

1

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

A peculiar sculpture of a miraculous amputee.

2

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

It is walking around just going about life.

3

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

Without a head.

4

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

A magnificent city park linked to salacious rumors.

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

This is one of the great sex scandals of the 20th century.

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

And a lighthouse marks the site of unspeakable horrors.

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

There are some of the darkest deeds people have ever been reduced to.

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

Sometimes the greatest secrets lie in plain sight.

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

These are monumental mysteries.

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

Named for the bountiful orchards that once covered the area,

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

Fruta Colorado is now known for its spectacular views and rugged trails.

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

Within an hour of your doorstep, you can be on a 10,000-foot mountain,

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

or you can be out in the middle of the desert all by yourself.

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00:01:04,000 --> 00:01:08,000

And it's this diversity that makes Fruta such a unique place to live.

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00:01:08,000 --> 00:01:11,000

But in the downtown district, there's an attraction

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00:01:11,000 --> 00:01:16,000

that even in these disparate surroundings seems oddly out of place.

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00:01:16,000 --> 00:01:21,000

That's about five feet tall, and it's made of rested metal implements.

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00:01:22,000 --> 00:01:25,000

It has proud feathers, talons,

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00:01:25,000 --> 00:01:30,000

and it looks like it might be contemplating whether it should or should not cross the road.

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00:01:30,000 --> 00:01:35,000

This is a sculpture of a chicken, but it's no ordinary bird.

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00:01:35,000 --> 00:01:40,000

It became the town's most famous resident because of its unique anatomy.

22

00:01:41,000 --> 00:01:43,000

This chicken doesn't have a head.

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00:01:44,000 --> 00:01:48,000

It defied all the odds and literally achieved the impossible.

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00:01:50,000 --> 00:01:56,000

So how did a headless rooster defy biology and pack its way to stardom?

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00:01:59,000 --> 00:02:03,000

September 10, 1945, Fruta Colorado.

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

Farmer Lloyd Olson is preparing a hearty feast for his large family.

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

Lloyd Olson doesn't have a lot of money, and he raised chickens to put on his dinner table.

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00:02:13,000 --> 00:02:16,000

Taking several live chickens out to the wood shed,

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

he lays each of their heads on the chopping block.

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00:02:19,000 --> 00:02:22,000

And Lloyd began cutting their heads off one by one.

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

And what normally happens when you cut a chicken's head off

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00:02:25,000 --> 00:02:29,000

is it blutters around for a little bit, then an adrenaline response,

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00:02:29,000 --> 00:02:31,000

because the brain hasn't completely shut down yet.

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00:02:32,000 --> 00:02:35,000

Olson continues to slaughter the chickens,

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

and as always, they flap their wings momentarily before expiring.

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00:02:40,000 --> 00:02:45,000

And Lloyd gets to the end and he looks around, and there's a chicken walking around.

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00:02:46,000 --> 00:02:49,000

The farmer wanders over to collect the wayward bird,

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00:02:49,000 --> 00:02:52,000

assuming there must be one more still to slaughter.

39

00:02:53,000 --> 00:02:59,000

But when he takes a closer look, he realizes his chicken's head has been cut off. It's gone.

40

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

But he doesn't appear to be in any pain.

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

He's just walking around like nobody's business.

42

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

Amazed that the creature has survived,

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

Olson spares the death-defying animal from the night's feast and leaves it in its coop.

44

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

The next day, he returns, expecting to find the headless rooster dead.

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

But the chicken is still alive.

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

And Olson realizes that they have a biological marvel on their hands.

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00:03:31,000 --> 00:03:36,000

It is walking around like it has not a care in the world, actually pecking at the ground,

48

00:03:36,000 --> 00:03:40,000

just going about life, without a head.

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00:03:42,000 --> 00:03:48,000

Astonished that such a phenomenon could occur, Olson gently tends to the unusual bird.

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00:03:49,000 --> 00:03:53,000

They feed him using an eye drop dispenser through his open esophagus.

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00:03:53,000 --> 00:03:57,000

They give him milk and water and an occasional grain of corn.

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

He was well cared for and not in any pain.

53

00:04:01,000 --> 00:04:07,000

The curious creature, once destined for the dinner plate, soon becomes a member of the Olson family.

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00:04:07,000 --> 00:04:11,000

And it's even given a pet name, BIRICAL MIC.

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00:04:12,000 --> 00:04:17,000

Word of the astounding animal quickly spreads through the farming community.

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00:04:17,000 --> 00:04:23,000

Pretty soon they've got neighbors knocking on their door and they would bring a six pack of beer in exchange for taking a look at this chicken.

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00:04:23,000 --> 00:04:29,000

When the local journal publishes a story about the unusual creature, it sparks a media frenzy.

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00:04:31,000 --> 00:04:36,000

And soon, Miracle MIC is earning a lot more than just a few bottles of ale.

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00:04:36,000 --> 00:04:42,000

And this is when a promoter talks the Olsons into putting MIC on the sideshows,

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00:04:42,000 --> 00:04:45,000

so that they can share MIC with the rest of the country.

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00:04:45,000 --> 00:04:49,000

The show hits the road, making its way across the country.

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00:04:49,000 --> 00:04:56,000

And at each stop, adoring fans marvel at how the animal could possibly still be alive.

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00:04:57,000 --> 00:05:02,000

The side shows they were charging people 25 cents a pop to see MIC.

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00:05:02,000 --> 00:05:07,000

At the height of MIC's popularity, he was making about \$4,500 a month.

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00:05:07,000 --> 00:05:12,000

And so for a farmer like Lloyd Olson, that was a lot of money back in 45.

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00:05:12,000 --> 00:05:17,000

For 18 months, Miracle MIC Mania overtakes the nation.

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00:05:18,000 --> 00:05:21,000

But the life of a shooting star can be short.

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00:05:22,000 --> 00:05:28,000

And one night at a hotel room in Phoenix, fate finally catches up with a celebrated bird.

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

MIC begins to choke. And this wasn't an uncommon thing.

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00:05:34,000 --> 00:05:37,000

Mucous would often get clogged in his throat.

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00:05:37,000 --> 00:05:42,000

But a quick shot of water down his esophagus with the eyed dispenser cleared it up very quickly.

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00:05:42,000 --> 00:05:44,000

But they can't find the eyed dispenser.

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00:05:44,000 --> 00:05:48,000

So while they're scrambling around frantically trying to come up with it,

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00:05:48,000 --> 00:05:50,000

Miracle MIC sadly passes away.

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00:05:52,000 --> 00:05:56,000

Although MIC is gone, the mystery remains.

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00:05:56,000 --> 00:06:01,000

How could this chicken survive for a year and a half without its head?

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

In search of answers, Olson donates the rooster's remains to science.

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00:06:07,000 --> 00:06:10,000

And they discover some amazing things, actually.

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00:06:10,000 --> 00:06:16,000

Normally, in a beheading, the major arteries in the neck are completely severed, and the chicken bleeds out.

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00:06:17,000 --> 00:06:23,000

Well, in MIC's case, the artery was only partially severed and a clot had formed, which prevented him from bleeding to death.

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00:06:24,000 --> 00:06:31,000

The researchers also discover that despite missing his head, most of MIC's brain stem was left intact.

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00:06:31,000 --> 00:06:37,000

The brain stem controls most of the motor functions, breathing and heart rate, and the chicken's reflexes.

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00:06:37,000 --> 00:06:42,000

So MIC was able to live his life relatively easy due to these two circumstances.

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00:06:43,000 --> 00:06:49,000

There has never been another reported case of a headless chicken like Miracle MIC.

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00:06:49,000 --> 00:06:55,000

And this rare bird's story is one that the town of Fruta will never forget.

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00:06:55,000 --> 00:06:58,000

MIC is Fruta's unofficial mascot.

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00:06:58,000 --> 00:07:02,000

We've actually created a festival in his honor to celebrate his lust for life.

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

We do things such as a wing-eating contest, a peep-eating contest, a chicken song dance-off.

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00:07:09,000 --> 00:07:14,000

And it's just a family-oriented event centered around a chicken's beheading.

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00:07:15,000 --> 00:07:25,000

Today, this eccentric steel sculpture stands as a testament to the tale of one determined rooster and his inspirational will to live.

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00:07:28,000 --> 00:07:33,000

Nestled on the southern coast of Maine is the historic town of York.

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00:07:33,000 --> 00:07:40,000

With long stretches of white sandy beaches and sapphire waters, the area is a popular resort destination.

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00:07:41,000 --> 00:07:49,000

But just a few miles off these picturesque shores stands a small, desolate island that's home to a formidable landmark.

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00:07:50,000 --> 00:07:52,000

It's a 137-foot granite tower.

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00:07:52,000 --> 00:07:59,000

Soaring up over the rock, it looks almost like it would topple over because it's so tall compared to the base that it sits upon.

96

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

Built in 1851, this is the Boone Island lighthouse, which boasts the proud distinction of being the tallest in New England.

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00:08:10,000 --> 00:08:19,000

But according to author Andrew Vietz, this watchtower was constructed in the aftermath of a terrible event that sent shockwaves across the ocean.

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00:08:20,000 --> 00:08:22,000

It was the site of a horror story.

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00:08:23,000 --> 00:08:28,000

It was betrayal, greed, and some of the darkest deeds that people ever have been reduced to.

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00:08:30,000 --> 00:08:36,000

So what horrific scandal played out on the forsaken rocks that surround this lonely outpost?

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00:08:41,000 --> 00:08:43,000

1711, York, Maine.

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00:08:44,000 --> 00:08:52,000

It's New Year's Day and on this cold winter morning, the town's coroner is investigating reports that a body has washed up on the beach.

103

00:08:54,000 --> 00:08:58,000

And when he locates the corpse, he is horrified by its condition.

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00:08:59,000 --> 00:09:07,000

It's rail-thin, emaciated, and pockmarked with chillblanes, which are sores that come about from exposure, from extreme cold.

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

He deduced that this was a shipwreck victim, and he pieced together that he probably came from Boone Island, a number one hotspot for shipwrecks.

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00:09:18,000 --> 00:09:22,000

The coroner organizes a rescue party to search for survivors.

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00:09:23,000 --> 00:09:28,000

But when the group sets foot on Boone Island, they're met by a desperate sight.

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00:09:29,000 --> 00:09:33,000

They're astonished to see a couple of people waving frantically at them.

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00:09:34,000 --> 00:09:42,000

These men are all in horrible, horrible shape, crawling towards this rescuer, begging him to take them from this horror.

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00:09:43,000 --> 00:09:49,000

The rescuers are amazed that anyone has survived in such freezing temperatures without any food.

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00:09:50,000 --> 00:09:58,000

Though barely able to speak, one of the men explains that he is Captain John Dean of the British merchant vessel, the Nottingham Galley.

112

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

The emaciated men are taken to York, and within a few months make a full recovery.

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00:10:06,000 --> 00:10:12,000

And when they return to England, Captain Dean reveals the key to their incredible survival.

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00:10:12,000 --> 00:10:19,000

He writes a memoir of this shipwreck as he saw it and sort of cast himself as a hero.

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00:10:20,000 --> 00:10:26,000

Dean explains that the boat was sailing from London to Boston when it was swept into a savage

nor'easter,

116

00:10:29,000 --> 00:10:35,000

which left them shipwrecked on Boone Island for three weeks in freezing temperatures without food or water.

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00:10:36,000 --> 00:10:44,000

According to Dean, it was through his brave leadership that most of the crew survived.

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00:10:46,000 --> 00:10:51,000

The captain says he was bandaging their wounds, nursing them back to health as best he could,

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

and explains that he would plunge his hands into the freezing water to pull muscles out for the men.

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00:10:57,000 --> 00:10:59,000

They ate seaweed and they even ate boot leather.

121

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

Dean is hailed as a hero and becomes a celebrity of sorts on British shores.

122

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

But not everyone is enthralled by the commanding officer's valiant story.

123

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

When his crew members hear his version of the tale, they are horrified.

124

00:11:19,000 --> 00:11:25,000

They are beyond angry, enraged really. They call them a liar and a scoundrel.

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

So is Captain Dean telling the truth about what really happened on Boone Island?

126

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

It's 1711 in London, England. After a group of shipwrecked sailors are rescued from Boone Island off the coast of Maine,

127

00:11:50,000 --> 00:11:54,000

the captain publishes an account of his heroic efforts to save his men.

128

00:11:55,000 --> 00:11:59,000

But not everyone agrees with the commander's version of the story.

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

So what really happened on Boone Island?

130

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

Following the publication of Dean's story, three of the surviving sailors accuse him of lying.

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

They do something that is sort of unheard of in that day and age.

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00:12:16,000 --> 00:12:20,000

They challenged the captain in print and wrote their own version of the tale.

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00:12:21,000 --> 00:12:26,000

And then they took out depositions under oath, swearing that their version of this tale is accurate.

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

The crew members state that the cause of the shipwreck was not a storm, but the actions of the captain himself.

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00:12:35,000 --> 00:12:41,000

The bosson claims that he overheard the captain say explicitly that maybe it wouldn't be a bad thing if the boat were lost.

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00:12:42,000 --> 00:12:43,000

It's money for the entire ship.

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00:12:44,000 --> 00:12:45,000

So he could claim the insurance money.

138

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

If the vessel were to wreck, Dean's policy would make him a very rich man.

139

00:12:53,000 --> 00:12:58,000

And according to the crew, the captain put them on the collision course into Boone Island.

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00:12:59,000 --> 00:13:07,000

Once marooned on the barren island, the crew says the captain didn't tend to their wounds or fish for food as he claimed.

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00:13:08,000 --> 00:13:12,000

Instead, they survived by turning to the darkest of Deeds.

142

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

The carpenter passes away in the middle of the night.

143

00:13:17,000 --> 00:13:23,000

And the men decide that the only way they're going to survive is if they eat the carpenter.

144

00:13:25,000 --> 00:13:32,000

As word of a sailor's account spreads throughout London, the once celebrated commander quickly falls from grace.

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00:13:33,000 --> 00:13:34,000

The captain is run out of town.

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00:13:35,000 --> 00:13:36,000

At best, he's a lousy captain.

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00:13:36,000 --> 00:13:42,000

And at worst, he's a traitor and scoundrel and anything but a gentleman.

148

00:13:46,000 --> 00:13:51,000

Yet despite his downfall, it has never been determined who was actually telling the truth.

149

00:13:52,000 --> 00:14:03,000

Today, this historic lighthouse warns passing ships about the treacherous tides surrounding Boone Island and endures as a stark reminder of a haunting tragedy at sea.

150

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

Minneapolis, Minnesota, once the flower milling capital of the world, is now a major center of commerce in the Midwest.

151

00:14:15,000 --> 00:14:24,000

And while its downtown is packed with modern skyscrapers, perhaps the most distinctive high rise is an old obelisk-like structure.

152

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

The building is 32 stories created out of Indiana limestone.

153

00:14:31,000 --> 00:14:36,000

And at the top, you will see 10 foot letters with the name Foché on every side of the building.

154

00:14:39,000 --> 00:14:43,000

Visitors might assume that Foché is just another company that has come and gone.

155

00:14:44,000 --> 00:14:52,000

But author Elizabeth Johaneck can attest that this word is linked to one of the most devious schemes in the history of the state.

156

00:14:53,000 --> 00:14:56,000

The tower represented wealth, greed and trickery.

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00:14:57,000 --> 00:15:03,000

What nationwide financial scam is at the heart of this magnificent landmark.

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00:15:07,000 --> 00:15:10,000

1917, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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

Wilbur Foché has climbed from humble roots to become the owner of a burgeoning utilities empire.

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00:15:19,000 --> 00:15:22,000

Foché was a very charismatic gentleman.

161

00:15:22,000 --> 00:15:27,000

He seemed to be making stellar profits and people trusted him.

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00:15:30,000 --> 00:15:36,000

Foché's firm continues to expand thanks to an aggressive direct mail and newspaper advertising campaign.

163

00:15:38,000 --> 00:15:44,000

He was a marketing genius. Foché's motto was never has an investor lost any money with the Foché company.

164

00:15:47,000 --> 00:15:50,000

All your money, all the time, on time.

165

00:15:53,000 --> 00:15:57,000

Investors buy the pitch, hook, line and sinker.

166

00:15:58,000 --> 00:16:01,000

People from all over the United States were invested in this stock.

167

00:16:02,000 --> 00:16:08,000

They were young, old, rich, they had medium incomes, but they all believed in Foché.

168

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

Over the next decade, the Utilities Mogul rewards his delighted shareholders with stellar returns.

169

00:16:17,000 --> 00:16:26,000

And as the company's value skyrockets, Foché announces he will build a sensational new tower for his headquarters in downtown Minneapolis.

170

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

He ended up with a 447 foot 32 floor building, the tallest skyscraper west of the Mississippi River.

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00:16:38,000 --> 00:16:47,000

In August 1929, Foché stages a grand dedication ceremony for 25,000 invited guests.

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00:16:48,000 --> 00:16:54,000

The elaborate three-day affair includes burlesque dancers, fireworks and lavish parades.

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00:16:55,000 --> 00:17:04,000

Celebrated composer John Philip Sousa is even commissioned to write and perform a special song titled The Foché Tower March.

174

00:17:04,000 --> 00:17:08,000

It was a party like nothing Minneapolis had ever seen before.

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00:17:10,000 --> 00:17:16,000

But just as the tycoon prepares to move into his tower, trouble appears on the horizon.

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

The company checks mysteriously started bouncing.

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00:17:22,000 --> 00:17:25,000

And bad checks are just the tip of the iceberg.

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00:17:25,000 --> 00:17:30,000

Soon Foché also stops paying all the company's bills and dividends.

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00:17:30,000 --> 00:17:35,000

It suddenly seemed as though Foché's well-ped evaporated.

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00:17:36,000 --> 00:17:42,000

What could cause this massive corporation to seemingly go bankrupt overnight?

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00:17:47,000 --> 00:17:50,000

It's 1929 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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00:17:50,000 --> 00:17:58,000

Wilbur Foché has just constructed a dazzling new tower as headquarters for his wildly successful Utilities Company.

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00:17:58,000 --> 00:18:06,000

But with the building complete, rumors begin to circulate that all is not well with Foché's vast empire.

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00:18:09,000 --> 00:18:16,000

By November, Foché's backers have lost almost all of the \$28 million they've invested.

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00:18:17,000 --> 00:18:21,000

And although Wall Street has recently suffered a devastating crash,

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00:18:21,000 --> 00:18:27,000

many believe that the firm's colossal loss cannot be due to market forces alone.

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00:18:29,000 --> 00:18:32,000

And what authorities step in to investigate the company's books?

188

00:18:32,000 --> 00:18:34,000

They are stunned.

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00:18:34,000 --> 00:18:37,000

They discovered a lot of discrepancies.

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00:18:37,000 --> 00:18:44,000

What became clear is that the Foché company had been pulling the wool over investors' eyes.

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00:18:45,000 --> 00:18:51,000

With evidence of missed deeds mounting, Wilbur Foché is charged with fraud.

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

And in 1931, he stands trial at the Minneapolis Federal Courthouse.

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00:18:58,000 --> 00:19:05,000

Testimony reveals that he has been manipulating his accounts to make it look as if the business was making a profit,

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00:19:05,000 --> 00:19:09,000

when in fact, it was incurring a huge loss.

195

00:19:10,000 --> 00:19:14,000

This practice made the company look extremely successful.

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00:19:14,000 --> 00:19:17,000

\$100,000, triple that point, two-foot.

197

00:19:17,000 --> 00:19:22,000

By selling stock to new shareholders based on the inflated value,

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00:19:22,000 --> 00:19:27,000

the utility's magnet was able to pay handsome dividends to earlier investors.

199

00:19:27,000 --> 00:19:33,000

He was robbing Peter to pay Paul, and was basically running a Ponzi scheme.

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00:19:34,000 --> 00:19:40,000

Through this elaborate scam, Foché managed to accumulate \$3 million

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

and build the symbol of his success, his famous tower.

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00:19:47,000 --> 00:19:54,000

In 1932, Foché is convicted of fraud and sentenced to 15 years in prison.

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00:19:54,000 --> 00:19:59,000

After serving his time, he relocates to the southwest,

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

where he spends his remaining days working as a salesman for a small firm.

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00:20:06,000 --> 00:20:12,000

Yet while the infamous swindler's empire has crumbled, his legacy endures.

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00:20:12,000 --> 00:20:17,000

In the end, this incredible tower represented his downfall.

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00:20:18,000 --> 00:20:24,000

Today, the Foché Tower is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

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00:20:25,000 --> 00:20:31,000

And while this elegant art deco structure has become one of the region's most recognizable landmarks,

209

00:20:31,000 --> 00:20:36,000

it also stands as a dark reminder of the perils of white-collar crime.

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

Once a rough-and-tumble settlement filled with rowdy saloons,

211

00:20:44,000 --> 00:20:49,000

Casper, Wyoming is now known for its rugged natural splendor.

212

00:20:50,000 --> 00:20:54,000

And 50 miles to the southwest is a vast mountain range

213

00:20:54,000 --> 00:20:57,000

that is one of the region's most dramatic sights.

214

00:20:57,000 --> 00:21:01,000

They cover about 12,000 acres. They're surrounded by isolation,

215

00:21:01,000 --> 00:21:06,000

flat windswept basin to the east, some water to the west.

216

00:21:07,000 --> 00:21:11,000

Soaring more than a thousand feet over the surrounding plains,

217

00:21:11,000 --> 00:21:15,000

these colossal granite domes are the Pedro Mountains.

218

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

But according to journalist Jeremy Fugelberg,

219

00:21:20,000 --> 00:21:24,000

this windswept range harbored a mystery

220

00:21:24,000 --> 00:21:28,000

that baffled scientists for nearly a century.

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

These mountains held a secret that captured the imagination of so many people.

222

00:21:33,000 --> 00:21:38,000

It made them wonder about the truth, about humans and the American West.

223

00:21:38,000 --> 00:21:41,000

What miniature treasure was found here?

224

00:21:41,000 --> 00:21:46,000

And how did it challenge our understanding about the history of the human race?

225

00:21:49,000 --> 00:21:52,000

October, 1932, the Pedro Mountains, Wyoming.

226

00:21:54,000 --> 00:21:57,000

Gold prospectors Cecil Main and Frank Carr

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00:21:57,000 --> 00:22:02,000

have just dynamited a section of rocks in hopes of finding their fortune.

228

00:22:04,000 --> 00:22:07,000

At first, they are sorely disappointed.

229

00:22:07,000 --> 00:22:10,000

They didn't find gold, but what they did find was a cave.

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00:22:10,000 --> 00:22:15,000

It's very narrow opening, but of course they decided to see what was inside the cave.

231

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

Leading away, Cecil crawls into the dark cavernous space.

232

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

In the blackness, he catches sight of a diminutive and grotesque creature

233

00:22:26,000 --> 00:22:28,000

seated motionless along the wall.

234

00:22:28,000 --> 00:22:30,000

It's a small brown figure.

235

00:22:30,000 --> 00:22:33,000

It's head tilted, it's eyes squinted shut.

236

00:22:33,000 --> 00:22:36,000

It looks like it has arms, it's wrapped around itself.

237

00:22:37,000 --> 00:22:40,000

It appears to be some kind of mummy,

238

00:22:40,000 --> 00:22:44,000

but what is most stunning about the specimen is its size.

239

00:22:44,000 --> 00:22:49,000

The proportions are very adult-like, but it's about six, seven inches tall.

240

00:22:49,000 --> 00:22:51,000

It looks like a little human.

241

00:22:51,000 --> 00:22:56,000

The two prospectors wrap up the freakish figure and return to Casper.

242

00:22:56,000 --> 00:23:00,000

Frank and Cecil don't have gold, but one thing's for sure,

243

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

they thought, hey, we can actually make some money out of this one.

244

00:23:05,000 --> 00:23:09,000

Indeed, when the mysterious little man is presented to the public,

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00:23:09,000 --> 00:23:12,000

he makes waves across the media.

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00:23:12,000 --> 00:23:17,000

And over the next few years, the mummy, nicknamed Pedro,

247

00:23:17,000 --> 00:23:19,000

after the mountain range where he was discovered,

248

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

is bought and sold several times, often to be displayed.

249

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

It was a freak show, something that people could pay a little bit of money to see.

250

00:23:28,000 --> 00:23:32,000

And all who set eyes on Pedro can't help but wonder,

251

00:23:32,000 --> 00:23:35,000

what is he and where did he come from?

252

00:23:36,000 --> 00:23:39,000

Many believe that it is simply a hoax.

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00:23:39,000 --> 00:23:43,000

One of the assumptions about this is that this is something that was manufactured,

254

00:23:43,000 --> 00:23:45,000

partially because it was so incredible.

255

00:23:46,000 --> 00:23:49,000

But others insist that the figure is authentic

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00:23:49,000 --> 00:23:53,000

and that he belonged to an ancient band of aggressive pygmies,

257

00:23:54,000 --> 00:23:58,000

described in Native American folklore as the Nimiragar.

258

00:23:59,000 --> 00:24:04,000

There's legends going back of a tribe of small humans that were dangerous

259

00:24:04,000 --> 00:24:07,000

that would hurt you because you encroached on their turf.

260

00:24:08,000 --> 00:24:12,000

In 1950, an attempt is made to answer these questions,

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00:24:12,000 --> 00:24:16,000

when Pedro is brought to New York City to be examined by experts

262

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

at the American Museum of Natural History.

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

They thought this mummy was very unique and decided to find out what's inside this thing.

264

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

The scientists run a series of X-rays on the specimen, expecting to prove a hoax,

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00:24:30,000 --> 00:24:33,000

but are stunned by the results.

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00:24:33,000 --> 00:24:37,000

This is something that instantly debunks any sort of claim that this is a hoax.

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00:24:37,000 --> 00:24:41,000

The X-rays show a curved spine, a developed rib cage.

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00:24:42,000 --> 00:24:44,000

It was a very small human.

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00:24:45,000 --> 00:24:47,000

This raises all sorts of questions.

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00:24:47,000 --> 00:24:57,000

So could this mummy be proof that a lost race of tiny Native American warriors once walked this earth?

271

00:25:01,000 --> 00:25:04,000

It's 1950 in Casper, Wyoming.

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00:25:04,000 --> 00:25:12,000

Scientists have confirmed that a 7-inch mummy discovered in the Pedro Mountains is in fact human,

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00:25:13,000 --> 00:25:19,000

leading some to speculate that it's evidence of an ancient race of miniature people.

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

So what's the truth behind this inexplicably tiny man?

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00:25:26,000 --> 00:25:33,000

Scientists believe that further analysis is needed to get to the bottom of the strange specimen's origins.

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00:25:34,000 --> 00:25:39,000

But these plans are thwarted when Pedro's owner dies and the mummy disappears.

277

00:25:40,000 --> 00:25:46,000

Its whereabouts and the riddle of its origins remain a mystery for the next 40 years.

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00:25:48,000 --> 00:25:55,000

But then in 1994, a TV documentary about Pedro and his discovery offers renewed hope.

279

00:25:56,000 --> 00:25:58,000

A family watching it looked at each other and said,

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

wait a minute, we have a mummy just like Pedro.

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00:26:02,000 --> 00:26:06,000

Their specimen was discovered in the same area of the Pedro Mountains.

282

00:26:07,000 --> 00:26:12,000

Their ancestor had purchased it off a sheep herder in Wyoming who'd found it in some sort of mountain range.

283

00:26:13,000 --> 00:26:17,000

For decades, the family has kept the odd figure as a collectible.

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00:26:18,000 --> 00:26:22,000

But after seeing the program, they bring it to scientists in Wyoming.

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00:26:24,000 --> 00:26:27,000

This is a chance to examine it closely with modern science.

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00:26:27,000 --> 00:26:31,000

They carbon-date it and they're able to date this mummy just 300 years ago.

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

However, the analysis unveils another unexpected revelation.

288

00:26:37,000 --> 00:26:40,000

The test showed that this was an infant.

289

00:26:42,000 --> 00:26:46,000

When combined with the analysis done on the first mummy,

290

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

it's discovered that both figures were likely born with a condition called anencephaly

291

00:26:52,000 --> 00:26:56,000

that resulted in a very small number of people dying.

292

00:26:57,000 --> 00:27:00,000

This results in the abnormal formation of the head and spine.

293

00:27:01,000 --> 00:27:05,000

So what these tests show are that these aren't the race of little people, they're infants,

294

00:27:05,000 --> 00:27:08,000

and both likely suffered from a birth defect.

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00:27:09,000 --> 00:27:13,000

Yet many questions surrounding the mummies remain unanswered.

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00:27:14,000 --> 00:27:15,000

Why were they there?

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00:27:15,000 --> 00:27:19,000

There's no clue where they came from or who cared about them.

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00:27:19,000 --> 00:27:20,000

They're just mysteries.

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

And while the origins of these peculiar figures are still a mystery,

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

the Pedro Mountains from which they emerged continue to remind us

301

00:27:32,000 --> 00:27:36,000

that there's still much to be discovered about the human race.

302

00:27:41,000 --> 00:27:45,000

With the Pacific Ocean to the west and Desert to the east,

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00:27:45,000 --> 00:27:49,000

San Diego boasts a year-round Mediterranean climate

304

00:27:49,000 --> 00:27:52,000

that is treasured by lovers of the outdoors.

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00:27:53,000 --> 00:27:57,000

And its crown jewel is a vast and picturesque public park.

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00:27:58,000 --> 00:28:02,000

It is over a thousand acres linked by arcaded passageways and arched bridges.

307

00:28:02,000 --> 00:28:06,000

And it really serves as the cultural center of the city.

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00:28:08,000 --> 00:28:13,000

This is Balboa Park, home to a magnificent collection of museums, hiking trails,

309

00:28:13,000 --> 00:28:15,000

and open-air pavilions.

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00:28:16,000 --> 00:28:18,000

But a coordinated curator, Jeffrey Richardson,

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00:28:19,000 --> 00:28:25,000

this botanical wonderland also helped launch the career of an evangelical superstar

312

00:28:26,000 --> 00:28:29,000

who was both captivating and controversial.

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

This woman would fall from grace in one of the greatest scandals of the 20th century.

314

00:28:38,000 --> 00:28:41,000

Who inspired the masses on these glorious grounds?

315

00:28:42,000 --> 00:28:48,000

And how did she become entangled in a sordid tale of sex, kidnapping, and torture?

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00:28:51,000 --> 00:28:54,000

1921 Balboa Park, San Diego

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

Sister Amy Semple McPherson is a rising celebrity in the Pentecostal movement

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00:29:01,000 --> 00:29:05,000

known for her remarkable ability to heal through the power of her faith.

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00:29:05,000 --> 00:29:10,000

Today, however, 30,000 followers are about to witness her greatest miracle yet.

320

00:29:15,000 --> 00:29:19,000

They were there to see this notion that through Jesus Christ,

321

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

Sister Amy was able to channel his healing powers.

322

00:29:24,000 --> 00:29:28,000

A paralyzed woman is brought to the stage to receive the preacher's blessing.

323

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

Sister Amy asked her, is Jesus Christ a part of her life?

324

00:29:32,000 --> 00:29:34,000

And the woman says yes.

325

00:29:35,000 --> 00:29:38,000

Please lift the weight from this woman.

326

00:29:39,000 --> 00:29:44,000

And after several seconds, quite remarkably, she gets up and she walks.

327

00:29:46,000 --> 00:29:51,000

The event in Balboa Park catapults Sister Amy's popularity to new heights.

328

00:29:53,000 --> 00:29:58,000

In 1923, she opens what would become one of the first mega churches in the country.

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00:29:58,000 --> 00:30:04,000

And a year later, she acquires her own radio station, allowing her to build what she calls a church without walls.

330

00:30:06,000 --> 00:30:11,000

And because of her radio program, her message was now going around the world.

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00:30:12,000 --> 00:30:15,000

But just as her global success is gaining momentum,

332

00:30:16,000 --> 00:30:19,000

a mysterious event threatens to end it all.

333

00:30:22,000 --> 00:30:24,000

May 18, 1926

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00:30:25,000 --> 00:30:27,000

Venice Beach, California

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

Sister Amy, accompanied by her secretary, takes a break from her busy schedule to go for a swim.

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00:30:35,000 --> 00:30:39,000

The secretary stepped away for a moment and when she returned, Sister Amy was nowhere to be found.

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00:30:42,000 --> 00:30:46,000

For weeks, the Los Angeles Police Department scours the area.

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00:30:47,000 --> 00:30:49,000

But there is no trace of the missing evangelist.

339

00:30:50,000 --> 00:30:55,000

The assumption is that she has drowned and that Sister Amy is no longer with us.

340

00:30:58,000 --> 00:31:01,000

Then, one month later, there's a surprising development in the case.

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00:31:04,000 --> 00:31:12,000

Sister Amy emerges from the Mexican desert and she claims she has been kidnapped, beaten, tortured and held for 32 days.

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00:31:13,000 --> 00:31:19,000

Sister Amy gives investigators a horrific account of how she was abducted and taken across the border to Mexico.

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00:31:21,000 --> 00:31:28,000

She claims that while on the beach, two individuals had grabbed her, threw her in a car and took her hostage to a remote location in the Mexican desert.

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00:31:30,000 --> 00:31:35,000

The evangelist explains that after more than a month in captivity, she pulled off an incredible escape.

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00:31:36,000 --> 00:31:39,000

According to Sister Amy, it was only a month after the incident.

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00:31:39,000 --> 00:31:46,000

She ultimately found an aluminum tin can top and she used that top to slowly break from the ropes that were tying her.

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00:31:47,000 --> 00:31:52,000

She then walked 17 hours across the scorched terrain until she finally found help.

348

00:31:53,000 --> 00:31:59,000

It truly seems miraculous that she has emerged unscathed from such a traumatic event.

349

00:31:59,000 --> 00:32:06,000

On hearing of her extraordinary ordeal, Sister Amy's followers welcome her back to California in huge numbers.

350

00:32:07,000 --> 00:32:13,000

But while the crowds are captivated by her incredible tale of survival, the authorities are having problems with the facts.

351

00:32:14,000 --> 00:32:16,000

How could you escape?

352

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

The authorities are having problems with the facts.

353

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

The authorities are having problems with the facts.

354

00:32:25,000 --> 00:32:27,000

How could you escape?

355

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

How could you escape?

356

00:32:29,000 --> 00:32:35,000

For someone who has apparently traveled several miles in the desert by themselves, her clothes were in really good shape.

357

00:32:36,000 --> 00:32:39,000

The police start to wonder, was her story true?

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00:32:47,000 --> 00:32:49,000

Southern California, June 1926.

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00:32:50,000 --> 00:32:59,000

After disappearing for weeks, celebrity evangelist Amy Semple McPherson has emerged from the Mexican desert claiming she was held hostage and tortured.

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

Yet when police investigate her remarkable story, they begin to wonder, is McPherson telling the truth?

361

00:33:10,000 --> 00:33:14,000

There was an issue of how she appeared when she made her way out of the desert.

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00:33:15,000 --> 00:33:24,000

Her clothes were in really good shape, her shoes were perfectly clean, and police ultimately come to the realization that Sister Amy is lying.

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

Following their suspicions, detectives interview her parishioners and learn that the preacher may not be quite as pious as she seems.

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

They hear rumors of improprieties.

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00:33:39,000 --> 00:33:44,000

Sister Amy may be having an affair with one of the local radio technicians that works for her.

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00:33:45,000 --> 00:33:48,000

His name is Kenneth Ormiston, and he's a married man.

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00:33:49,000 --> 00:33:57,000

Not only that, when police look into Kenneth Ormiston's whereabouts during Sister Amy's disappearance, they make an even more shocking discovery.

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00:33:58,000 --> 00:34:10,000

The police find he had rented a hotel room up the California coast, and one woman claimed that she saw Kenneth Ormiston with a woman matching Sister Amy's description.

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00:34:12,000 --> 00:34:17,000

This caused many individuals to make the assumption that the two of them had run off together.

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00:34:19,000 --> 00:34:24,000

Sister Amy's alleged affair immediately attracts the attention of the media.

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00:34:24,000 --> 00:34:29,000

This wasn't just a sex story. This is one of those stories with a major religious figure.

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00:34:29,000 --> 00:34:35,000

So Sister Amy really got caught up in what was one of the great sex scandals of the 20th century.

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00:34:37,000 --> 00:34:44,000

In July of 1926, prosecutors convened to charge the preacher with falsifying police reports.

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00:34:45,000 --> 00:34:51,000

But although there is a wealth of circumstantial evidence against her, it's not enough to convince the jury.

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00:34:52,000 --> 00:34:58,000

And as a result of this, all charges were dropped against her and no additional charges were ever filed.

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

It's never determined whether Sister Amy was really kidnapped or actually having an affair.

377

00:35:06,000 --> 00:35:11,000

But whatever the truth, her reputation is forever tainted by the scandal.

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00:35:12,000 --> 00:35:23,000

In September of 1944, the controversial evangelist is found dead in her hotel room, apparently from an accidental drug overdose.

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00:35:25,000 --> 00:35:33,000

Sister Amy was really an enigma. She had her own physical desires that ultimately turned out to forever damage her reputation.

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00:35:34,000 --> 00:35:42,000

But she'd founded the first mega church, the kinds that we kind of think of today, that really are very prominent and it all began with Sister Amy.

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00:35:44,000 --> 00:35:51,000

And today, the splendid grounds of Balboa Park, where this revered figure once preached to the masses,

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00:35:51,000 --> 00:35:57,000

endure as a reminder of her meteoric rise and her stunning fall from grace.

383

00:35:58,000 --> 00:36:02,000

Named for the striking steeples that define its scenic skyline,

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00:36:02,000 --> 00:36:07,000

Frederick Maryland is known as the city of clustered spires.

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00:36:08,000 --> 00:36:18,000

And while it's now home to 65,000 residents, outside the county courthouse stands a little-known figure that some argue should be its most illustrious.

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00:36:19,000 --> 00:36:23,000

It's approximately 7.5 feet tall, made of bronze.

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00:36:23,000 --> 00:36:32,000

It depicts the image of a stoic man dressed in colonial garb, a top of four-foot granite pediment.

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00:36:34,000 --> 00:36:37,000

Most people have never even heard of this man.

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00:36:38,000 --> 00:36:47,000

But according to local guide Tiffany Eholt, the title inscribed on the statue's base suggests he perhaps deserves more recognition.

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00:36:47,000 --> 00:36:54,000

This isn't George Washington, but some people regard this man as the very first president of the United States.

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00:36:55,000 --> 00:37:01,000

So who is this forgotten figure? And why does he hold claims to being the father of the nation?

392

00:37:04,000 --> 00:37:15,000

November 15, 1777. The Revolutionary War is raging as the American colonies fight to throw off the oppressive yoke of British rule.

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00:37:16,000 --> 00:37:21,000

But to win, they must unite their forces under a central governing body.

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00:37:22,000 --> 00:37:30,000

So at a meeting in York, Pennsylvania, delegates from each colony create a written contract called the Articles of Confederation.

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00:37:31,000 --> 00:37:34,000

The charter called for the unification of all 13 colonies.

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00:37:35,000 --> 00:37:39,000

The proposed alliance would be a key step to defeating the British.

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00:37:39,000 --> 00:37:46,000

But soon after the document is drafted, its creation comes under threat, as not all agree with the terms.

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00:37:47,000 --> 00:37:53,000

By May 5, 1779, all colonies had signed up from the charter, except for one, Maryland.

399

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

Fearing that those with more land will possess too much power, Maryland delegates argue over some of the colony's territorial claims.

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00:38:04,000 --> 00:38:11,000

And for the next several months, unification remains elusive.

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00:38:12,000 --> 00:38:20,000

Yet just when it looks as if the creation of this new government is doomed, one man reportedly steps forward to settle the dispute.

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00:38:21,000 --> 00:38:26,000

A 65-year-old veteran politician from Maryland named John Hansen.

403

00:38:26,000 --> 00:38:37,000

In June of 1780, the popular statesman known for his diplomatic skills is sent to Philadelphia to help solve the problem.

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

While his fellow delegates purportedly refuse to bargain with their opponents, Hansen embraces negotiation.

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00:38:47,000 --> 00:38:52,000

Hansen used his skills of diplomacy and persuasion to help overcome the impasse.

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00:38:52,000 --> 00:38:55,000

I would like to now open the floor for many discussions.

407

00:38:56,000 --> 00:39:00,000

Soon all 13 colonies reach an agreement over the disputed lands.

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00:39:01,000 --> 00:39:07,000

And on March 1, 1781, Hansen was the fundelegate to sign the Articles of Confederation.

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00:39:11,000 --> 00:39:17,000

With this document, the 13 colonies unite for the first time under a centralized government.

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00:39:18,000 --> 00:39:22,000

Standing together as one in their struggle for freedom.

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00:39:23,000 --> 00:39:33,000

And in the fall of 1781, British forces surrender at Yorktown, and the new Congress of the now liberated nation convenes in Philadelphia.

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

The delegates are charged with selecting a leader for their fledgling government.

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00:39:41,000 --> 00:39:44,000

The man they choose will be called President.

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00:39:45,000 --> 00:39:49,000

The cast their votes for a man that helped ensure the new nation's creation.

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00:39:51,000 --> 00:39:53,000

66 year old Maryland patriot, John Hansen.

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00:39:57,000 --> 00:40:03,000

So why then is George Washington recognized as the nation's first president and not John Hansen?

417

00:40:03,000 --> 00:40:06,000

It's November 1781, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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00:40:07,000 --> 00:40:14,000

Representatives from all 13 states have just signed the Articles of Confederation, establishing the nation's first formal government.

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00:40:16,000 --> 00:40:19,000

And the delegates have voted for Maryland's John Hanson as president.

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00:40:20,000 --> 00:40:25,000

But if that's the case, why do most people recognize George Washington as the first president?

421

00:40:25,000 --> 00:40:29,000

The new government is immediately plagued with several problems.

422

00:40:30,000 --> 00:40:38,000

Under the Articles of Confederation, it has no authority to tax, regulate trade, or even effectively enforce legislation.

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00:40:39,000 --> 00:40:44,000

The Articles limited the government's authority, thus making it ineffective.

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00:40:45,000 --> 00:40:48,000

The new government is immediately plagued with several problems.

425

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

The new government is immediately plagued with several problems.

426

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

The Articles limited the government's authority, thus making it ineffective.

427

00:40:56,000 --> 00:41:06,000

To solve the problem, on June 21, 1788, the delegates draw up a new set of laws, granting the federal government more power over the states.

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00:41:07,000 --> 00:41:09,000

This document is the U.S. Constitution.

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00:41:10,000 --> 00:41:15,000

And over time, the Constitution became known as the foundational document of the country.

430

00:41:16,000 --> 00:41:22,000

The Charter also calls for the selection of a powerful executive to lead the new nation.

431

00:41:23,000 --> 00:41:29,000

And eight months later, George Washington becomes the first president of the United States of America.

432

00:41:31,000 --> 00:41:35,000

And slowly, John Hansen got written out of history.

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Instead, George Washington became universally known as the father of the country.

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But some historians argue that although the government created by the Articles of Confederation was later replaced by a more effective system,

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it was nevertheless America's first government.

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And Hansen was its first president.

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And as the debate continues to this day, this statue stands as a memorial to the leader who has become one of history's most forgotten men.

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From a headless chicken to a cannibal's confession, a miniature mummy to a kidnapped evangelist.

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

I'm Don Wildman, and these are Monumental Mysteries.