

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:09,640

This program is about unsolved mysteries. Whenever possible, the actual family members

2

00:00:09,640 --> 00:00:13,720

and police officials have participated in recreating the events. What you are about

3

00:00:13,720 --> 00:00:20,520

to see is not a news broadcast.

4

00:00:20,520 --> 00:00:26,080

In 1945, five Navy torpedo bombers took off from a Florida airfield and headed east over

5

00:00:26,080 --> 00:00:32,080

the Atlantic only to disappear without a trace. Thus the legend of the Bermuda Triangle was born.

6

00:00:32,080 --> 00:00:45,080

Today an aviation researcher believes he has found one of the missing planes and solved the mystery of the lost patrol.

7

00:00:45,080 --> 00:00:49,520

When she was a young woman, Marge Ryder faced the excruciating decision to give up a child

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00:00:49,520 --> 00:00:55,720

for adoption not once, not twice, but three times. Perhaps someone watching tonight is

9

00:00:55,760 --> 00:01:00,520

one of the daughters she is searching for.

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00:01:00,520 --> 00:01:05,200

Near San Francisco, a 60 year old woman made a brave stand against drug dealers plaguing

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00:01:05,200 --> 00:01:10,400

her neighbor and was shot in her own home. Authorities need your help to find her unknown

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00:01:10,400 --> 00:01:16,120

attackers. We'll also bring you the poignant story of six children torn apart by adoption

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00:01:16,120 --> 00:01:22,640

four decades ago. One phone call may be the final step in bringing this family back together.

14

00:01:22,640 --> 00:01:25,720

Join me. You may be able to help solve a mystery.

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00:02:22,720 --> 00:02:29,720

In 1945, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, five Navy Avenger torpedo bombers took off on a routine

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00:02:29,720 --> 00:02:34,720

training flight. There were 14 men on board.

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00:02:39,720 --> 00:02:47,720

The mission was known as Flight 19. Five hours after they took off, the entire squadron would vanish without a trace.

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00:02:48,720 --> 00:02:55,720

Their disappearance became the lynchpin of a modern legend of the supernatural. It has

19

00:02:56,760 --> 00:03:02,080

been called the Triangle of Death, the Houdou Sea, or the Graveyard of the Atlantic. But

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00:03:02,080 --> 00:03:09,080

to most of us, the area where the five planes disappeared is known as the Bermuda Triangle.

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00:03:10,920 --> 00:03:16,120

This 400,000 square mile area in the eastern Atlantic extends from the south of Florida,

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00:03:16,120 --> 00:03:22,480

northeast to Bermuda, and southeast to Puerto Rico. According to experts, in the last 75

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00:03:22,480 --> 00:03:27,960

years, over 100 ships and planes have apparently disappeared in this region. Though at least

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00:03:27,960 --> 00:03:32,760

1,000 lives have been lost, the Triangle's most famous victims were the five Avengers

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00:03:32,760 --> 00:03:39,760

of Flight 19. For the last 45 years, the disappearance of Flight 19 has been used by

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00:03:40,640 --> 00:03:46,480

many as proof that the Bermuda Triangle does exist. The five planes were sent to a vanishing

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00:03:46,480 --> 00:03:52,600

side some supernatural vortex and then whisked away to another world. But recently, an aviation

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00:03:52,600 --> 00:03:58,040

investigator named John Meyer has come up with a more down-to-earth explanation. He is certain

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00:03:58,040 --> 00:04:03,800

that he has found one of the missing aircraft just 30 miles off the Florida coast. If Meyer

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00:04:03,800 --> 00:04:08,600

is correct, then one of the most intriguing unsolved mysteries of this century may finally

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00:04:08,640 --> 00:04:15,640

be explained. For years, John Meyer has scrutinized Flight 19's flight plan, radio transmissions,

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00:04:17,920 --> 00:04:24,920

and the weather on the day of the disappearance. When I read the story and I read the transcripts

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00:04:24,920 --> 00:04:31,760

of the radio conversations, it triggered a response in me and I said, if this is true

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00:04:31,760 --> 00:04:37,920

and this is true, then I think I can find one of the airplanes. Last summer, using the

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00:04:37,920 --> 00:04:42,600

latest in modern technology, Meyer mounted his fourth underwater expedition looking for

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00:04:42,600 --> 00:04:48,560

one of the lost planes. In order to pinpoint his final resting place, Meyer has carefully

37

00:04:48,560 --> 00:04:56,560

reconstructed the last flight of the lost Avengers. It all began at the Naval Air Station in Fort

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00:04:56,560 --> 00:05:04,560

Lauderdale, Florida. It was the afternoon of December 5, 1945. Lieutenant Charles Taylor

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00:05:04,560 --> 00:05:10,080

was assigned to command Flight 19. Known as a cool, capable pilot, Taylor had logged

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00:05:10,080 --> 00:05:17,080

over 2,500 hours as a naval aviator. You are scheduled for a low-level navigation problem.

41

00:05:17,360 --> 00:05:22,560

You will fly 123 miles southeast, beginning your practice bomb... Before takeoff, the

42

00:05:22,560 --> 00:05:28,160

crewman of Flight 19 were briefed on the routine training exercise by a senior operations officer.

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00:05:28,160 --> 00:05:34,720

12 miles and the winds are southwest at 18 knots and gusty. Again, I remind you, it can

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00:05:34,720 --> 00:05:40,040

change momentarily, so please be aware. Now, I respect your professionalism and let's go

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00:05:40,040 --> 00:05:47,040

over your ship. Captain, can I have a word with you in private, sir? All right, I'll be

46

00:05:47,040 --> 00:05:54,040

back in five minutes. Relax. Just before takeoff, Lieutenant Taylor made an unusual request.

47

00:05:54,440 --> 00:05:57,880

Sir, if it's all the same to you, I'd just soon you replace me on the flight this afternoon.

48

00:05:57,880 --> 00:06:04,880

I'm just not feeling up to it. Why? What's the matter? I just don't feel right, sir. I'd

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00:06:04,880 --> 00:06:10,520

rather not be in the air today. Well, the rest of the instructors are off the base. You're

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00:06:10,520 --> 00:06:17,520

the last one on the roster. I'm sorry, son. You've got to go up. Some people speculated

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00:06:18,440 --> 00:06:24,720

that he was a party animal and he was out drinking. I don't think that's fair to him. The fact

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00:06:24,720 --> 00:06:28,360

was that for some reason he didn't feel 100 percent. Could have been an ear infection,

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00:06:28,360 --> 00:06:32,320

could have been the flu, could have been any number of things. And as a pilot, it was

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00:06:32,320 --> 00:06:39,320

his duty to say, I don't want to fly for whatever reason. At 2.10 p.m., the five planes left

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00:06:39,840 --> 00:06:46,840

the runway and headed east. Leaving Fort Lauderdale, the planes were to head 120 nautical miles

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00:06:56,160 --> 00:07:03,160

southeast, make a practice bomb run, and then fly 73 miles northwest. They then would head

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00:07:03,160 --> 00:07:10,160

120 miles southwest back to Fort Lauderdale. Flight 19 consisted of four student pilots

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00:07:11,520 --> 00:07:17,960

who were qualified naval aviators. They each had more hours in the air than the FAA requires

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00:07:17,960 --> 00:07:22,960

now for a commercial license. They had gone through all of their training, but this one

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00:07:22,960 --> 00:07:29,960

flight. FT-28, the flight, I'm making my clearing turn. The flight was not following

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00:07:30,960 --> 00:07:36,960

Charles Taylor. He was the instructor pilot who was trailing behind the rest of the flight.

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00:07:36,960 --> 00:07:42,760

He was grading their performance. He wasn't doing the navigating. The other pilots in

63

00:07:42,760 --> 00:07:49,760

the flight were doing their own navigation. FT-28, FT-36, area is clear, target is marked.

64

00:07:52,760 --> 00:07:57,560

FT-28, the flight, target is at 12 o'clock, one mile out. Let's see what you're made

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00:07:57,560 --> 00:08:04,560

of. FT-36, Roger, I'm commencing my run.

66

00:08:11,160 --> 00:08:18,160

Radio traffic indicated that the men successfully completed the practice bomb run. At approximately

67

00:08:18,400 --> 00:08:23,400

3.10 p.m. on the second leg of the mission, Taylor's compass began to malfunction.

68

00:08:23,400 --> 00:08:30,400

I don't know where we are. We must have got lost after that last turn.

69

00:08:35,240 --> 00:08:39,240

Powers, what is your compass read?

70

00:08:39,240 --> 00:08:43,140

Lieutenant, we're at 3.30 degrees.

71

00:08:43,140 --> 00:08:47,840

Meyer believes the coordinates given by the students were accurate. For some reason, Taylor

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00:08:47,840 --> 00:08:53,960

remained convinced that they were lost. At the Fort Lauderdale Air Station, the communication

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00:08:53,960 --> 00:09:00,960

center monitoring the flight became concerned about Taylor's defective compasses.

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00:09:00,960 --> 00:09:07,960

At the time I am over small islands, believed to be Florida Keys, my compass is out. I'm

75

00:09:07,960 --> 00:09:14,000

in the Keys, but I don't know how far down and I don't know how to get to Fort Lauderdale.

76

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

I am over land, but it's broken. I'm going to swing down and take another look.

77

00:09:23,280 --> 00:09:28,360

Taylor had made a critical error. He thought that Flight 19 was in the Gulf of Mexico flying

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00:09:28,360 --> 00:09:34,360

over the Florida Keys. Meyer believes that in actuality, the flight was 300 miles northeast

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00:09:34,360 --> 00:09:40,000

of Taylor's estimated location, flying over the Abaco Islands and the West Atlantic. From

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00:09:40,000 --> 00:09:46,000

the air, the two island chains looked remarkably similar. Taylor ordered northeasterly, then

81

00:09:46,000 --> 00:09:50,680

due east headings. Had they been over the Keys, this route would have taken them safely

82

00:09:50,680 --> 00:09:55,560

home. Instead, it took them further out to sea.

83

00:09:55,560 --> 00:10:01,760

The students, I am sure, because they had flown the area before, they're saying, uh-huh,

84

00:10:01,760 --> 00:10:07,360

you know, you're wrong. We're not in the Gulf of Mexico. We're in the Atlantic. But

85

00:10:07,440 --> 00:10:11,440

if the instructor pilot says, do it, you do it.

86

00:10:11,440 --> 00:10:18,440

By 5 p.m., the short winter day had darkened and the weather was deteriorating. Flight

87

00:10:19,280 --> 00:10:26,280

19 was heading east, away from their base, and they were beginning to lose radio contact.

88

00:10:26,280 --> 00:10:31,280

The base did monitor one of the squadron's last pilot-to-pilot communications.

89

00:10:32,200 --> 00:10:37,200

If we just had west, we'd get home. Damn it, if we just had west, we'd get home.

90

00:10:37,200 --> 00:10:44,200

Fuel was low and time was running out. According to Meyer, Taylor finally listened to his student

91

00:10:46,360 --> 00:10:50,400

pilots and headed west towards the Florida coast.

92

00:10:50,400 --> 00:10:55,400

So he flew due west for 49 minutes until the first airplane crashed.

93

00:10:55,520 --> 00:11:02,520

We may have to ditch. Damn it, I'm going down. I got a ditch. Do you read?

94

00:11:04,520 --> 00:11:11,520

Do you read? Damn it, do you read?

95

00:11:15,120 --> 00:11:20,480

In Meyer's reconstruction, the surviving four pilots then made a fatal error. Although they

96

00:11:20,480 --> 00:11:25,280

were only seven minutes away from the Florida coast, they still had not spotted land. They

97

00:11:25,360 --> 00:11:30,960

began to believe that they must be flying over the Gulf of Mexico. For this reason, they

98

00:11:30,960 --> 00:11:36,960

again reversed their course and headed east. But instead of going towards Florida, their

99

00:11:36,960 --> 00:11:42,960

new course took them back out to sea.

100

00:11:42,960 --> 00:11:49,960

By 8 p.m., the other four planes had disappeared beneath the waves. The legend of Flight 19

101

00:11:49,960 --> 00:11:56,960

was true. For the next five days, the Navy mounted the largest air sea search ever conducted

102

00:11:56,960 --> 00:12:03,960

up to that time. No trace of the planes, 14 missing men, was ever found. However Meyer

103

00:12:03,960 --> 00:12:08,880

believes that some of the men of Flight 19 were alive, drifting at sea, slowly running

104

00:12:08,880 --> 00:12:11,960

out of food and water.

105

00:12:11,960 --> 00:12:18,080

Two ships sighted flares within five hours of each other. And everybody in the investigation

106

00:12:18,120 --> 00:12:23,360

said, nah, those flares that were spotted were search aircraft. Well, you go back to the

107

00:12:23,360 --> 00:12:29,640

investigation and you find out when the search aircraft took off and where they went. And

108

00:12:29,640 --> 00:12:34,800

the search aircraft weren't where those flares were sighted by those steamers. Three days

109

00:12:34,800 --> 00:12:40,240

later, another ship spots some blinking lights, distressed lights on the water. And discounts

110

00:12:40,240 --> 00:12:47,240

them as being from another ship. I don't think so. I think those were people from flight

111

00:12:48,080 --> 00:12:51,040

19.

112

00:12:51,040 --> 00:12:56,360

After carefully cross-checking only available information on Flight 19, Meyer calculated

113

00:12:56,360 --> 00:13:01,720

the impact point of the first plane as here, just 30 miles off the Florida coast near Cape

114

00:13:01,720 --> 00:13:08,440

Canaveral. But finding a single Avenger in the ocean was an overwhelming task. Until ironically,

115

00:13:08,440 --> 00:13:12,440

a national tragedy made it possible.

116

00:13:12,800 --> 00:13:19,800

On January 19, 1986, the space shuttle Challenger exploded moments after lift off from Cape

117

00:13:21,040 --> 00:13:26,600

Canaveral. Some of the debris fell in the precise location where Meyer believes the first plane

118

00:13:26,600 --> 00:13:31,840

had ditched. Quite by accident, the underwater search for the Challenger wreckage may have

119

00:13:31,840 --> 00:13:37,640

uncovered what John Meyer had been looking for. Just 30 miles from Cape Canaveral, the

120

00:13:37,640 --> 00:13:43,320

salvage team located a plane wreck submerged at 400 feet of water. Believing the wreckage

121

00:13:43,320 --> 00:13:49,320

was out of a twin engine DC-3, they ignored it. But to John Meyer, this discovery appeared

122

00:13:49,320 --> 00:13:53,280

to be the vindication of his theory.

123

00:13:53,280 --> 00:13:58,480

Last July, John Meyer was on board a submersible as it prepared to dive 400 feet to inspect

124

00:13:58,480 --> 00:14:04,040

the wreckage. He knew that 45 years might have obliterated many of the Avengers identifying

125

00:14:04,040 --> 00:14:05,240

characteristics.

126

00:14:06,240 --> 00:14:12,600

We knew we had a wreck, but we didn't know what type airplane it was. And to say I was

127

00:14:12,600 --> 00:14:17,920

on the edge of my seat, along with my colleagues, would be an understatement.

128

00:14:17,920 --> 00:14:21,640

As they first approached the location of the wreck, they could see nothing in the murky

129

00:14:21,640 --> 00:14:26,640

water. Then the wing of a plane became visible.

130

00:14:26,640 --> 00:14:31,640

Oh my God, I can't believe I'm here.

131

00:14:32,040 --> 00:14:37,040

But was it the right plane?

132

00:14:37,040 --> 00:14:43,040

One distinctive feature of the Avenger is his Bombay, located under the fuselage.

133

00:14:43,040 --> 00:14:50,040

The submerged plane is upside down. Here the Bombay cavity is clearly visible.

134

00:14:50,040 --> 00:14:55,040

I can't believe I'm sitting here in front of this airplane after all these years.

135

00:14:55,040 --> 00:15:00,040

Another distinctive feature of the Avenger is its oval wheel well.

136

00:15:00,440 --> 00:15:05,440

Here this well can be seen on the underside of the wing.

137

00:15:05,440 --> 00:15:10,440

Oh my God. Look at that.

138

00:15:10,440 --> 00:15:15,540

Perhaps the Avenger's most unusual feature is the ball turret which protected the gunner

139

00:15:15,540 --> 00:15:22,540

behind the pilot. Even though the plane that Meyer found was upside down and partially

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00:15:22,540 --> 00:15:27,540

buried in the sand, the unique cross hatch of the turret's window frame is clearly visible.

141

00:15:28,040 --> 00:15:33,040

There's no question we got an Avenger, folks.

142

00:15:33,040 --> 00:15:40,040

After all, at this point, eight years of research and all the frustrations that we had to actually

143

00:15:42,940 --> 00:15:49,940

be in a submarine and be right over top of this wreckage was just incredible.

144

00:15:51,240 --> 00:15:56,180

It is obvious that Meyer has found an Avenger, but is it one of the Avengers of the Lost

145

00:15:56,280 --> 00:16:02,580

Flight 19? Through the manipulation of the submersible's mechanical arm, Meyer removed

146

00:16:02,580 --> 00:16:07,540

the engine cowling. He was hoping that a serial number could be found that would confirm that

147

00:16:07,540 --> 00:16:14,040

this Avenger had been part of Flight 19. But after raising the cowling to the surface,

148

00:16:14,040 --> 00:16:18,780

Meyer was unable to find any serial numbers.

149

00:16:18,780 --> 00:16:24,840

The only way to prove whether this is indeed Flight 19 aircraft is going to be raised that

150

00:16:24,840 --> 00:16:31,840

sucker out of the water. I and my partners believe that we're correct, but it will remain

151

00:16:34,160 --> 00:16:37,600

a mystery until we can raise the airplane.

152

00:16:37,600 --> 00:16:42,840

If this plane can be identified as belonging to Flight 19, the legend of the Bermuda Trials

153

00:16:42,840 --> 00:16:48,360

will have to be rewritten. It is not as romantic to say that the flight disappeared due to a

154

00:16:48,720 --> 00:16:55,720

tragic chain of simple mistakes, but if John Meyer is correct, this is precisely what happened.

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00:16:56,840 --> 00:17:02,320

No matter what the explanation, the 14 men of Flight 19 deserve to be honored, not as

156

00:17:02,320 --> 00:17:09,320

victims of the supernatural, but as brave men who died in the service of their country.

157

00:17:10,320 --> 00:17:17,320

Next, the heartwarming reunion of a young woman and her mother marks the beginning of

158

00:17:18,640 --> 00:17:25,640

a new search for two long lost sisters.

159

00:17:32,880 --> 00:17:37,720

Jackie Dragon grew up in a typical middle class home near San Francisco, California.

160

00:17:37,720 --> 00:17:43,640

He knew she had been adopted, but had no idea who her birth parents were. Curiously, Jackie

161

00:17:43,640 --> 00:17:50,640

always had an unusual fascination with films and television shows about women in prison.

162

00:17:55,320 --> 00:18:00,480

I'm not sure what it was that attracted me exactly, but I do know that there was some

163

00:18:00,480 --> 00:18:07,080

strange sense of security that I felt in watching the stories and the women interacting in their

164

00:18:07,120 --> 00:18:11,880

lives and their relationships in prison.

165

00:18:11,880 --> 00:18:17,880

Like any young child, Jackie had a mischievous side. At the age of 12, she made an unexpected

166

00:18:17,880 --> 00:18:21,800

discovery.

167

00:18:21,800 --> 00:18:26,800

I was scavenging around, sneaking around in my father's closet and looking through a box

168

00:18:26,800 --> 00:18:33,640

of papers, important documents and things. And what I found were legal papers, and as

169

00:18:33,680 --> 00:18:38,680

I read through them, I realized they were my adoption papers.

170

00:18:38,680 --> 00:18:40,680

Jackals, dark.

171

00:18:40,680 --> 00:18:44,920

It was a big thing. It was a turning point. It was something that I knew from that point

172

00:18:44,920 --> 00:18:50,640

on that someday I would find those people in that paper and that I had to, that they

173

00:18:50,640 --> 00:18:56,040

were real.

174

00:18:56,040 --> 00:19:03,040

I searched off and on for a number of years, probably starting around 1982, and I found

175

00:19:04,600 --> 00:19:11,100

I think it was 1986 when I got the information that I wasn't born in some hospital somewhere,

176

00:19:11,100 --> 00:19:15,720

but that I was born in prison and that my mother had been incarcerated at the time of

177

00:19:15,720 --> 00:19:19,720

my birth.

178

00:19:19,720 --> 00:19:25,920

When I remembered that I had had such a fascination with movies, with women in prison and them,

179

00:19:25,920 --> 00:19:30,440

I thought, boy, that's bizarre.

180

00:19:30,720 --> 00:19:35,880

Jackie learned that she was born at the Dwight Reformatory for Women in Chicago, Illinois.

181

00:19:35,880 --> 00:19:41,720

Her mother, Marge Ryder, was serving a one-year sentence for her part in an armed robbery.

182

00:19:41,720 --> 00:19:47,160

Ten months later, Marge made one of the most difficult decisions of her life. She put Jackie

183

00:19:47,160 --> 00:19:49,920

up for adoption.

184

00:19:49,920 --> 00:19:55,200

I convinced myself that the best thing to do for Jackie was to give her a home that I

185

00:19:55,240 --> 00:20:02,240

assumed had two upstanding parents, that there was security in that home, that she could

186

00:20:04,840 --> 00:20:10,480

be guaranteed an education, all the things that I knew at that time in my life. There

187

00:20:10,480 --> 00:20:15,640

was no way I could possibly give her any of that.

188

00:20:15,640 --> 00:20:22,640

And I don't remember exactly when Jackie was taken, but I do remember that the day she

189

00:20:22,640 --> 00:20:28,760

left after she had left, they came and told me that Jackie had gone to her new home in

190

00:20:28,760 --> 00:20:35,760

some other state and it hurt. Same as it's hurt now. That's one memory I didn't lose.

191

00:20:43,680 --> 00:20:50,680

I didn't give her up in that sense. I knew nothing else to do. And that's the last I

192

00:20:52,640 --> 00:20:59,640

remember basically that I have of Jackie.

193

00:21:00,440 --> 00:21:05,040

Jackie's adoptive parents provided a stable home, but Jackie was always curious about

194

00:21:05,040 --> 00:21:07,880

her birth mother.

195

00:21:07,880 --> 00:21:12,080

I wondered whether or not she'd been able to kind of clean it up, you know, or whether

196

00:21:12,080 --> 00:21:16,560

she'd gotten in more trouble or whether or not she was safe or well. I don't think I

197

00:21:16,560 --> 00:21:21,920

ever considered not looking for her.

198

00:21:21,920 --> 00:21:26,560

After more than nine years of searching, Jackie finally learned of Marge's whereabouts.

199

00:21:26,560 --> 00:21:31,400

On July 26, 1990, she spoke with her mother for the first time in her life.

200

00:21:31,400 --> 00:21:34,280

Hi, may I speak with Marge Ryder, please?

201

00:21:34,280 --> 00:21:35,800

Speaking.

202

00:21:35,800 --> 00:21:40,680

What I realized when I found out that I had her phone number or when I realized that I

203

00:21:40,680 --> 00:21:45,280

was very close to finding her was that in a way, I was setting myself up to feel rejected

204

00:21:45,280 --> 00:21:47,200

all over again.

205

00:21:47,200 --> 00:21:51,600

Does the date February 16, 1964 mean anything to you?

206

00:21:51,600 --> 00:21:56,680

Even for a second, did she hesitate? She was happy that I called and I felt so relieved

207

00:21:56,680 --> 00:21:58,080

and so lucky.

208

00:21:58,080 --> 00:22:03,360

Well, do you have time to talk right now? I've got all the time in the world to talk

209

00:22:03,360 --> 00:22:04,760

now, yes.

210

00:22:04,760 --> 00:22:08,520

One of the first things she said was, I never thought any of you girls would be calling

211

00:22:08,520 --> 00:22:14,080

me and then she let me know that there were two other sisters. It was very exciting. I

212

00:22:14,080 --> 00:22:16,160

couldn't believe it. It was like, there's more? You're kidding. There's something more

213

00:22:16,160 --> 00:22:19,400

that I didn't know.

214

00:22:19,520 --> 00:22:23,840

When Jackie and Marge talked for more than two hours, Marge told Jackie about her own

215

00:22:23,840 --> 00:22:29,120

troubled childhood, how she dropped out of high school, fell in with the wrong crowd,

216

00:22:29,120 --> 00:22:33,840

got pregnant at 17.

217

00:22:33,840 --> 00:22:37,480

Marge Ryder would be the first person to admit that she made a lot of mistakes in her early

218

00:22:37,480 --> 00:22:42,640

life. But Marge has managed to rise above her past. Today she is happily married and

219

00:22:42,640 --> 00:22:48,640

lives in Winchester, Illinois. Inspired by Jackie's open-hearted love and understanding,

220

00:22:48,680 --> 00:22:55,680

Marge now wants to find the other daughter she gave away more than 25 years ago.

221

00:22:56,440 --> 00:23:01,120

Marge's first daughter, Laura May, was 18 months old when Marge went to prison. She

222

00:23:01,120 --> 00:23:07,560

was left in the care of Marge's grandmother. At the time, Marge was already eight months

223

00:23:07,560 --> 00:23:13,320

pregnant with Jackie. She claims that once she was in prison, her grandmother attempted

224

00:23:13,320 --> 00:23:15,480

to get legal custody of Laura May.

225

00:23:15,840 --> 00:23:17,000

Hi.

226

00:23:17,000 --> 00:23:19,320

Please sit down.

227

00:23:19,320 --> 00:23:23,840

I hadn't been there too terribly long and a lawyer came to see me.

228

00:23:23,840 --> 00:23:28,040

Now when I'm finished with my term, I want to take Laura May with me. I want to raise

229

00:23:28,040 --> 00:23:28,800

her myself.

230

00:23:28,800 --> 00:23:33,880

Oh I understand. And if you sign these, then it'll help us to all keep Laura May.

231

00:23:33,880 --> 00:23:35,440

Now what does this say?

232

00:23:35,440 --> 00:23:39,920

Don't worry about this. This is just some legal jargon. I need to get you to sign right

233

00:23:39,920 --> 00:23:40,920

here, okay?

234

00:23:40,920 --> 00:23:41,920

Right here?

235

00:23:41,920 --> 00:23:43,000

That's it.

236

00:23:43,040 --> 00:23:49,000

I think that he was probably on my grandmother's side trying to help her adopt the child away

237

00:23:49,000 --> 00:23:50,000

from me.

238

00:23:50,000 --> 00:23:51,000

Don't you worry.

239

00:23:51,000 --> 00:23:58,720

And the courts just stepped in because she was too old a woman to raise a infant child.

240

00:23:58,720 --> 00:24:04,280

And I think they lost her as well as I did.

241

00:24:04,280 --> 00:24:08,080

Laura May was ultimately taken by the Cook County Welfare Department and became a ward

242

00:24:08,080 --> 00:24:09,880

of the state.

243

00:24:09,880 --> 00:24:14,920

Marge never saw Laura May again.

244

00:24:14,920 --> 00:24:20,120

After Jackie was born, Marge cared for her in the prison's nursery. But ten months later,

245

00:24:20,120 --> 00:24:27,120

Marge gave in to outside pressures and put Jackie up for adoption.

246

00:24:27,120 --> 00:24:32,160

A few weeks later, Marge completed her sentence and was released. She never again got in trouble

247

00:24:32,160 --> 00:24:33,360

with the law.

248

00:24:33,640 --> 00:24:39,840

However, she did give birth to a third daughter, Dawn Marie, whom she also gave up for adoption.

249

00:24:39,840 --> 00:24:46,040

I had often gone over in my mind, what if they come looking for me? And how do I explain

250

00:24:46,040 --> 00:24:54,480

to them that I gave them away? And I pretty much convinced myself and I do believe it.

251

00:24:54,480 --> 00:25:00,520

I felt I was giving each child the very best that I could give them.

252

00:25:00,520 --> 00:25:02,000

So how was your flight?

253

00:25:02,000 --> 00:25:03,000

It was real nice.

254

00:25:03,040 --> 00:25:07,960

In September 20th, 1990, Marge Ryder flew to California and met her daughter Jackie for

255

00:25:07,960 --> 00:25:10,360

the first time in more than 25 years.

256

00:25:10,360 --> 00:25:12,360

She definitely got red curly hair.

257

00:25:12,360 --> 00:25:14,520

Well, I wonder where I got that?

258

00:25:14,520 --> 00:25:20,320

I had many, many, many questions for her about her, about her hair, about everything.

259

00:25:20,320 --> 00:25:24,200

You know, it's like who had red hair? That was something that I grew up with, red curly

260

00:25:24,200 --> 00:25:31,920

hair. Nobody ever had it but me. And it was a curse when I was a child. And she was great.

261

00:25:31,920 --> 00:25:36,080

I could ask anything I wanted and she would tell me everything.

262

00:25:36,080 --> 00:25:38,840

This is Laura May and this is you, of course.

263

00:25:38,840 --> 00:25:41,280

Wow, you can definitely tell it's family.

264

00:25:41,280 --> 00:25:43,680

She really looks the same. Look at all those knees.

265

00:25:43,680 --> 00:25:44,680

My guess.

266

00:25:44,680 --> 00:25:52,400

For Jackie, reunion with Marge marked the end of one search and the beginning of another.

267

00:25:52,400 --> 00:25:57,720

You know, I like to think that somewhere wherever they are, that they know that they're adopted

268

00:25:57,720 --> 00:26:00,920

and that they wonder where they came from.

269

00:26:00,920 --> 00:26:06,920

They were mine. I did love them. I do love them.

270

00:26:06,920 --> 00:26:13,520

And it would be nice to make the family complete again.

271

00:26:13,520 --> 00:26:17,720

Thanks to our viewers, Jackie Dragon and Marge Writers' dream of reuniting their family

272

00:26:17,720 --> 00:26:22,560

finally came true. They were contacted by Laura May and Dawn Marie.

273

00:26:22,560 --> 00:26:28,200

Dawn Marie, who's adoptive name is Susan, owns her own business in Santa Barbara, California.

274

00:26:28,200 --> 00:26:36,760

Laura May, Marge's oldest daughter, is now married and lives in Mississippi.

275

00:26:36,760 --> 00:26:41,720

Three months after our broadcast, Laura May arrived at her sister Jackie's home in Glendale,

276

00:26:41,720 --> 00:26:46,640

California. Marge and her youngest daughter Tracy had flown in from Illinois for this

277

00:26:46,640 --> 00:26:48,360

very special reunion.

278

00:26:48,360 --> 00:26:50,680

How much on the phone?

279

00:26:50,680 --> 00:26:52,200

This is Tracy.

280

00:26:52,200 --> 00:26:53,200

Hi.

281

00:26:53,200 --> 00:26:55,760

This is your sister Tracy.

282

00:26:55,760 --> 00:26:59,800

I think I was really nerve-wracking because it's like I wasn't quite sure what to expect

283

00:26:59,800 --> 00:27:01,760

and what they would expect of me.

284

00:27:01,760 --> 00:27:03,760

Your child?

285

00:27:03,760 --> 00:27:13,520

And then after I got here, it's just all seemed to flow. It was very natural.

286

00:27:13,520 --> 00:27:18,880

The last time I remember seeing Laura, she was in a high chair. And now here she is

287

00:27:18,880 --> 00:27:23,720

all growing up and I'm still looking for this little girl. You know, and that's, it's

288

00:27:23,720 --> 00:27:25,720

kind of hard.

289

00:27:25,720 --> 00:27:32,240

Hi, Susan. Oh, it's good to meet you.

290

00:27:32,240 --> 00:27:36,960

A short time later, the circle was finally completed with the arrival of Marge's other

291

00:27:36,960 --> 00:27:43,520

daughter, Susan.

292

00:27:43,520 --> 00:27:48,520

I grew up knowing that I was adopted, but I didn't know anything about who my real parents

293

00:27:48,520 --> 00:27:58,200

were. And it's nice to know, you know, who your family is and what your background is,

294

00:27:58,200 --> 00:28:00,960

you know, learn more about them.

295

00:28:00,960 --> 00:28:04,200

I think when I first started feeling really comfortable was when we went out and took

296

00:28:04,200 --> 00:28:09,120

some Polaroids and it was a really neat feeling to have a picture right in front of me and

297

00:28:09,120 --> 00:28:12,920

see all of us standing together.

298

00:28:12,920 --> 00:28:19,480

It's a very once in a lifetime kind of a thing to find a sister that you've never met.

299

00:28:19,480 --> 00:28:22,080

Everybody smile.

300

00:28:22,080 --> 00:28:30,760

Each one is totally individual. They're all strong, I've found out.

301

00:28:30,760 --> 00:28:34,840

And they've done good with their lives. I'm proud of all four of them.

302

00:28:43,840 --> 00:28:52,720

When any family is torn apart, the scars can last a lifetime. The saga of the six heck

303

00:28:52,720 --> 00:28:57,880

children of Iowa is reminiscent of a Dickens novel with an equally large cast of characters.

304

00:28:57,880 --> 00:29:04,640

Delbert Jr., Florence, Jim, Sharon Louise, Doris Jean, and little Tommy. These brothers

305

00:29:04,640 --> 00:29:09,120

and sisters were separated by adoption as children, but through force of will, five

306

00:29:09,120 --> 00:29:14,120

of them managed to reunite in adulthood. Today they want to make sure that their life story

307

00:29:14,120 --> 00:29:23,440

has a happy ending. They need your help in order to make that dream come true.

308

00:29:23,440 --> 00:29:27,120

Council Bluffs, Iowa, the summer of 1944.

309

00:29:27,120 --> 00:29:32,200

Come on, you guys, you're going to be late for school. Come on, hurry up.

310

00:29:32,200 --> 00:29:37,040

Ten-year-old Delbert Heck Jr. was a man of the house.

311

00:29:37,040 --> 00:29:43,240

His father was often away from home and did little to support the family.

312

00:29:43,240 --> 00:29:49,680

It was very rough times. We didn't have any money for food or groceries. I mean, it wasn't

313

00:29:49,680 --> 00:29:54,040

hard times for us because that was all we knew. You don't never whisk the water if

314

00:29:54,040 --> 00:29:59,880

you ain't had to well. So we just, we thought we was doing fine. We had each other and we

315

00:29:59,880 --> 00:30:04,280

had mother and we just made the best we could of it.

316

00:30:04,280 --> 00:30:06,600

What did you have for supper last night, Florence?

317

00:30:06,640 --> 00:30:07,680

Puffed rice.

318

00:30:07,680 --> 00:30:09,360

Puffed rice?

319

00:30:09,360 --> 00:30:16,120

In August 1944, the family was visited by a social worker sent by the local welfare department.

320

00:30:16,120 --> 00:30:19,720

I'd like to see the kitchen now.

321

00:30:19,720 --> 00:30:25,520

The Hex had to stand by silently as she scrutinized their home.

322

00:30:25,520 --> 00:30:30,200

She opened the cabinets to see what was there, which there was nothing there. Maybe a bag

323

00:30:30,200 --> 00:30:36,040

of dry puffed wheat or something. We didn't have dressers. We didn't have clothes hanging

324

00:30:36,120 --> 00:30:42,320

in the closet. You know, she's seen the mattress on the living room floor where all six of

325

00:30:42,320 --> 00:30:49,560

us kids slept. And she just explained to mother that she wasn't able to care for us properly

326

00:30:49,560 --> 00:30:52,440

and they were going to take us where they could be.

327

00:30:52,440 --> 00:31:01,720

Three months later, the state of Iowa took the Hex children away.

328

00:31:01,720 --> 00:31:07,160

She told us she was taking us to a movie. Of course, you know, we had never been to a

329

00:31:07,160 --> 00:31:14,240

movie, so that was really something. So we went with her willingly and mother stood

330

00:31:14,240 --> 00:31:19,800

on the porch and cried. And I thought there was, you know, there was something that just

331

00:31:19,800 --> 00:31:27,560

wasn't right.

332

00:31:27,560 --> 00:31:40,920

When she crossed Broadway going north, I knew we weren't going to a movie.

333

00:31:40,920 --> 00:31:45,600

The six children were scattered across the countryside like windblown seeds. Three were

334

00:31:45,600 --> 00:31:54,760

immediately adopted, three languished in orphanages. Seven-year-old Florence was one of them.

335

00:31:54,760 --> 00:32:01,080

I cried for mother a lot, but I cried a lot for the littler ones because, you know, I

336

00:32:01,080 --> 00:32:09,160

spent a lot of time. This was my life with the, and we had a dorm mother that lived in

337

00:32:09,160 --> 00:32:16,920

the end of our building. And they'd come get me, take me to the end of the dorm. And there

338

00:32:16,920 --> 00:32:21,880

was a little closet there. You are going to sleep in here until you learn to stop fighting.

339

00:32:21,880 --> 00:32:33,480

And that's where I slept for a good long while when I first went to the orphanage.

340

00:32:33,480 --> 00:32:39,340

Jim and Delbert were placed in a different orphanage in Davenport, Iowa. Delbert was

341

00:32:39,340 --> 00:32:45,920

farmed out briefly to foster parents. I really think what they wanted was a farm hand. I

342

00:32:45,920 --> 00:32:52,120

don't think they wanted a child. I didn't have no contact with Jim, and he was the only

343

00:32:52,120 --> 00:32:57,600

one that I knew at that time. And when I didn't have him no more, I didn't have nothing to

344

00:32:57,600 --> 00:33:04,680

hold on to. So it didn't last but just a few weeks, and I just, I was ready to go back

345

00:33:04,680 --> 00:33:12,000

to Davenport.

346

00:33:12,000 --> 00:33:17,280

Delbert and Jimmy would remain in the orphanage until 1952, when the state set the two boys

347

00:33:17,280 --> 00:33:22,440

and their sister Florence back to their natural mother.

348

00:33:22,440 --> 00:33:23,880

Jimmy!

349

00:33:23,880 --> 00:33:26,440

Hey, Mom!

350

00:33:26,440 --> 00:33:35,400

Maude Heck would never see her other three children again.

351

00:33:35,400 --> 00:33:39,280

Unbeknownst to the Heck family, one-year-old Sharon Louise had been placed in the home

352

00:33:39,280 --> 00:33:49,040

of Wendell and Helena Jones. She had been renamed Dorissa. Five-year-old Doris Jean was sent

353

00:33:49,040 --> 00:33:58,360

to the home of Glen and Gertrude West. Her new name was Sally.

354

00:33:58,360 --> 00:34:03,160

It is assumed the three-year-old Tommy Heck was also adopted. His new name, if he has

355

00:34:03,160 --> 00:34:11,080

one, is still unknown.

356

00:34:11,080 --> 00:34:16,560

In 1970, Dorissa and Sally were reunited. Both had been adopted through the same orphanage

357

00:34:16,560 --> 00:34:21,040

which put them in contact with each other. The two then set out to find their missing

358

00:34:21,040 --> 00:34:23,200

family.

359

00:34:23,200 --> 00:34:28,520

I had a lot of information on our, on our biological family from all of the records

360

00:34:28,520 --> 00:34:32,880

that, that my parents had given me when I was sixteen. Sally didn't have a whole lot

361

00:34:32,880 --> 00:34:38,560

of information, but I had said if, if I knew where we lived, perhaps I could start there.

362

00:34:38,560 --> 00:34:42,280

And she said that she had that information because they had sent her, her original birth

363

00:34:42,280 --> 00:34:46,640

certificate and she was born at home, so she had her home address which happened to be

364

00:34:46,640 --> 00:34:51,360

Council Bluffs Iowa. And I got on the phone and I called information in Council Bluffs

365

00:34:51,360 --> 00:34:54,000

Iowa and started making phone calls.

366

00:34:54,000 --> 00:35:01,120

It was like one thirty in the afternoon, March twenty ninth when I talked to her. And at

367

00:35:01,120 --> 00:35:06,000

eleven thirty that night she called back and she said since I talked to you, I've talked

368

00:35:06,000 --> 00:35:11,600

to an aunt and Council Bluffs, two brothers and a sister.

369

00:35:11,600 --> 00:35:16,440

Forty-five years after the Heck family had been torn apart, their day of reunion finally

370

00:35:16,440 --> 00:35:19,240

came.

371

00:35:19,240 --> 00:35:26,440

Sally and I decided to drive to the reunion together, kind of like a team. We, by that

372

00:35:26,440 --> 00:35:32,200

time of course had known that the three oldest children had been raised together and we kind

373

00:35:32,200 --> 00:35:37,720

of felt like outsiders and we wanted to be together.

374

00:35:37,720 --> 00:35:42,480

We didn't really know what to do. It was like do you walk up and hug them and tell them

375

00:35:42,480 --> 00:35:46,920

how glad you are to see them after forty-five years or do you just stand back and shake hands

376

00:35:46,920 --> 00:35:54,280

or what do we do. But the minute we walked in, it was, the bond was instant and within

377

00:35:54,280 --> 00:35:58,120

five minutes we were like, we've grown up together.

378

00:35:58,120 --> 00:36:06,920

The minute we saw each other and you knew you were in the right place, you were home.

379

00:36:06,920 --> 00:36:13,160

There was no doubt what these were, brothers and sisters.

380

00:36:14,160 --> 00:36:20,160

The reunion was a celebration that there was still one person missing.

381

00:36:20,160 --> 00:36:25,160

They're going to the cake.

382

00:36:25,160 --> 00:36:31,160

It's important for me to find Tommy now or for all of us really.

383

00:36:31,160 --> 00:36:37,160

To me there's a missing, they're still part of my life that's missing.

384

00:36:37,160 --> 00:36:45,160

Finding Tommy is like if you've got a car and part of the pieces are not there, it's

385

00:36:45,160 --> 00:36:53,160

not going to run right. Well, he got a family. Part of the pieces are not there.

386

00:36:55,160 --> 00:37:01,160

These are the last known pictures of Tommy Heck, taken when he was four and a half years old by his

387

00:37:01,160 --> 00:37:07,160

adopted parents who sent them to the orphanage. Today Tommy would be forty-seven.

388

00:37:07,160 --> 00:37:13,160

Tommy was adopted through Christian Homes Orphanage in Council Bluffs, Iowa, most likely by a Midwestern family.

389

00:37:13,160 --> 00:37:19,160

His most distinguishing physical characteristic is a double ear lobe on his right ear.

390

00:37:19,160 --> 00:37:26,160

We need to find Tommy to make the rest of our family complete so that we can just close that family and say,

391

00:37:26,160 --> 00:37:30,160

here we are. Here we are, world. This is the Heck family.

392

00:37:30,160 --> 00:37:35,160

Look at us, Iowa. You separated us, but we're back together now.

393

00:37:56,160 --> 00:37:58,160

The Heck Family

394

00:38:18,160 --> 00:38:24,160

Just past midnight on the first day of 1990, paramedics and police in East Palo Alto, California

395

00:38:24,160 --> 00:38:27,520

and responded to an emergency call.

396

00:38:27,520 --> 00:38:31,600

A 60-year-old woman lay inside her home, shot in the stomach.

397

00:38:31,600 --> 00:38:34,760

Unknown gunmen had fired 35 rounds of ammunition

398

00:38:34,760 --> 00:38:37,240

into her house and car before they fled.

399

00:38:40,440 --> 00:38:43,640

The victim was Mrs. C. W. Roddy, a retired service

400

00:38:43,640 --> 00:38:45,760

representative for the phone company, who

401

00:38:45,760 --> 00:38:51,320

had lived in the area with her son Darnell for 23 years.

402

00:38:51,320 --> 00:38:53,200

The New Year's Eve attack was a culmination

403

00:38:53,200 --> 00:38:55,960

of a three-year nightmare in which C. W. Roddy had

404

00:38:55,960 --> 00:38:57,640

been physically and verbally threatened

405

00:38:57,640 --> 00:39:00,840

by a group of young men in her neighborhood.

406

00:39:00,840 --> 00:39:04,600

Now she lay in her own home, bleeding from a bullet wound.

407

00:39:04,600 --> 00:39:06,600

Fortunately, Mrs. Roddy survived,

408

00:39:06,600 --> 00:39:08,080

and the East Palo Alto authorities

409

00:39:08,080 --> 00:39:10,040

continued a search for her assailants.

410

00:39:12,800 --> 00:39:16,160

Palo Alto, California, home of prestigious Stanford

411

00:39:16,160 --> 00:39:19,260

University, is one of several primarily white upper middle

412

00:39:19,260 --> 00:39:22,840

class communities surrounding the city of East Palo Alto,

413

00:39:22,880 --> 00:39:25,800

which stands in stark contrast.

414

00:39:25,800 --> 00:39:28,320

Formerly a respectable working class community,

415

00:39:28,320 --> 00:39:31,960

it has in the last few years fallen victim to drug traffickers,

416

00:39:31,960 --> 00:39:36,200

whose customers often come from the affluent suburbs nearby.

417

00:39:36,200 --> 00:39:40,520

The drug dealing on our street was very much

418

00:39:40,520 --> 00:39:43,920

like a drive-up bank window.

419

00:39:43,920 --> 00:39:47,280

They drive up, dope dealers will rush to the car,

420

00:39:47,280 --> 00:39:50,280

and a total frenzy of competition with one another,

421

00:39:50,280 --> 00:39:52,240

trying to get the sale.

422

00:39:52,240 --> 00:39:57,000

And it continued like that, day and night.

423

00:39:57,000 --> 00:39:59,000

When C. W. Roddy finally understood

424

00:39:59,000 --> 00:40:00,680

what was happening in her neighborhood,

425

00:40:00,680 --> 00:40:03,080

she began to take action.

426

00:40:03,080 --> 00:40:06,320

The first confrontation came when teenage drug dealers parked

427

00:40:06,320 --> 00:40:10,320

their cars in front of the house she shared with her son.

428

00:40:10,320 --> 00:40:12,160

Excuse me.

429

00:40:12,160 --> 00:40:15,160

Your man, do you have any business with me here?

430

00:40:15,160 --> 00:40:16,160

Listen, lay, lay.

431

00:40:16,160 --> 00:40:17,360

You just take care of the little business,

432

00:40:17,360 --> 00:40:19,200

we'll be here a little later, OK?

433

00:40:19,200 --> 00:40:21,040

No action, will you?

434

00:40:21,040 --> 00:40:22,280

If you don't have business with me,

435

00:40:22,280 --> 00:40:24,600

I'd really like you to move your car.

436

00:40:24,600 --> 00:40:26,880

Lady, I'm not moving.

437

00:40:26,880 --> 00:40:28,800

I will be taking your license number

438

00:40:28,800 --> 00:40:30,440

and giving it to the police.

439

00:40:30,440 --> 00:40:33,480

C. W. reported the young traffickers often,

440

00:40:33,480 --> 00:40:35,400

but the understaffed local police simply

441

00:40:35,400 --> 00:40:38,920

were unable to cope with the enormous problem.

442

00:40:38,920 --> 00:40:41,640

I've always felt that your home is your castle,

443

00:40:41,640 --> 00:40:44,920

and what you do in your home is your business.

444

00:40:44,920 --> 00:40:50,000

But when they bring their drugs out in front of my house,

445

00:40:50,040 --> 00:40:53,800

in the streets, that makes it my business,

446

00:40:53,800 --> 00:40:58,080

and I don't do that kind of business.

447

00:40:58,080 --> 00:41:02,640

In February of 1988, Mrs. Roddy was physically threatened.

448

00:41:02,640 --> 00:41:04,640

Know what's up, old bag?

449

00:41:04,640 --> 00:41:07,680

You gonna blow your damn house up, you see what I'm saying?

450

00:41:07,680 --> 00:41:11,320

And I said to him, are you going to make sure that I manage?

451

00:41:11,320 --> 00:41:15,000

And I looked up and saw a police officer sitting

452

00:41:15,000 --> 00:41:17,440

directly across the street.

453

00:41:17,440 --> 00:41:19,440

You better watch your back.

454

00:41:19,680 --> 00:41:22,560

Officer, did you hear what the young man said to me?

455

00:41:22,560 --> 00:41:23,720

No, I didn't, ma'am.

456

00:41:23,720 --> 00:41:25,960

He threatened to blow up my house.

457

00:41:25,960 --> 00:41:27,480

Do you wish you make a citizen's arrest?

458

00:41:27,480 --> 00:41:28,280

Yes, I do.

459

00:41:28,280 --> 00:41:29,120

You do wish you make a citizen's arrest?

460

00:41:29,120 --> 00:41:30,520

I do wish to.

461

00:41:30,520 --> 00:41:33,360

So we did.

462

00:41:33,360 --> 00:41:41,240

And he took him off, but he was back within a matter of minutes.

463

00:41:41,240 --> 00:41:44,760

Over the next 18 months, the situation worsened.

464

00:41:44,760 --> 00:41:46,720

During certain hours of the day, the neighborhood

465

00:41:46,720 --> 00:41:50,280

streets resembled a rush hour traffic jam.

466

00:41:50,280 --> 00:41:52,160

In their off hours, the dealers used

467

00:41:52,160 --> 00:41:55,920

CW's front curb as their personal parking lot.

468

00:41:55,920 --> 00:41:57,040

You know who's car this is?

469

00:41:57,040 --> 00:41:57,640

It's my car.

470

00:41:57,640 --> 00:41:58,680

You see me parking there?

471

00:41:58,680 --> 00:41:59,560

Go act stupid.

472

00:41:59,560 --> 00:42:01,280

I would love to have it.

473

00:42:01,280 --> 00:42:02,720

Why don't you move my car?

474

00:42:02,720 --> 00:42:04,840

It's somebody else's mood.

475

00:42:04,840 --> 00:42:07,880

Then in October of 1989, the confrontation

476

00:42:07,880 --> 00:42:09,360

suddenly erupted into violence.

477

00:42:09,800 --> 00:42:11,280

Oh, man.

478

00:42:11,280 --> 00:42:12,280

Oh, man.

479

00:42:12,280 --> 00:42:13,280

Oh, man.

480

00:42:13,280 --> 00:42:14,280

Oh, man.

481

00:42:14,280 --> 00:42:15,280

Oh, man.

482

00:42:15,280 --> 00:42:16,280

Oh, man.

483

00:42:16,280 --> 00:42:19,640

He picked up a piece of wood, and I was infuriated.

484

00:42:19,640 --> 00:42:22,240

And I said to myself, this is stupid.

485

00:42:22,240 --> 00:42:25,000

So I started back across the street, and they started saying,

486

00:42:25,000 --> 00:42:26,280

yeah, go call the police.

487

00:42:26,280 --> 00:42:27,280

Call the police.

488

00:42:27,280 --> 00:42:28,280

Call the police.

489

00:42:28,280 --> 00:42:29,280

Call the police.

490

00:42:29,280 --> 00:42:30,280

Call the police.

491

00:42:30,280 --> 00:42:31,880

After getting to the police station,

492

00:42:31,880 --> 00:42:35,640

the boy was on his way back home before I even finished

493

00:42:35,640 --> 00:42:37,040

with the police report.

494

00:42:37,040 --> 00:42:38,400

You guys are going to pay for this.

495

00:42:38,440 --> 00:42:41,800

In December of 1989, CW became involved

496

00:42:41,800 --> 00:42:43,560

in another confrontation.

497

00:42:43,560 --> 00:42:46,120

Chris Thomas, a new neighbor, was wounded when

498

00:42:46,120 --> 00:42:47,240

he came to her defense.

499

00:42:47,240 --> 00:42:48,520

I'm hanging around my own neighborhood.

500

00:42:48,520 --> 00:42:50,800

They cut him very badly in the face.

501

00:42:50,800 --> 00:42:55,080

They had to take him to the hospital and get stitches.

502

00:42:55,080 --> 00:42:58,720

And someone called the police.

503

00:42:58,720 --> 00:43:00,240

Police arrested the young man who

504

00:43:00,240 --> 00:43:02,240

would attack Chris Thomas.

505

00:43:02,240 --> 00:43:06,160

For the next 10 days, things were quiet until New Year's Eve.

506

00:43:08,880 --> 00:43:10,800

On New Year's Eve in East Palo Alto,

507

00:43:10,800 --> 00:43:13,440

for some strange reason, a lot of citizens

508

00:43:13,440 --> 00:43:15,640

like to shoot guns.

509

00:43:15,640 --> 00:43:18,240

They just shoot up in the air.

510

00:43:18,240 --> 00:43:20,280

At midnight, Mrs. Roddy was sleeping

511

00:43:20,280 --> 00:43:23,840

when the gunfire awakened her.

512

00:43:23,840 --> 00:43:26,400

I heard all of the shooting.

513

00:43:26,400 --> 00:43:28,720

And I looked up at the clock, and I said, oh, they're just

514

00:43:28,720 --> 00:43:31,560

celebrating New Year's Eve, right?

515

00:43:31,560 --> 00:43:32,760

So I got up.

516

00:43:32,760 --> 00:43:34,200

And then I went in the living room.

517

00:43:34,200 --> 00:43:37,640

I noticed across the street three young men.

518

00:43:37,640 --> 00:43:40,040

They were just standing around talking.

519

00:43:40,040 --> 00:43:41,880

And they're working the cars coming up

520

00:43:41,880 --> 00:43:45,120

in the street at that particular time.

521

00:43:45,120 --> 00:43:48,320

I would say about 20 minutes after midnight,

522

00:43:48,320 --> 00:43:51,120

it had all quieted down.

523

00:43:51,120 --> 00:43:53,360

All of a sudden, I heard all these shots.

524

00:44:01,360 --> 00:44:03,360

I hit the floor at that time.

525

00:44:03,360 --> 00:44:04,560

I was about to get up.

526

00:44:04,560 --> 00:44:09,160

And I heard my mother scream in pain.

527

00:44:09,160 --> 00:44:12,160

C.W. Roddy had been shot in the stomach.

528

00:44:12,160 --> 00:44:16,000

Her son, Darnell, immediately called for help.

529

00:44:16,000 --> 00:44:19,520

I think the attack on my house was a planned attack.

530

00:44:19,520 --> 00:44:22,080

And they were planning to kill us.

531

00:44:22,080 --> 00:44:23,560

My mother's been shot.

532

00:44:23,560 --> 00:44:25,640

The police arrived within minutes.

533

00:44:25,640 --> 00:44:27,400

As they fanned out to search the street,

534

00:44:27,400 --> 00:44:29,960

they found that C.W.'s new neighbor, Chris Thomas,

535

00:44:29,960 --> 00:44:33,000

and his wife had seen the attack.

536

00:44:33,000 --> 00:44:37,680

We heard this big, loud rattle of gunfire outside our house.

537

00:44:37,680 --> 00:44:39,200

And I turned towards the window.

538

00:44:39,200 --> 00:44:44,720

And I could see the blue flames from the gun

539

00:44:44,720 --> 00:44:45,720

through the blinds.

540

00:44:45,720 --> 00:44:48,880

When I looked outside, I saw two young black men.

541

00:44:48,880 --> 00:44:51,520

It was really scary, because I could see bullet holes

542

00:44:51,520 --> 00:44:53,720

in the windows and the walls and the doors,

543

00:44:53,720 --> 00:44:55,960

and through all over the garage.

544

00:44:55,960 --> 00:44:57,720

The car had bullet holes in it.

545

00:44:57,720 --> 00:45:02,120

And I thought that they'd killed her.

546

00:45:02,160 --> 00:45:05,920

Investigators located shell casings from three weapons,

547

00:45:05,920 --> 00:45:10,360

a .38 revolver, a .380 semi-automatic pistol,

548

00:45:10,360 --> 00:45:13,400

and possibly a .50 assault weapon.

549

00:45:13,400 --> 00:45:16,640

When the local police completed their own investigation,

550

00:45:16,640 --> 00:45:19,720

they called in the FBI.

551

00:45:19,720 --> 00:45:22,280

We know that there were three to four individuals

552

00:45:22,280 --> 00:45:24,520

who were responsible for firing these rounds

553

00:45:24,520 --> 00:45:26,960

into the home of Mrs. Roddy.

554

00:45:26,960 --> 00:45:29,880

This is a neighborhood that has been somewhat paralyzed

555

00:45:29,880 --> 00:45:31,520

because of the amount of violence

556

00:45:31,520 --> 00:45:34,680

that has been generated from those who took a stance

557

00:45:34,680 --> 00:45:38,840

to come forward and say, no more.

558

00:45:38,840 --> 00:45:40,880

Despite an extensive investigation,

559

00:45:40,880 --> 00:45:43,920

no concrete evidence has been unearthed.

560

00:45:43,920 --> 00:45:47,200

And even though C.W. Roddy's assailants have not been found,

561

00:45:47,200 --> 00:45:51,240

the attack has galvanized her neighborhood.

562

00:45:51,240 --> 00:45:54,080

A group of mothers are taken charge of the local park

563

00:45:54,080 --> 00:45:55,960

and attempted to move the drug dealers out

564

00:45:55,960 --> 00:45:58,040

of their neighborhood.

565

00:45:58,040 --> 00:45:59,840

They have had success in the park,

566

00:45:59,840 --> 00:46:04,800

but the women realize that this is only the first step.

567

00:46:04,800 --> 00:46:07,720

I went by a couple of Saturdays ago

568

00:46:07,720 --> 00:46:10,680

and just observed the children out there playing.

569

00:46:10,680 --> 00:46:12,080

And it was such a beautiful sight,

570

00:46:12,080 --> 00:46:13,240

and it made me feel so good.

571

00:46:13,240 --> 00:46:15,960

It brought tears to my eyes.

572

00:46:15,960 --> 00:46:17,800

So it's looking better.

573

00:46:17,800 --> 00:46:19,240

It did not happen in one day.

574

00:46:19,240 --> 00:46:21,360

And I don't expect it all to change in one day,

575

00:46:21,360 --> 00:46:24,240

but I do see the beginning of a change.

576

00:46:24,240 --> 00:46:27,600

And the future looks bright, and I am hopeful.

577

00:46:30,040 --> 00:46:33,120

Out of the near tragedy of Mrs. Roddy's brush with death,

578

00:46:33,120 --> 00:46:35,840

the rebirth of her neighborhood has begun.

579

00:46:35,840 --> 00:46:37,840

A new drug task force has been formed,

580

00:46:37,840 --> 00:46:40,120

and for the time being, drug trafficking on Hearst Street

581

00:46:40,120 --> 00:46:41,760

has been curtailed.

582

00:46:41,760 --> 00:46:44,160

Still, the neighborhood wants C.W. Roddy's attackers

583

00:46:44,160 --> 00:46:45,240

brought to justice.

584

00:46:52,640 --> 00:46:54,320

For every mystery, there is someone

585

00:46:54,320 --> 00:46:56,960

somewhere who knows the truth.

586

00:46:56,960 --> 00:46:59,480

Join me next week for another edition

587

00:46:59,480 --> 00:47:01,000

of Unsolved Mysteries.