:35:08,000

But one monument here stands apart from the rest, a hulking half submerged vessel protruding out of the ground.

306

00:35:09,000 --> 00:35:13,000

It's an image that is striking, yet beautiful, it's a piece of history.

307

00:35:15,000 --> 00:35:27,000

This memorial honors some of America's most clandestine missions and at its base stands a gleaming slab of granite, a tribute to one of the country's worst nautical disasters.

308

00:35:28,000 --> 00:35:37,000

It is a terrible tragedy that today is still wrapped in an enigma. No one really knows what happened.

309

00:35:39,000 --> 00:35:47,000

So what is this maritime mystery and how is this tragedy tied to one of the greatest deep sea discoveries of all time?

310

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

1968, The Cold War.

311

00:35:52,000 --> 00:36:03,000

On May 22, the USS Scorpion, a nuclear submarine, is heading to the naval station in Norfolk, Virginia from the North Atlantic.

312

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

She started on her way, but she never made it home.

313

00:36:09,000 --> 00:36:12,000

The Navy launches a massive hunt for the missing sub.

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00:36:13,000 --> 00:36:19,000

But after nine days, the vessel is presumed lost at sea with all 99 hands on board.

315

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

Why did she go down? Was she attacked?

316

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

The United States was very scared of the Soviet threat.

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00:36:29,000 --> 00:36:33,000

Could the sub have been sunk by a new top secret Soviet weapon?

318

00:36:35,000 --> 00:36:41,000

Five months later, the Navy finds something in the Atlantic Ocean, 400 miles south of the Azores Islands.

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00:36:42,000 --> 00:36:49,000

It's the hulking remains of the USS Scorpion, resting 10,000 feet below the ocean's surface.

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00:36:50,000 --> 00:36:55,000

But the technological limitations of the cameras at the time hamper the investigation.

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00:36:56,000 --> 00:37:05,000

They were able to get some very blurry, very grainy shots of it, but the photographic evidence was not clear enough to really help in the investigation.

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00:37:06,000 --> 00:37:09,000

It seems the mystery may never be solved.

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00:37:10,000 --> 00:37:14,000

But 14 years later, the case will be blown wide open.

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00:37:17,000 --> 00:37:20,000

1982, Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

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00:37:21,000 --> 00:37:30,000

Renowned oceanographer Dr. Robert Ballard has developed a new machine that he hopes will revolutionize the world of undersea exploration.

326

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

It's called the Argo, and it's outfitted with high-tech lights and high-resolution cameras.

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

Deep in the ocean, it is black, it is dark, and this was a tool that would light up the area down there.

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00:37:46,000 --> 00:37:52,000

And when the Navy learns about this new device, they decide to approach Ballard with a request.

329

00:37:53,000 --> 00:38:00,000

To use the Argo to photograph and film the wreck of the USS Scorpion to try and find out why it sank.

330

00:38:02,000 --> 00:38:05,000

Ballard accepts the mission on one condition.

331

00:38:06,000 --> 00:38:14,000

After he photographs and films the Scorpion, he asks that the Navy fund another mission that has been a lifelong quest of his.

332

00:38:15,000 --> 00:38:22,000

To find the final resting spot of a luxury liner that has eluded explorers ever since it sank in 1912.

333

00:38:24,000 --> 00:38:31,000

Titanic was the Everest of the submersible world. It was the big shipwreck.

334

00:38:33,000 --> 00:38:39,000

The Navy agrees and even sees a way to use Ballard's personal quest to their own advantage.

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00:38:40,000 --> 00:38:45,000

The cover story was that Bob Ballard was able to do his lifelong dream and go find Titanic.

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00:38:47,000 --> 00:38:54,000

And so, in the summer of 1985, the undersea explorer sets out on this top-secret expedition.

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00:38:55,000 --> 00:38:57,000

So what will he find?

338

00:38:58,000 --> 00:39:09,000

It's the 1980s. At the request of the US Navy, renowned oceanographer Robert Ballard is on a top-secret mission.

339

00:39:10,000 --> 00:39:16,000

Photograph the wreckage of a sunken nuclear sub called the USS Scorpion and find out why she sank.

340

00:39:17,000 --> 00:39:21,000

So can Robert Ballard's high-tech images get to the bottom of this mystery?

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00:39:22,000 --> 00:39:28,000

In the summer of 1985, Ballard's crew spots the downed USS Scorpion.

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00:39:29,000 --> 00:39:33,000

The team begins capturing high-resolution video and still images.

343

00:39:34,000 --> 00:39:38,000

The pictures were the best images that had ever been produced at that time.

344

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

And Ballard's data reveals that the hull of the vessel is broken into two main pieces.

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00:39:45,000 --> 00:39:48,000

But other than that, the wreckage is largely intact.

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00:39:49,000 --> 00:39:56,000

Navy investigators conclude that something forced the sub to sink below crush depth and it imploded.

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00:39:57,000 --> 00:40:00,000

The question is, what?

348

00:40:02,000 --> 00:40:06,000

One long-standing theory is that a Russian torpedo shot down the sub.

349

00:40:07,000 --> 00:40:11,000

But Ballard's photos do not show any obvious torpedo scars on the hull.

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00:40:12,000 --> 00:40:19,000

It would have caused a tremendous amount of explosive damage, so Ballard's pictures effectively ruled that theory out.

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00:40:21,000 --> 00:40:28,000

So if it wasn't a Russian torpedo, what sent the Scorpion plummeting 10,000 feet to the ocean depths?

352

00:40:29,000 --> 00:40:32,000

The answer may lie with the pressures of the Cold War.

353

00:40:33,000 --> 00:40:39,000

According to newly declassified documents, the Navy was so intent on deploying the stealthy craft

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

that it cut the time of allotted regular maintenance from 24 to just 8 months.

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00:40:48,000 --> 00:40:52,000

There are theories that perhaps the maintenance was rushed on the vessel.

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00:40:53,000 --> 00:40:55,000

Because it was the Cold War, she had to get back out to service.

357

00:40:56,000 --> 00:40:58,000

But the investigators cannot be sure.

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00:40:59,000 --> 00:41:03,000

What really happened to the Scorpion is still a mystery. We really don't know.

359

00:41:06,000 --> 00:41:12,000

With his job for the Navy complete, Ballard moves on to his next mission, the search for the Titanic.

360

00:41:13,000 --> 00:41:21,000

And on September 1st, 1985, Ballard, with the help of the Argo, detects a debris trail in the North Atlantic.

361

00:41:22,000 --> 00:41:26,000

Shortly after, Ballard spies the long lost Titanic.

362

00:41:27,000 --> 00:41:34,000

The watery tomb of 1,500 souls, lying 12,450 feet below the ocean surface.

363

00:41:36,000 --> 00:41:40,000

The 73-year-old mystery is finally put to rest.

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

But it will be more than 20 years before it is publicly revealed that Ballard's quest for the Titanic

365

00:41:47,000 --> 00:41:51,000

was intrinsically tied to a top-secret naval mission.

366

00:41:53,000 --> 00:41:58,000

And today, this granite marker at the Cold War Submarine Memorial

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00:41:58,000 --> 00:42:02,000

is a sobering tribute to those who lost their lives on the USS Scorpion

368

00:42:03,000 --> 00:42:09,000

and a reminder of how one man, in an attempt to solve one mystery, solved another.

369

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

From a sideshow swindler to a frozen forebearer, a sunken submarine to a hamstrung eris.

370

00:42:17,000 --> 00:42:21,000

I'm Don Wildman and these are Monumental Mysteries.

