

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:03,680

This program is about unsolved mysteries.

2

00:00:03,680 --> 00:00:06,280

Whenever possible, the actual family members and police

3

00:00:06,280 --> 00:00:09,280

officials have participated in recreating the events.

4

00:00:09,280 --> 00:00:12,280

What you are about to see is not a news broadcast.

5

00:00:16,880 --> 00:00:20,680

Tonight on Unsolved Mysteries, in honor of Veterans Day,

6

00:00:20,680 --> 00:00:25,760

the compelling saga of America's last POW.

7

00:00:26,160 --> 00:00:30,760

April 20, 1965, American involvement in Southeast Asia

8

00:00:30,760 --> 00:00:32,400

was on the rise.

9

00:00:32,400 --> 00:00:34,920

Colonel Charles Shelton, an Air Force pilot

10

00:00:34,920 --> 00:00:38,360

stationed in Okinawa, said goodbye to his wife and children

11

00:00:38,360 --> 00:00:40,600

for the last time.

12

00:00:40,600 --> 00:00:43,760

Nine days later, Shelton was shot down and captured

13

00:00:43,760 --> 00:00:47,400

while on a top secret reconnaissance flight over Laos.

14

00:00:47,400 --> 00:00:50,360

For the next 25 years, Shelton's wife, Mary,

15

00:00:50,360 --> 00:00:53,760

and waged a valiant crusade to prevent the death of her husband

16

00:00:53,760 --> 00:00:59,040

was still alive, long after the war in Vietnam was over.

17

00:00:59,040 --> 00:01:02,640

In 1991, a young woman was driven to a remote area

18

00:01:02,640 --> 00:01:04,280

in Florida and brutally murdered

19

00:01:04,280 --> 00:01:07,840

by two men who thought they had committed the perfect crime.

20

00:01:07,840 --> 00:01:11,120

What they didn't know was that another man hiding nearby

21

00:01:11,120 --> 00:01:13,480

had seen everything.

22

00:01:13,480 --> 00:01:16,480

Also tonight, another edition of Special Alert.

23

00:01:16,480 --> 00:01:19,520

Authorities need your help to capture a convicted killer who

24

00:01:19,520 --> 00:01:21,120

recently escaped from prison.

25

00:01:21,120 --> 00:01:25,160

Join me, and perhaps you may be able to help solve a mystery.

26

00:02:21,120 --> 00:02:26,400

On a chilly morning in October of 1990,

27

00:02:26,400 --> 00:02:29,160

the family of Air Force pilot Charles E. Shelton

28

00:02:29,160 --> 00:02:31,160

was joined by friends and dignitaries

29

00:02:31,160 --> 00:02:36,360

at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, DC.

30

00:02:36,360 --> 00:02:40,440

They were gathered to mourn the death of an American hero,

31

00:02:40,440 --> 00:02:44,240

but it was not Colonel Shelton who was laid to rest that day.

32

00:02:44,240 --> 00:02:46,240

It was his wife, Marion.

33

00:02:51,320 --> 00:02:54,880

Marion Shelton spent the last 25 years of her life fighting

34

00:02:54,880 --> 00:02:58,800

what may be the final battle of the Vietnam War, a battle

35

00:02:58,800 --> 00:03:01,960

for the truth about her husband, and more than 2,000

36

00:03:01,960 --> 00:03:04,760

other American servicemen missing and unaccounted

37

00:03:04,760 --> 00:03:08,000

for since the war's end.

38

00:03:08,000 --> 00:03:11,920

Colonel Charles Shelton was shot down in the spring of 1965,

39

00:03:11,920 --> 00:03:15,560

long before Vietnam had become a household word.

40

00:03:15,560 --> 00:03:19,200

Today, Colonel Shelton has earned a unique but tragic honor.

41

00:03:19,200 --> 00:03:21,960

He is the only missing serviceman still officially

42

00:03:21,960 --> 00:03:25,720

listed as a prisoner of war.

43

00:03:25,720 --> 00:03:27,680

Representatives of the armed services

44

00:03:27,680 --> 00:03:30,760

declined to participate in this broadcast.

45

00:03:30,760 --> 00:03:33,280

Though more than a quarter century has passed,

46

00:03:33,280 --> 00:03:35,520

the story of Colonel Shelton is still

47

00:03:35,520 --> 00:03:40,000

a subject of intense controversy.

48

00:03:40,000 --> 00:03:42,040

According to Charles Shelton's family,

49

00:03:42,040 --> 00:03:44,400

precious little diplomatic or military effort

50

00:03:44,400 --> 00:03:46,280

was ever expended by the US government

51

00:03:46,320 --> 00:03:49,840

to actually find Colonel Shelton and bring him home.

52

00:03:49,840 --> 00:03:51,880

Some believe that his prisoner of war status

53

00:03:51,880 --> 00:03:54,840

is simply a concession to POW activists

54

00:03:54,840 --> 00:03:58,560

and a commemoration of his legendary resistance as a captive.

55

00:03:58,560 --> 00:04:01,520

But strong evidence suggests that Colonel Shelton

56

00:04:01,520 --> 00:04:04,600

and perhaps other servicemen missing in Southeast Asia

57

00:04:04,600 --> 00:04:06,560

may still be alive.

58

00:04:06,560 --> 00:04:09,920

To Shelton's family, the possibility seems very real

59

00:04:09,920 --> 00:04:13,200

that one day they will celebrate the return of America's

60

00:04:13,200 --> 00:04:14,040

last POW.

61

00:04:17,040 --> 00:04:19,320

Charles Shelton and Marion Volman were high school

62

00:04:19,320 --> 00:04:20,560

sweethearts.

63

00:04:20,560 --> 00:04:23,280

They married in 1951, and their family quickly

64

00:04:23,280 --> 00:04:25,600

grew to include five children.

65

00:04:25,600 --> 00:04:28,160

But Charles and Marion always acted as though they

66

00:04:28,160 --> 00:04:30,800

were still on their honeymoon.

67

00:04:30,800 --> 00:04:31,800

Is everybody ready?

68

00:04:37,480 --> 00:04:38,760

Now look at the camera.

69

00:04:38,760 --> 00:04:40,800

My father and my mother's relationship,

70

00:04:40,800 --> 00:04:44,040

they were very much in love with each other.

71

00:04:44,040 --> 00:04:46,040

They were each other's first loves.

72

00:04:46,040 --> 00:04:48,520

Charles.

73

00:04:48,520 --> 00:04:52,560

Even after 10 years of marriage, it was just real intense.

74

00:04:52,560 --> 00:04:57,560

And he often said that he, that she was his first love

75

00:04:57,560 --> 00:05:01,280

and only love and last love.

76

00:05:01,280 --> 00:05:03,880

Charles joined the Air Force in 1954

77

00:05:03,880 --> 00:05:06,800

and moved rapidly through the ranks.

78

00:05:06,800 --> 00:05:09,400

At the time, American involvement in Vietnam

79

00:05:09,400 --> 00:05:11,920

was quietly and steadily on the rise.

80

00:05:11,920 --> 00:05:15,760

Charles Shelton was swept up in the tide.

81

00:05:15,760 --> 00:05:18,760

In 1962, Shelton was sent to Saigon

82

00:05:18,760 --> 00:05:21,080

to train Vietnamese pilots.

83

00:05:21,080 --> 00:05:24,200

Three years later, he began flying top secret photo

84

00:05:24,200 --> 00:05:27,240

reconnaissance flights over Laos.

85

00:05:27,240 --> 00:05:30,840

In 1965, dad was definitely at the peak of his career.

86

00:05:30,840 --> 00:05:33,720

He was just about finished with his tour of duty

87

00:05:33,720 --> 00:05:36,240

in the secret part of the War in Indochina.

88

00:05:36,240 --> 00:05:40,640

He had been, at that time, the senior tactical reconnaissance

89

00:05:40,680 --> 00:05:46,240

United States Air Force pilot involved in the War in Laos.

90

00:05:46,240 --> 00:05:48,680

Laos borders Vietnam on the west.

91

00:05:48,680 --> 00:05:50,800

Although officially neutral during the war,

92

00:05:50,800 --> 00:05:54,920

Laosian territory was used by North Vietnam as a staging area.

93

00:05:54,920 --> 00:05:58,360

The United States bomb targets there frequently and covertly.

94

00:06:01,200 --> 00:06:03,440

Now you kids go wait in the car for your mother.

95

00:06:03,440 --> 00:06:05,160

OK.

96

00:06:05,160 --> 00:06:07,880

Colonel Shelton was stationed in Okinawa, Japan,

97

00:06:07,880 --> 00:06:10,560

where his wife and children joined him.

98

00:06:11,480 --> 00:06:13,800

But he was often gone for weeks at a time,

99

00:06:13,800 --> 00:06:15,600

and enduring the pain of separation

100

00:06:15,600 --> 00:06:20,040

became a familiar duty for Marion and Charles.

101

00:06:20,040 --> 00:06:21,000

Bye.

102

00:06:21,000 --> 00:06:21,800

Bye.

103

00:06:26,760 --> 00:06:28,840

I'll wait right here till you get back.

104

00:06:28,840 --> 00:06:31,760

Better.

105

00:06:31,760 --> 00:06:35,120

On April 20, 1965, they had no idea

106

00:06:35,120 --> 00:06:37,440

they were saying goodbye for the last time.

107

00:06:38,160 --> 00:06:44,320

Dad's 33rd birthday, April 29, 1965,

108

00:06:44,320 --> 00:06:46,520

although he wasn't home, the family decided

109

00:06:46,520 --> 00:06:48,920

to celebrate the birthday anyway.

110

00:06:48,920 --> 00:06:52,800

On that day, mom invited some friends of hers

111

00:06:52,800 --> 00:06:56,600

and their children, other officer, wives, and their families

112

00:06:56,600 --> 00:07:01,160

over to the home to celebrate his birthday.

113

00:07:01,160 --> 00:07:04,080

Hi, Dad.

114

00:07:04,080 --> 00:07:05,080

Marion?

115

00:07:05,080 --> 00:07:07,080

I thought you were flying today.

116

00:07:07,080 --> 00:07:08,080

Am I?

117

00:07:11,560 --> 00:07:14,560

Marion, I need to talk to you.

118

00:07:14,560 --> 00:07:15,560

What is it?

119

00:07:19,000 --> 00:07:22,000

Marion, uh, I'm sorry.

120

00:07:22,000 --> 00:07:23,000

I'm sorry.

121

00:07:23,000 --> 00:07:24,000

I'm sorry.

122

00:07:24,000 --> 00:07:25,000

I'm sorry.

123

00:07:25,000 --> 00:07:26,000

I'm sorry.

124

00:07:26,000 --> 00:07:27,000

I'm sorry.

125

00:07:27,000 --> 00:07:28,000

I'm sorry.

126

00:07:28,000 --> 00:07:29,000

I'm sorry.

127

00:07:29,000 --> 00:07:30,000

I'm sorry.

128

00:07:30,440 --> 00:07:35,440

Charles' plane was shot down a couple hours ago.

129

00:07:35,440 --> 00:07:36,840

He's all right.

130

00:07:36,840 --> 00:07:39,560

They've been in radio contact with him.

131

00:07:39,560 --> 00:07:41,000

There's a search and rescue mission underway,

132

00:07:41,000 --> 00:07:42,360

even as we speak.

133

00:07:42,360 --> 00:07:44,640

Where is he?

134

00:07:44,640 --> 00:07:47,880

He went into the area called the Plain of Jars

135

00:07:47,880 --> 00:07:50,920

in northern Laos, near the Path at Laos headquarters

136

00:07:50,920 --> 00:07:52,680

in Samnouay.

137

00:07:52,680 --> 00:07:53,920

This is Grasshopper 32.

138

00:07:53,920 --> 00:07:55,800

Come in, Whiskey Angel.

139

00:07:55,800 --> 00:08:00,040

American planes made visual and radio contact with Shelton.

140

00:08:00,040 --> 00:08:02,600

But before rescue helicopters could reach him,

141

00:08:02,600 --> 00:08:07,040

a sudden change in the weather sealed his fate.

142

00:08:07,040 --> 00:08:09,640

There was a low cloud coverage, which

143

00:08:09,640 --> 00:08:13,120

made it impossible for anybody to get in really close

144

00:08:13,120 --> 00:08:16,120

and maneuver without a tremendous amount of danger.

145

00:08:16,120 --> 00:08:18,560

So Dad was left sitting on that hill for three days

146

00:08:18,560 --> 00:08:22,400

waiting, and nobody ever came.

147

00:08:22,400 --> 00:08:26,320

There was just no organized rescue in those days.

148

00:08:26,320 --> 00:08:27,480

That was 1965.

149

00:08:27,480 --> 00:08:28,080

He was shot down.

150

00:08:28,080 --> 00:08:32,800

If he was shot down in 1968, at the place he was shot down at,

151

00:08:32,800 --> 00:08:38,120

I think he'd been out of there in an hour and a half.

152

00:08:38,120 --> 00:08:40,360

For three days, Shelton eluded capture

153

00:08:40,360 --> 00:08:42,880

by the Path at Laos, the communist forces

154

00:08:42,880 --> 00:08:44,000

operating in the area.

155

00:08:45,000 --> 00:08:49,000

A platoon of Path at Laos surrounded Dad.

156

00:08:49,000 --> 00:08:51,920

One of the Path at Laos present actually

157

00:08:51,920 --> 00:08:56,040

was an informer for our government and reported the story.

158

00:08:56,040 --> 00:08:58,120

He said that they apprehended him,

159

00:08:58,120 --> 00:09:02,720

and the story ends that particular intelligence report

160

00:09:02,720 --> 00:09:06,720

saying that Dad's body went limp, forcing his captors

161

00:09:06,720 --> 00:09:08,320

to have to carry him.

162

00:09:08,320 --> 00:09:10,320

Charles Shelton's defiant resistance

163

00:09:10,320 --> 00:09:13,120

would become legendary among American servicemen

164

00:09:13,120 --> 00:09:17,080

and even win the grudging respect of his captors.

165

00:09:17,080 --> 00:09:21,320

He was tough, and he was tenacious, and he just didn't let go.

166

00:09:21,320 --> 00:09:23,720

I think that if anyone could survive over there,

167

00:09:23,720 --> 00:09:25,320

it'd be Charlie Shelton.

168

00:09:25,320 --> 00:09:26,320

No doubt in my mind.

169

00:09:39,320 --> 00:09:41,720

Marion Shelton was officially informed

170

00:09:41,720 --> 00:09:44,320

that her husband was a prisoner of war.

171

00:09:44,320 --> 00:09:47,320

His personal effects, returned by Air Force officials,

172

00:09:47,320 --> 00:09:50,320

were a somber reminder of his predicament.

173

00:09:50,320 --> 00:09:54,320

But they also raised deeply troubling questions.

174

00:09:54,320 --> 00:09:58,320

Inside the Foot Locker, Marion found her husband's dog tags

175

00:09:58,320 --> 00:10:01,320

in his military ID, which are normally carried

176

00:10:01,320 --> 00:10:05,320

by Air Force personnel at all times.

177

00:10:06,320 --> 00:10:09,320

Marion also found her husband's camera.

178

00:10:09,320 --> 00:10:13,320

When developed, the role of film inside included this picture

179

00:10:13,320 --> 00:10:16,320

shot just before Shelton's ill-fated flight.

180

00:10:16,320 --> 00:10:19,320

He was wearing what is known as a sanitized uniform,

181

00:10:19,320 --> 00:10:22,320

devoid of any official insignia.

182

00:10:22,320 --> 00:10:24,320

Many years passed before the Shelton family

183

00:10:24,320 --> 00:10:28,320

would fully understand its tragic implications.

184

00:10:28,320 --> 00:10:31,320

If you were captured in Laos, you were never going to come out.

185

00:10:31,320 --> 00:10:33,320

The war in Laos was that sensitive

186

00:10:33,320 --> 00:10:36,320

that the government was not going to bother

187

00:10:36,320 --> 00:10:38,320

with politicizing our presence there

188

00:10:38,320 --> 00:10:42,320

by looking for the return of POWs or hostages.

189

00:10:42,320 --> 00:10:44,320

And to this date, I don't believe our government

190

00:10:44,320 --> 00:10:49,320

has ever admitted to having troops present in Laos officially,

191

00:10:49,320 --> 00:10:53,320

and we've never negotiated for the men in Laos officially.

192

00:10:57,320 --> 00:10:59,320

Three months after Charles was shot down,

193

00:10:59,320 --> 00:11:02,320

Marion and the children returned to Kentucky.

194

00:11:02,320 --> 00:11:05,320

Lee and Honey, don't drag those on the ground.

195

00:11:05,320 --> 00:11:08,320

While the war in Vietnam dragged on for eight more years,

196

00:11:08,320 --> 00:11:11,320

rumors and unofficial accounts of Charles Shelton

197

00:11:11,320 --> 00:11:13,320

filtered through the military grapevine

198

00:11:13,320 --> 00:11:15,320

and back to the United States.

199

00:11:17,320 --> 00:11:21,320

From time to time, pilots would come through from Indochina

200

00:11:21,320 --> 00:11:23,320

and they would come with some news

201

00:11:23,320 --> 00:11:26,320

by word of mouth about Dad's situation.

202

00:11:26,320 --> 00:11:30,320

They'd come through, tell Mom that Dad was sick or healthy.

203

00:11:30,320 --> 00:11:33,320

If he'd been wounded or if he'd escaped again

204

00:11:33,320 --> 00:11:35,320

or this type of thing.

205

00:11:35,320 --> 00:11:40,320

Mama kept a lot of that information away from us

206

00:11:40,320 --> 00:11:44,320

because, again, she was afraid that that would hurt us.

207

00:11:44,320 --> 00:11:46,320

And I didn't want to hear it.

208

00:11:46,320 --> 00:11:48,320

I loved my father.

209

00:11:48,320 --> 00:11:50,320

I loved him very much.

210

00:11:50,320 --> 00:11:52,320

And when Mama started telling me stories

211

00:11:52,320 --> 00:11:54,320

about what had happened to Dad,

212

00:11:54,320 --> 00:11:59,320

I heard about him being kept in a shallow grave

213

00:11:59,320 --> 00:12:01,320

with bars over it.

214

00:12:01,320 --> 00:12:04,320

And they poked him, trying to keep him awake.

215

00:12:04,320 --> 00:12:09,320

I couldn't stand to hear about stuff about torture.

216

00:12:14,320 --> 00:12:18,320

I have asked for this radio and television time tonight

217

00:12:18,320 --> 00:12:21,320

for the purpose of announcing that we today

218

00:12:21,320 --> 00:12:25,320

have concluded an agreement to end the war

219

00:12:25,320 --> 00:12:27,320

and bring peace with honor in Vietnam.

220

00:12:27,320 --> 00:12:30,320

Finally on January 27, 1973,

221

00:12:30,320 --> 00:12:33,320

President Richard Nixon appeared on national television

222

00:12:33,320 --> 00:12:37,320

with a message that Americans had been so desperate to hear.

223

00:12:51,320 --> 00:12:53,320

The family was told that all POWs

224

00:12:53,320 --> 00:12:56,320

would be included on one of two lists.

225

00:12:56,320 --> 00:13:01,320

Those who were coming home and those who were perished in captivity.

226

00:13:01,320 --> 00:13:05,320

Those lists were scheduled to be turned over to our government

227

00:13:05,320 --> 00:13:07,320

and we understood that the Defense Department

228

00:13:07,320 --> 00:13:10,320

would be calling the families all day long,

229

00:13:10,320 --> 00:13:14,320

letting them know whether or not their husband

230

00:13:14,320 --> 00:13:17,320

or father's name was on which list.

231

00:13:19,320 --> 00:13:23,320

Finally, the phone rang way late into the night.

232

00:13:27,320 --> 00:13:29,320

Hello?

233

00:13:29,320 --> 00:13:31,320

Yes, I am.

234

00:13:39,320 --> 00:13:41,320

I see.

235

00:13:45,320 --> 00:13:47,320

Thank you.

236

00:13:56,320 --> 00:14:00,320

She began to cry and of course I knew at that point

237

00:14:00,320 --> 00:14:03,320

dad's name wasn't on the list.

238

00:14:03,320 --> 00:14:05,320

We naturally concluded that therefore,

239

00:14:05,320 --> 00:14:09,320

you know, we would be told soon just how he died in captivity

240

00:14:09,320 --> 00:14:13,320

and his body returned and that was the end of the story.

241

00:14:13,320 --> 00:14:17,320

And I think we all felt, although a sense of loss at the time,

242

00:14:17,320 --> 00:14:21,320

there was also an even greater sense of relief

243

00:14:21,320 --> 00:14:24,320

that the waiting was over.

244

00:14:27,320 --> 00:14:34,320

January, 1973, Operation Homecoming.

245

00:14:34,320 --> 00:14:38,320

For most Americans, the return of 591 POWs

246

00:14:38,320 --> 00:14:42,320

seemed to signal at last the end of the war.

247

00:14:46,320 --> 00:14:49,320

Soon after, in April of 1973,

248

00:14:49,320 --> 00:14:52,320

the Pentagon issued a statement that stunned the families

249

00:14:52,320 --> 00:14:55,320

of those servicemen still missing in Southeast Asia.

250

00:14:55,320 --> 00:15:01,320

There was no indication that American POWs were alive anywhere.

251

00:15:01,320 --> 00:15:05,320

Mom realized, I think, more and more that if dad would ever come home

252

00:15:05,320 --> 00:15:07,320

or if any of the prisoners would come home,

253

00:15:07,320 --> 00:15:10,320

that it really depended on the efforts of the families.

254

00:15:10,320 --> 00:15:13,320

And she seemed convinced to that early on, you know,

255

00:15:13,320 --> 00:15:16,320

so much so that she ventured into Southeast Asia.

256

00:15:20,320 --> 00:15:24,320

August, 1973, only a few months after the end of the Vietnam War,

257

00:15:24,320 --> 00:15:28,320

Marion left the safety of Kentucky and traveled halfway around the world.

258

00:15:28,320 --> 00:15:31,320

Accompanied by reporter Leah Larkin,

259

00:15:31,320 --> 00:15:35,320

she visited the jungles in Laos that had claimed her husband.

260

00:15:35,320 --> 00:15:39,320

Marion's Piedmont guide was an American operative

261

00:15:39,320 --> 00:15:42,320

fluent in local dialects.

262

00:15:42,320 --> 00:15:45,320

We met with villagers where he was supposed to have been or was,

263

00:15:45,320 --> 00:15:49,320

held alive in a cave. There were sightings of him in the cave.

264

00:15:49,320 --> 00:15:52,320

And some of the villagers had actually visited some of these caves

265

00:15:52,320 --> 00:15:54,320

and had seen prisoners.

266

00:15:57,320 --> 00:16:00,320

She'd hoped that she would get some positive proof

267

00:16:00,320 --> 00:16:02,320

that her husband was still alive.

268

00:16:02,320 --> 00:16:04,320

She got a little bit of a shock.

269

00:16:04,320 --> 00:16:06,320

She was very excited.

270

00:16:06,320 --> 00:16:08,320

She was very excited.

271

00:16:08,320 --> 00:16:10,320

She was very excited.

272

00:16:10,320 --> 00:16:12,320

She was very excited.

273

00:16:12,320 --> 00:16:15,320

She was very excited to know that her husband was still alive.

274

00:16:15,320 --> 00:16:17,320

She got no positive proof.

275

00:16:17,320 --> 00:16:19,320

She says you've never seen him.

276

00:16:19,320 --> 00:16:22,320

People said, yes. There must be men alive.

277

00:16:22,320 --> 00:16:25,320

But nothing really. No concrete evidence.

278

00:16:25,320 --> 00:16:27,320

One day she convinced herself he must be dead.

279

00:16:27,320 --> 00:16:30,320

One day she convinced herself he must be dead.

280

00:16:30,320 --> 00:16:32,320

There's no way he could still be alive.

281

00:16:32,320 --> 00:16:35,320

Then the next day, something would happen to give her a glimmer of hope.

282

00:16:35,320 --> 00:16:38,320

It was this constant going back from one to the other.

283

00:16:38,320 --> 00:16:40,320

He's dead. No, he's not dead.

284

00:16:40,320 --> 00:16:42,480

I think, I mean, that's a torment that's

285

00:16:42,480 --> 00:16:44,400

very difficult to live with.

286

00:16:44,400 --> 00:16:46,640

And it's obviously a torment that plagued her the rest of her

287

00:16:46,640 --> 00:16:48,920

life.

288

00:16:48,920 --> 00:16:52,960

Marion Shelton returned home empty-handed and disheartened.

289

00:16:52,960 --> 00:16:55,880

But two years later, events in Southeast Asia

290

00:16:55,880 --> 00:16:59,320

provided a windfall of new information and new hope.

291

00:17:01,920 --> 00:17:07,120

On April 29, 1975, Saigon fell to communist forces.

292

00:17:07,120 --> 00:17:10,000

It was 10 years to the day after Charles Shelton

293

00:17:10,000 --> 00:17:13,080

was shot down.

294

00:17:13,080 --> 00:17:15,360

Thousands of refugees fled Vietnam,

295

00:17:15,360 --> 00:17:18,360

crowded into vessels that were barely seaworthy.

296

00:17:18,360 --> 00:17:20,440

These so-called boat people brought stories

297

00:17:20,440 --> 00:17:23,120

about American servicemen that sent shock waves

298

00:17:23,120 --> 00:17:26,760

with the POW and MIA movement.

299

00:17:26,760 --> 00:17:30,960

They came out all over Southeast Asia, Hong Kong, Malaysia,

300

00:17:30,960 --> 00:17:33,000

the Philippines, Thailand.

301

00:17:33,000 --> 00:17:36,880

And hundreds and then thousands told

302

00:17:36,880 --> 00:17:40,320

of seeing American pilots, American prisoners, still

303

00:17:40,320 --> 00:17:44,520

in chains, gaunt, starving, begging for food, in prison,

304

00:17:44,520 --> 00:17:48,400

in captivity, on work gangs.

305

00:17:48,400 --> 00:17:55,280

This is how we knew for sure that our men were left behind.

306

00:17:55,280 --> 00:17:58,000

This propaganda film, Shot in North Vietnam,

307

00:17:58,000 --> 00:18:02,200

shows American POWs held during the war.

308

00:18:02,200 --> 00:18:05,920

According to the refugees, many were still alive two years

309

00:18:05,960 --> 00:18:08,800

after the war had ended.

310

00:18:08,800 --> 00:18:11,560

For reasons that remain the subject of controversy,

311

00:18:11,560 --> 00:18:14,640

the US government withheld the refugees' accounts

312

00:18:14,640 --> 00:18:17,480

in classified files.

313

00:18:17,480 --> 00:18:21,520

The stories are overwhelming in their specificity,

314

00:18:21,520 --> 00:18:24,760

in their clarity, and in their numbers.

315

00:18:24,760 --> 00:18:27,680

But if you mark it secret and you keep it locked up

316

00:18:27,680 --> 00:18:31,880

in the safes, behind locked doors, behind guarded doors,

317

00:18:31,880 --> 00:18:34,640

then we don't know it's there.

318

00:18:34,680 --> 00:18:37,360

Eventually, through the Freedom of Information Act,

319

00:18:37,360 --> 00:18:39,920

Marion obtained hundreds of classified documents

320

00:18:39,920 --> 00:18:41,880

pertaining to her husband.

321

00:18:41,880 --> 00:18:45,320

Credible sources, many of them CIA operatives,

322

00:18:45,320 --> 00:18:50,800

reported that Charles was alive even as late as 1983, 18 years

323

00:18:50,800 --> 00:18:53,880

after he parachuted into Laos.

324

00:18:53,880 --> 00:18:56,840

There were so many documents that said

325

00:18:56,840 --> 00:18:59,720

Colonel Shelton and other men were alive.

326

00:18:59,720 --> 00:19:01,520

It was apparent that there was just

327

00:19:01,520 --> 00:19:03,720

such a gigantic amount of evidence.

328

00:19:03,720 --> 00:19:06,480

There are reports in his file that he was shot in the legs

329

00:19:06,480 --> 00:19:08,720

because they were so tired of him escaping,

330

00:19:08,720 --> 00:19:10,240

and more reports that he just kept

331

00:19:10,240 --> 00:19:13,520

trying to escape afterwards.

332

00:19:13,520 --> 00:19:16,480

A particular report that was picked up off of the radio

333

00:19:16,480 --> 00:19:20,360

between Pathet Laos headquarters and Hanoi

334

00:19:20,360 --> 00:19:23,800

indicated that in 1968, the Pathet Laos turned

335

00:19:23,800 --> 00:19:26,160

out over to the North Vietnamese,

336

00:19:26,160 --> 00:19:27,720

and they decided to interrogate him.

337

00:19:28,720 --> 00:19:29,720

Charles Shelton.

338

00:19:41,720 --> 00:19:43,720

I have heard about you.

339

00:19:58,720 --> 00:20:13,720

When the North Vietnamese returned with more personnel

340

00:20:13,720 --> 00:20:16,720

to apprehend and control Dad, they found

341

00:20:16,720 --> 00:20:19,920

that he had already killed the other guards that were present

342

00:20:19,920 --> 00:20:21,560

during the interrogation.

343

00:20:21,560 --> 00:20:24,200

The report finished with the recommendation

344

00:20:24,200 --> 00:20:27,040

that this prisoner be moved north,

345

00:20:27,040 --> 00:20:29,920

whether that meant to China or Vietnam.

346

00:20:29,920 --> 00:20:36,200

We can't be sure, but it commented that he was incorrigible.

347

00:20:36,200 --> 00:20:38,640

The more Marion dug through official records,

348

00:20:38,640 --> 00:20:41,800

the more she believed her husband was still alive.

349

00:20:41,800 --> 00:20:43,840

These often vivid accounts became

350

00:20:43,840 --> 00:20:46,480

her ammunition for a bureaucratic showdown

351

00:20:46,480 --> 00:20:50,280

on October 7, 1980.

352

00:20:50,280 --> 00:20:52,800

Prior to hearings in San Antonio, Texas,

353

00:20:52,800 --> 00:20:57,080

793 Air Force servicemen already had their classification

354

00:20:57,080 --> 00:20:59,840

changed to presumed dead.

355

00:20:59,840 --> 00:21:02,320

Marion was determined to convince the government

356

00:21:02,320 --> 00:21:04,440

that her husband was still alive.

357

00:21:11,520 --> 00:21:14,920

When I was in Vietnam in Laos in 1973,

358

00:21:14,920 --> 00:21:18,800

I met with a delegation of the North Vietnamese.

359

00:21:18,800 --> 00:21:21,920

I was seeking any information I could find regarding

360

00:21:21,920 --> 00:21:24,920

the fate of my husband.

361

00:21:24,920 --> 00:21:28,560

When I asked specifically about my husband,

362

00:21:28,560 --> 00:21:31,760

I was told by the North Vietnamese,

363

00:21:31,760 --> 00:21:35,320

why are you asking us when your own government says

364

00:21:35,320 --> 00:21:38,680

they are all dead?

365

00:21:38,680 --> 00:21:42,520

I am terribly disappointed that our government has made it

366

00:21:42,520 --> 00:21:47,240

so easy for them to evade an accounting.

367

00:21:47,240 --> 00:21:48,560

I feel that presuming people were here.

368

00:21:48,560 --> 00:21:50,960

When they set up and decided to hold these status review

369

00:21:50,960 --> 00:21:54,880

hearings, I don't think they had any idea about burden

370

00:21:54,880 --> 00:21:57,360

and proof as a legal concept.

371

00:21:57,360 --> 00:22:00,360

What they were going to do was make the service

372

00:22:00,360 --> 00:22:03,640

members' family come in and prove he was still alive.

373

00:22:03,640 --> 00:22:07,280

When the only information about whether he was really alive

374

00:22:07,280 --> 00:22:09,160

was in the hands of the government,

375

00:22:09,160 --> 00:22:11,920

that seemed quite unfair.

376

00:22:11,920 --> 00:22:14,440

Did he have a mustache?

377

00:22:14,440 --> 00:22:17,360

We argued that instead it should be the service's duty

378

00:22:17,360 --> 00:22:20,840

to prove that he should be changed to kill in action.

379

00:22:20,840 --> 00:22:24,080

In other words, what evidence do they have that he was dead?

380

00:22:24,080 --> 00:22:25,920

They do have evidence he was alive.

381

00:22:25,920 --> 00:22:28,880

Now what evidence do they have to change that?

382

00:22:28,880 --> 00:22:33,760

The board finds that by a preponderance of the evidence,

383

00:22:33,760 --> 00:22:41,360

Colonel Charles E. Shelton can reasonably be presumed dead.

384

00:22:41,360 --> 00:22:45,520

These findings were reached by a majority decision of the board.

385

00:22:46,040 --> 00:22:50,400

Four years later, Secretary of the Air Force, Vernon Orr,

386

00:22:50,400 --> 00:22:53,720

refused to accept the board's recommendation.

387

00:22:53,720 --> 00:22:57,160

In 1984, he upheld Charles Shelton's status

388

00:22:57,160 --> 00:23:01,400

as a prisoner of war, making him the only one of more than 2,000

389

00:23:01,400 --> 00:23:06,160

missing servicemen not listed as presumed dead.

390

00:23:06,160 --> 00:23:08,600

Do you think your husband's alive?

391

00:23:08,600 --> 00:23:12,880

I think he very well can be and probably is.

392

00:23:13,240 --> 00:23:16,000

It was a weary Marion Shelton who took to the airwaves

393

00:23:16,000 --> 00:23:17,480

in the late 1980s.

394

00:23:17,480 --> 00:23:20,200

Before national audiences had numbered in the millions,

395

00:23:20,200 --> 00:23:22,600

she continued to press for a vigorous follow-up

396

00:23:22,600 --> 00:23:25,600

to the reports of surviving POWs.

397

00:23:25,600 --> 00:23:28,640

They know there's prisoners over there.

398

00:23:28,640 --> 00:23:31,840

And I think they know that my husband's over there.

399

00:23:31,840 --> 00:23:36,000

My mom was so busy doing a lot of the POW things

400

00:23:36,000 --> 00:23:39,760

and going all over the country and speaking and on television.

401

00:23:39,800 --> 00:23:42,640

And she didn't know how to cope with it.

402

00:23:42,640 --> 00:23:48,040

And when she would come home, she would drink in private and sleep.

403

00:23:48,040 --> 00:23:49,920

She couldn't take it any longer.

404

00:23:49,920 --> 00:23:53,000

She knew that Colonel Shelton was alive.

405

00:23:53,000 --> 00:23:55,320

She knew many other men were alive.

406

00:23:55,320 --> 00:23:58,560

And she could not stand to hear the US government continually

407

00:23:58,560 --> 00:24:00,160

lie about it.

408

00:24:00,160 --> 00:24:02,640

Slowly, her heart started to break

409

00:24:02,640 --> 00:24:07,120

that the United States government, what my dad fought for,

410

00:24:07,120 --> 00:24:10,640

the United States government, what my dad fought for

411

00:24:10,640 --> 00:24:14,600

was not going to bring him home or was not trying hard enough.

412

00:24:14,600 --> 00:24:18,880

So it devastated her.

413

00:24:18,880 --> 00:24:25,560

Her American dream that we were all supposed to have was broken.

414

00:24:28,200 --> 00:24:31,680

Despair finally overwhelmed Marion Shelton.

415

00:24:31,680 --> 00:24:34,520

On several occasions in 1987 and 88,

416

00:24:34,520 --> 00:24:38,640

she was hospitalized for alcohol abuse.

417

00:24:38,640 --> 00:24:41,720

Marion's 25-year struggle for her husband's freedom

418

00:24:41,720 --> 00:24:45,640

finally came to an end on October 4, 1990.

419

00:24:45,640 --> 00:24:47,760

Her body was discovered by friends

420

00:24:47,760 --> 00:24:49,840

on the patio of her home.

421

00:24:49,840 --> 00:24:54,280

Marion Shelton had shot herself in the head.

422

00:24:54,280 --> 00:24:57,200

Marion Shelton was the POW movement.

423

00:24:57,200 --> 00:25:00,200

She's done more, did more while she was alive

424

00:25:00,200 --> 00:25:03,720

than just about any other person to try to bring those men home.

425

00:25:05,520 --> 00:25:10,240

Charles was my childhood sweetheart,

426

00:25:10,240 --> 00:25:13,360

my best friend, my protector.

427

00:25:17,040 --> 00:25:19,600

I prepared myself as did my husband for him

428

00:25:19,600 --> 00:25:23,400

to be wounded, captured, or killed.

429

00:25:26,200 --> 00:25:27,760

But we were never prepared for him

430

00:25:27,760 --> 00:25:29,560

to be abandoned by his own country.

431

00:25:29,560 --> 00:25:32,560

I do know that there are men still there,

432

00:25:32,560 --> 00:25:35,560

and I'm pretty sure my dad's one of them.

433

00:25:35,560 --> 00:25:37,560

And even if he died 10 years ago,

434

00:25:37,560 --> 00:25:39,560

I blame our government for not bringing him home

435

00:25:39,560 --> 00:25:41,560

and leaving him behind.

436

00:25:41,560 --> 00:25:45,560

To those people who would listen to our story

437

00:25:45,560 --> 00:25:48,560

and just conclude that we're living in a kind of fantasy land,

438

00:25:48,560 --> 00:25:51,560

I would remind them that two years ago,

439

00:25:51,560 --> 00:25:53,560

the government of the Soviet Union

440

00:25:53,560 --> 00:25:57,560

repatriated to Japan 70 prisoners of war

441

00:25:57,560 --> 00:26:01,560

taken from Japan in World War II.

442

00:26:01,560 --> 00:26:05,560

And that the French were still being released by the Vietnamese

443

00:26:05,560 --> 00:26:08,560

as late as the 70s and early 80s,

444

00:26:08,560 --> 00:26:11,560

who were captured at Diem Vinh Phu in 1954.

445

00:26:11,560 --> 00:26:15,560

So it's not unusual for, as we see,

446

00:26:15,560 --> 00:26:18,560

communist governments keeping citizens

447

00:26:18,560 --> 00:26:21,560

as long as they want to.

448

00:26:21,560 --> 00:26:23,560

And sometimes prisoners can live,

449

00:26:23,560 --> 00:26:26,560

obviously, for a long time.

450

00:26:27,560 --> 00:26:31,560

But they're still alive for decades in captivity.

451

00:26:58,560 --> 00:27:02,560

Albuquerque, New Mexico, August 18, 1984.

452

00:27:02,560 --> 00:27:05,560

I'm in the hit!

453

00:27:05,560 --> 00:27:08,560

10.25 p.m.

454

00:27:08,560 --> 00:27:10,560

Gunshot!

455

00:27:15,560 --> 00:27:17,560

Where you hit?

456

00:27:17,560 --> 00:27:18,560

Twice.

457

00:27:18,560 --> 00:27:19,560

We're in the hit.

458

00:27:19,560 --> 00:27:20,560

3.32.

459

00:27:20,560 --> 00:27:21,560

3.32.

460

00:27:21,560 --> 00:27:22,560

10.83.

461

00:27:22,560 --> 00:27:23,560

We got shots fired.

462

00:27:23,560 --> 00:27:25,560

Start 43.55.

463

00:27:28,560 --> 00:27:30,560

10.28 p.m.

464

00:27:30,560 --> 00:27:33,560

Police units respond to that most urgent and personal

465

00:27:33,560 --> 00:27:35,560

of emergency calls.

466

00:27:35,560 --> 00:27:38,560

Officer is down.

467

00:27:38,560 --> 00:27:40,560

I knew I was losing a lot of blood.

468

00:27:40,560 --> 00:27:41,560

I was worried about that.

469

00:27:41,560 --> 00:27:43,560

And it was getting hard to breathe

470

00:27:43,560 --> 00:27:47,560

because of the wound in my side in my left lung area.

471

00:27:47,560 --> 00:27:50,560

But I had an attitude that I was not going to die,

472

00:27:50,560 --> 00:27:53,560

that I was going to make it through it.

473

00:27:53,560 --> 00:27:56,560

And I think that helped a lot.

474

00:27:57,560 --> 00:27:58,560

How is he?

475

00:27:58,560 --> 00:27:59,560

Pretty good.

476

00:27:59,560 --> 00:28:00,560

He's doing all right.

477

00:28:00,560 --> 00:28:01,560

Got two hits here.

478

00:28:01,560 --> 00:28:02,560

And I went in the arm right here.

479

00:28:02,560 --> 00:28:04,560

Vic Webb had been on the Albuquerque police

480

00:28:04,560 --> 00:28:06,560

force for five years.

481

00:28:06,560 --> 00:28:08,560

And this incident was the first time he had ever

482

00:28:08,560 --> 00:28:10,560

fired his gun on duty.

483

00:28:10,560 --> 00:28:12,560

What happened?

484

00:28:12,560 --> 00:28:15,560

During the shootout, Webb was struck twice.

485

00:28:15,560 --> 00:28:18,560

Without the rapid response of his fellow officers,

486

00:28:18,560 --> 00:28:20,560

he would almost certainly have died.

487

00:28:20,560 --> 00:28:21,560

Hang in there.

488

00:28:21,560 --> 00:28:22,560

Hang in there.

489

00:28:22,560 --> 00:28:27,560

At any moment on any patrol, police officers

490

00:28:27,560 --> 00:28:30,560

must expect the unexpected.

491

00:28:30,560 --> 00:28:33,560

The night he was nearly killed, Vic Webb and another officer

492

00:28:33,560 --> 00:28:35,560

entered a local pool hall with an arrest warrant

493

00:28:35,560 --> 00:28:38,560

for a female suspect in a fraud case.

494

00:28:38,560 --> 00:28:41,560

Instead, they found themselves face to face

495

00:28:41,560 --> 00:28:43,560

with a trigger-happy ex-con.

496

00:28:47,560 --> 00:28:50,560

The evening began when Officer Rick Foley sat down

497

00:28:50,560 --> 00:28:53,560

at the police crime computer.

498

00:28:53,560 --> 00:28:56,560

He discovered an outstanding arrest warrant for a woman

499

00:28:56,560 --> 00:28:58,560

he wanted to question on another case.

500

00:28:58,560 --> 00:29:00,560

Could you look on an outstanding bench warm, please?

501

00:29:00,560 --> 00:29:03,560

An informant told Foley that the suspect

502

00:29:03,560 --> 00:29:06,560

frequented Albuquerque Tavern called Gary's game room.

503

00:29:11,560 --> 00:29:14,560

Foley and Vic Webb arrived at around 10 p.m.

504

00:29:14,560 --> 00:29:15,560

Another bench warm?

505

00:29:15,560 --> 00:29:16,560

Yeah.

506

00:29:16,560 --> 00:29:18,560

So you were seeing several places around the area here?

507

00:29:18,560 --> 00:29:21,560

Although they were not ordinarily partners,

508

00:29:21,560 --> 00:29:24,560

Webb had volunteered to assist in serving the warrant.

509

00:29:26,560 --> 00:29:28,560

When we walked in, we noticed some people

510

00:29:28,560 --> 00:29:32,560

sitting at a bar off to the left and a couple of people

511

00:29:32,560 --> 00:29:33,560

playing pool.

512

00:29:33,560 --> 00:29:34,560

You guys need some help with something?

513

00:29:34,560 --> 00:29:36,560

Just looking.

514

00:29:36,560 --> 00:29:39,560

Towards the back of the room, there was a dark hallway,

515

00:29:39,560 --> 00:29:42,560

so we decided to move back towards the back and take a look.

516

00:29:49,560 --> 00:29:51,560

Give me your guns.

517

00:29:51,560 --> 00:29:53,560

Give me your guns.

518

00:29:53,560 --> 00:29:56,560

Give me now!

519

00:29:57,560 --> 00:30:01,560

This was a situation where we were caught absolutely cold,

520

00:30:01,560 --> 00:30:04,560

and here was a guy pointing a gun at us demanding our weapons.

521

00:30:04,560 --> 00:30:08,560

I'd been out of the academy for approximately a year and a half,

522

00:30:08,560 --> 00:30:12,560

two years, fairly new on the department,

523

00:30:12,560 --> 00:30:17,560

and my first thoughts were I couldn't believe this was happening to me.

524

00:30:18,560 --> 00:30:22,560

I snapped back into reality and knew that if, in fact,

525

00:30:22,560 --> 00:30:25,560

he was going to shoot me or kill me,

526

00:30:25,560 --> 00:30:28,560

I didn't want it to be inside the game room.

527

00:30:33,560 --> 00:30:35,560

His first round hit me in the side,

528

00:30:35,560 --> 00:30:39,560

and I was wearing a bulletproof vest at the time,

529

00:30:39,560 --> 00:30:42,560

but this round went in between the two panels on my side

530

00:30:42,560 --> 00:30:44,560

and entered the room.

531

00:30:44,560 --> 00:30:47,560

Although the first shot had broken two ribs,

532

00:30:47,560 --> 00:30:51,560

Officer Webb managed to pull his own weapon and return fire.

533

00:30:54,560 --> 00:30:57,560

We were probably about three feet apart at this time,

534

00:30:57,560 --> 00:31:00,560

but he was on one side of the wall and I was on the other side.

535

00:31:02,560 --> 00:31:05,560

I had fired five to six rounds by this time,

536

00:31:05,560 --> 00:31:08,560

and he was continuing to fire back through the sheet rock.

537

00:31:08,560 --> 00:31:10,560

A bullet ripped through Webb's right arm,

538

00:31:10,560 --> 00:31:13,560

severing an artery and destroying nerves.

539

00:31:13,560 --> 00:31:16,560

His shooting hand was rendered useless.

540

00:31:18,560 --> 00:31:21,560

Webb made his way to the exit and struggled to his feet.

541

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

Only later did authorities realize that the suspect had picked up Webb's gun

542

00:31:26,560 --> 00:31:28,560

and used it to make his escape.

543

00:31:28,560 --> 00:31:30,560

He was shot in the head,

544

00:31:30,560 --> 00:31:32,560

and he was shot in the head,

545

00:31:32,560 --> 00:31:34,560

and he was shot in the head,

546

00:31:34,560 --> 00:31:36,560

and he was shot in the head,

547

00:31:36,560 --> 00:31:38,560

and he was shot in the head.

548

00:31:42,560 --> 00:31:45,560

The alleged assailant was subsequently identified as Lyle Moody,

549

00:31:45,560 --> 00:31:50,560

a paroled armed robber with a criminal record stretching back 17 years.

550

00:31:54,560 --> 00:31:58,560

The great irony in this case is that the fraud suspect Webb and Foley were

551

00:31:58,560 --> 00:32:01,560

initially seeking, had been arrested 18 months before,

552

00:32:01,560 --> 00:32:05,560

but her name had never been removed from the police computer.

553

00:32:07,560 --> 00:32:10,560

Since the night of the shootout,

554

00:32:10,560 --> 00:32:14,560

Lyle Moody has been spotted in Las Lunas, New Mexico,

555

00:32:14,560 --> 00:32:17,560

Oxnard, California, and Montabello, Colorado,

556

00:32:17,560 --> 00:32:20,560

where he was last seen in March of 1985.

557

00:32:26,560 --> 00:32:30,560

I would hope that the police officers who run across him the next time

558

00:32:30,560 --> 00:32:35,560

know who he is and know how dedicated he is to not going back to prison.

559

00:32:37,560 --> 00:32:43,560

My fear is that he's going to be cornered by some other officers

560

00:32:43,560 --> 00:32:45,560

who may not know who he is,

561

00:32:45,560 --> 00:32:48,560

and more police officers are going to get hurt.

562

00:33:06,560 --> 00:33:11,560

Recently, we were contacted by the FBI with an urgent request.

563

00:33:11,560 --> 00:33:15,560

They hoped that our viewers might assist in locating a convicted murderer

564

00:33:15,560 --> 00:33:19,560

who had just escaped from the state penitentiary in Bismarck, North Dakota.

565

00:33:19,560 --> 00:33:21,560

Please watch closely.

566

00:33:21,560 --> 00:33:24,560

Perhaps you will recognize Richard Lee McNair.

567

00:33:24,560 --> 00:33:26,560

Do you want to go to the police station?

568

00:33:26,560 --> 00:33:28,560

No, I'm not going to the police station.

569

00:33:28,560 --> 00:33:30,560

I'm going to the police station.

570

00:33:30,560 --> 00:33:32,560

I'm going to the police station.

571

00:33:32,560 --> 00:33:35,560

Perhaps you will recognize Richard Lee McNair.

572

00:33:35,560 --> 00:33:38,560

Do you want to live here for the rest of your life?

573

00:33:38,560 --> 00:33:41,560

The rest of your life, man.

574

00:33:41,560 --> 00:33:44,560

There's no Burger King's, no Dairy Queen's, no McDonald's.

575

00:33:44,560 --> 00:33:46,560

This is it.

576

00:33:46,560 --> 00:33:48,560

This is all there is.

577

00:33:49,560 --> 00:33:53,560

While in prison, Richard McNair eagerly assisted authorities

578

00:33:53,560 --> 00:33:57,560

in presenting crime prevention programs to local teenagers.

579

00:33:57,560 --> 00:34:01,560

Richard McNair was really a model prisoner here at the state pen.

580

00:34:01,560 --> 00:34:06,560

He was the editor of the inmate newspaper, very polite to staff,

581

00:34:06,560 --> 00:34:09,560

and most people seemed to like him.

582

00:34:09,560 --> 00:34:14,560

Behind his facade of cooperation, McNair was dedicated to breaking out of prison.

583

00:34:14,560 --> 00:34:20,560

His first attempt in April of 1991 was a failure, but McNair persisted.

584

00:34:20,560 --> 00:34:25,560

On the evening of October 9, 1992, McNair and two other inmates

585

00:34:25,560 --> 00:34:30,560

finally discovered a weak link in the prison's security.

586

00:34:30,560 --> 00:34:34,560

Mr. McNair and the other two individuals who escaped with him at the time

587

00:34:34,560 --> 00:34:37,560

were in an education room.

588

00:34:37,560 --> 00:34:41,560

They worked their way through the air vent coming into that room

589

00:34:41,560 --> 00:34:46,560

and crawled up into a mechanical space where the vents for the institution are.

590

00:34:46,560 --> 00:34:51,560

They then entered a second vent, which leads to the roof area of the institution.

591

00:34:53,560 --> 00:34:56,560

The three inmates made their way over a series of rooftops

592

00:34:56,560 --> 00:34:59,560

and through several coils of razor wire.

593

00:34:59,560 --> 00:35:04,560

Finally after dropping 15 feet to the ground, they were out of the prison.

594

00:35:04,560 --> 00:35:08,560

As soon as they hit the second roof, they were heard by the officer

595

00:35:08,560 --> 00:35:10,560

who immediately reported it to the captain.

596

00:35:10,560 --> 00:35:14,560

Our captain ran out of the institution as the three individuals

597

00:35:14,560 --> 00:35:18,560

were running about 50 feet in front of her to the south of the penitentiary.

598

00:35:18,560 --> 00:35:20,560

She then radioed for help.

599

00:35:22,560 --> 00:35:25,560

Within 48 hours, two of the convicts were recaptured.

600

00:35:25,560 --> 00:35:29,560

However, Richard McNair is still on the run.

601

00:35:31,560 --> 00:35:36,560

Authorities believe McNair may have stolen a light blue 1990 Chevrolet pickup truck like this one,

602

00:35:36,560 --> 00:35:41,560

missing from H.A. Thompson and son's plumbing company, two miles west of the prison.

603

00:35:42,560 --> 00:35:46,560

McNair may be headed to Oklahoma where his family lives

604

00:35:46,560 --> 00:35:49,560

or to Washington State where he has a girlfriend.

605

00:35:49,560 --> 00:35:54,560

We consider McNair extremely dangerous, very volatile, very violent.

606

00:35:54,560 --> 00:35:59,560

The original crime he was charged with in November of 1987 was a shooting death.

607

00:35:59,560 --> 00:36:02,560

He said he will not come back, he will not be taken.

608

00:36:02,560 --> 00:36:04,560

McNair is extremely dangerous.

609

00:36:15,560 --> 00:36:20,560

Next, a mysterious witness reports a brutal murder in Florida.

610

00:36:25,560 --> 00:36:32,560

For the police, nothing is more frustrating than a case where they are virtually positive

611

00:36:32,560 --> 00:36:36,560

they know who committed a murder but have no way of proving it.

612

00:36:36,560 --> 00:36:39,560

Florida authorities are caught in just such a dilemma.

613

00:36:39,560 --> 00:36:43,560

Their only hope of closing the case is to locate an unknown eyewitness,

614

00:36:43,560 --> 00:36:48,560

a man who called the Miami Police Department on May 1, 1991.

615

00:36:49,560 --> 00:36:53,560

Then we were police on fire.

616

00:36:53,560 --> 00:36:58,560

The caller told a police operator that he had witnessed a horrible crime

617

00:36:58,560 --> 00:37:01,560

in Bel Glade, 80 miles north of Miami.

618

00:37:01,560 --> 00:37:05,560

I am a citizen who saw a person when they killed him.

619

00:37:05,560 --> 00:37:06,560

Yes.

620

00:37:06,560 --> 00:37:08,560

In Bel Glade.

621

00:37:08,560 --> 00:37:11,560

I picked up the number of the case.

622

00:37:11,560 --> 00:37:13,560

Where did they kill him?

623

00:37:13,560 --> 00:37:15,560

The operator could not fully understand the caller,

624

00:37:16,560 --> 00:37:19,560

so she connected him to Detective Bert Blanco.

625

00:37:19,560 --> 00:37:25,560

In a rushed, nervous voice, the caller began to describe a grisly scene

626

00:37:25,560 --> 00:37:28,560

which he had witnessed several days earlier.

627

00:37:28,560 --> 00:37:32,560

He said he was hunting illegally in a sugar cane field

628

00:37:32,560 --> 00:37:35,560

when he heard a vehicle in the distance.

629

00:37:38,560 --> 00:37:42,560

The man stated that as he ran to hide, a blue Ford Bronco pulled up nearby.

630

00:37:43,560 --> 00:37:45,560

A man and a woman got out.

631

00:37:45,560 --> 00:37:47,560

She called him Ricardito,

632

00:37:47,560 --> 00:37:52,560

which you are about to hear is a translation of the eyewitness's phone call to the police.

633

00:37:55,560 --> 00:37:58,560

They started to argue, the girl and him.

634

00:38:01,560 --> 00:38:03,560

It appeared to be a drug problem.

635

00:38:04,560 --> 00:38:07,560

He was telling her to give him the money.

636

00:38:07,560 --> 00:38:10,560

She told him she cannot give him the money yet.

637

00:38:12,560 --> 00:38:14,560

There were two of them.

638

00:38:14,560 --> 00:38:16,560

The young man appeared to be Cuban,

639

00:38:16,560 --> 00:38:19,560

and the other Mexican, by the way, he spoke.

640

00:38:19,560 --> 00:38:23,560

She was shouting, Ricardito, don't kill me Ricardito.

641

00:38:29,560 --> 00:38:32,560

After he killed her, he dragged her away.

642

00:38:32,560 --> 00:38:36,560

So I got down on my knees because I thought if this person sees me,

643

00:38:36,560 --> 00:38:38,560

they're going to kill me too.

644

00:38:38,560 --> 00:38:40,560

Then the Bronco pulled away.

645

00:38:40,560 --> 00:38:43,560

I saw a seven and a two on the license plate.

646

00:38:43,560 --> 00:38:46,560

Then I left because I was scared.

647

00:38:46,560 --> 00:38:48,560

But later I thought it's a crime.

648

00:38:51,560 --> 00:38:55,560

The mysterious caller had said that the sugar cane field was behind a building

649

00:38:55,560 --> 00:38:57,560

shaped like an ice cream cone.

650

00:38:57,560 --> 00:39:02,560

Detective Frank Mayo, the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department and Belle Glade

651

00:39:02,560 --> 00:39:04,560

was assigned to investigate.

652

00:39:05,560 --> 00:39:11,560

I left the station and went down to the area of the twisty tree.

653

00:39:11,560 --> 00:39:15,560

And once I was there, I looked around and I saw a set of tree lines

654

00:39:15,560 --> 00:39:18,560

about a mile south of the twisty tree.

655

00:39:18,560 --> 00:39:21,560

So I decided to drive to that area and start searching the tree line.

656

00:39:24,560 --> 00:39:27,560

As I was passing along the tree line in my vehicle,

657

00:39:27,560 --> 00:39:33,560

I saw like a small brown object over in the tall grass area.

658

00:39:33,560 --> 00:39:38,560

Not knowing that that time what it was, I stopped the car and I got out

659

00:39:38,560 --> 00:39:40,560

and I walked over to the bushes.

660

00:39:40,560 --> 00:39:45,560

And after I got there, I realized it was the body of a female at that time.

661

00:39:45,560 --> 00:39:49,560

But the body was in a state at which at that time I couldn't determine

662

00:39:49,560 --> 00:39:51,560

which race it was.

663

00:39:51,560 --> 00:39:54,560

Detective Mayo notified headquarters.

664

00:39:54,560 --> 00:39:59,560

A team of homicide investigators was immediately dispatched to the scene.

665

00:39:59,560 --> 00:40:01,560

It was a very heinous crime.

666

00:40:01,560 --> 00:40:03,560

It was very violent.

667

00:40:03,560 --> 00:40:07,560

I believe that the suspect had a lot of disregard for human life.

668

00:40:07,560 --> 00:40:09,560

A lot of disregard.

669

00:40:09,560 --> 00:40:13,560

She had been laying there for approximately a week, maybe a few days longer.

670

00:40:13,560 --> 00:40:18,560

She had passed the decomposition stage and she had started to get into mummification.

671

00:40:18,560 --> 00:40:25,560

How we identified her was her right thumbprint was the only print left.

672

00:40:25,560 --> 00:40:29,560

The majority of her fingers had already turned to skeleton.

673

00:40:29,560 --> 00:40:33,560

And with that right thumbprint, we were able to make identification

674

00:40:33,560 --> 00:40:37,560

and prove that she was in fact Rebecca Young.

675

00:40:37,560 --> 00:40:41,560

Rebecca Young was a 21-year-old resident of Bel Glade.

676

00:40:41,560 --> 00:40:45,560

In a terrible irony, Rebecca's mother had also been murdered.

677

00:40:45,560 --> 00:40:51,560

Rebecca was 12 years old at the time and went to live with her aunt Lucille.

678

00:40:51,560 --> 00:40:54,560

We had a very close relationship.

679

00:40:54,560 --> 00:40:56,560

We was friends.

680

00:40:56,560 --> 00:40:57,560

We were sisters.

681

00:40:57,560 --> 00:40:59,560

We was mother and daughter.

682

00:40:59,560 --> 00:41:01,560

We was grandparents too, you know.

683

00:41:01,560 --> 00:41:04,560

And this is the way I raised her and her brother.

684

00:41:04,560 --> 00:41:08,560

Rebecca was a very quiet, shy girl.

685

00:41:08,560 --> 00:41:14,560

And she was the type, she would do anything she possibly could for anybody.

686

00:41:14,560 --> 00:41:21,560

She was the type of child I would give anything to have over again.

687

00:41:21,560 --> 00:41:26,560

Police began to dig into Rebecca Young's background looking for a murder suspect.

688

00:41:26,560 --> 00:41:34,560

They soon discovered that after high school, Rebecca had become involved with a man known to be a petty criminal.

689

00:41:34,560 --> 00:41:44,560

She had gotten hooked up with a person locally who had gotten her into a different type of life than she was accustomed to.

690

00:41:44,560 --> 00:41:52,560

He started introducing her to the drug scene and prostitution and things of this nature.

691

00:41:52,560 --> 00:42:02,560

He had beat her up on more than one occasion and had intimidated her and threatened her into this type of lifestyle.

692

00:42:02,560 --> 00:42:06,560

While police have determined that the man is not a suspect in Rebecca's murder,

693

00:42:06,560 --> 00:42:12,560

they do believe that his petty thievery may have led to her death.

694

00:42:12,560 --> 00:42:18,560

This person may have robbed the client without Rebecca's knowledge that he was going to do this.

695

00:42:18,560 --> 00:42:25,560

Rebecca may have suffered the consequences as a result of his actions.

696

00:42:25,560 --> 00:42:34,560

On May 14, 1991, three weeks after Rebecca Young's murder, the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department detained a possible suspect.

697

00:42:34,560 --> 00:42:40,560

He was a local man who had reportedly told the prostitute that he killed a black woman.

698

00:42:40,560 --> 00:42:44,560

When the man was pulled over, police suspected that he was drunk.

699

00:42:44,560 --> 00:42:47,560

I'm clean, man. I'm clean, man.

700

00:42:47,560 --> 00:42:49,560

Would you stop me?

701

00:42:49,560 --> 00:42:51,560

I know what you guys want.

702

00:42:51,560 --> 00:42:53,560

Come on, give me a break.

703

00:42:53,560 --> 00:42:55,560

I'm doing this.

704

00:42:55,560 --> 00:42:57,560

Don't move.

705

00:42:57,560 --> 00:43:02,560

Before I could interview him, he told me that I wanted to talk to him about a murder.

706

00:43:02,560 --> 00:43:06,560

When I told him I wanted to talk to him about the prostitution, he would have been out with it.

707

00:43:06,560 --> 00:43:09,560

He said I don't want to talk to you. I want an attorney.

708

00:43:09,560 --> 00:43:11,560

All right, so you're 15 years old.

709

00:43:11,560 --> 00:43:17,560

At that point we didn't have any further evidence that he was involved in this. I had to release him.

710

00:43:17,560 --> 00:43:26,560

Even though the suspect would eventually be released, police feels certain that he was involved in Rebecca Young's murder.

711

00:43:26,560 --> 00:43:34,560

They are now engaged in an all-out search for the elusive eyewitness who would originally telephone them to report the crime.

712

00:43:34,560 --> 00:43:37,680

the man, except that his first name is Antonio.

713

00:43:37,680 --> 00:43:39,320

He said he called from a pay phone

714

00:43:39,320 --> 00:43:42,760

because he did not have a telephone at home.

715

00:43:42,760 --> 00:43:45,000

Judging from Antonio's accent, police

716

00:43:45,000 --> 00:43:48,360

believe he was born in Cuba.

717

00:43:48,360 --> 00:43:50,960

This is a portion of the actual tape recording

718

00:43:50,960 --> 00:43:52,640

of Antonio's telephone call.

719

00:44:04,560 --> 00:44:15,480

Police in Florida, as well as a friends and family

720

00:44:15,480 --> 00:44:19,880

of Rebecca Young, want to urge Antonio to come forward.

721

00:44:19,880 --> 00:44:22,960

It should be emphasized that he is not wanted for any crime.

722

00:44:35,040 --> 00:44:37,600

On our next Unsolved Mysteries, you'll

723

00:44:37,600 --> 00:44:40,520

meet George Anderson, whose apparent psychic abilities

724

00:44:40,520 --> 00:44:43,400

have amazed believers and baffled skeptics.

725

00:44:43,400 --> 00:44:45,080

He says he can help grieving families

726

00:44:45,080 --> 00:44:47,160

by communicating with their lost loved ones

727

00:44:47,160 --> 00:44:48,920

from beyond the grave.

728

00:44:48,920 --> 00:44:52,360

It sounds unbelievable, but you can judge for yourself

729

00:44:52,360 --> 00:44:57,240

as we take you to an actual session with this intriguing man.

730

00:44:57,240 --> 00:45:01,400

Join me next time for another edition of Unsolved Mysteries.