

1

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

The End

2

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

Tonight on Unsolved Mysteries

3

00:00:08,000 --> 00:00:14,400

For more than 20 years, Mary Clamser suffered from the debilitating effects of multiple

4

00:00:14,400 --> 00:00:15,400

sclerosis.

5

00:00:15,400 --> 00:00:20,040

Then a violent summer storm swept over Mary's house and brought with it what can only be

6

00:00:20,040 --> 00:00:25,560

called a miracle, a powerful bolt of lightning that apparently released Mary from the shackles

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00:00:25,560 --> 00:00:29,280

of her devastating disease.

8

00:00:29,400 --> 00:00:30,400

July 1986.

9

00:00:30,400 --> 00:00:35,880

A young Marine is nearly killed during a brutal hazing ritual called a Code Red.

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00:00:35,880 --> 00:00:41,120

If it sounds like a movie plot, it's because the film *A Few Good Men* starring Tom Cruise

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00:00:41,120 --> 00:00:44,600

and Jack Nicholson was based on the incident.

12

00:00:44,600 --> 00:00:49,560

Tonight the disturbing untold story behind the movie.

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00:00:49,560 --> 00:00:53,360

Most people know Reggie White as one of the most feared players in the National Football

14

00:00:53,360 --> 00:00:54,360

League.

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00:00:54,360 --> 00:00:57,080

He's also an ordained minister.

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00:00:57,080 --> 00:01:01,840

In January a tragic fire ravaged White's church in Knoxville, Tennessee.

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00:01:01,840 --> 00:01:09,440

In the ruins, investigators found the unmistakable signs of arson and the ugly taint of racism.

18

00:01:09,440 --> 00:01:14,080

They call him a taunting bank robber, but now his flamboyant criminal career has come to

19

00:01:14,080 --> 00:01:17,680

an end thanks to one of our viewers.

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00:01:17,680 --> 00:01:19,920

Join me for these intriguing cases.

21

00:01:19,920 --> 00:01:25,080

Much more, perhaps you may be able to help solve a mystery.

22

00:01:57,080 --> 00:02:23,120

Almost everyone knows about the hit movie A Few Good Men starring Tom Cruise, Jack Nicholson,

23

00:02:23,120 --> 00:02:24,960

and to me more.

24

00:02:25,080 --> 00:02:29,200

Not everybody knows that A Few Good Men is based on an actual event.

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00:02:29,200 --> 00:02:33,400

It tells the story of Marines on trial for attacking a squad member in a brutal hazing

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00:02:33,400 --> 00:02:36,040

ritual known as a Code Red.

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00:02:36,040 --> 00:02:40,160

Amazingly that event still has repercussions today.

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00:02:40,160 --> 00:02:44,120

Repercussions that may have led to the mysterious death of one of the Marines who executed the

29

00:02:44,120 --> 00:02:48,120

Code Red.

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00:02:48,120 --> 00:02:52,720

David Cox of Needham, Massachusetts joined the Marines straight out of high school.

31

00:02:52,840 --> 00:02:58,440

Being one of the proud and the few was all he ever wanted.

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00:02:58,440 --> 00:03:02,000

In 1986, David was stationed in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

33

00:03:02,000 --> 00:03:09,120

A naval base the U.S. had refused to give up when Fidel Castro came to power in the 1950s.

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00:03:09,120 --> 00:03:13,160

Political tensions kept the base on constant alert.

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00:03:13,160 --> 00:03:18,280

Trouble filtered down to David Cox when another platoon member, PFC William Alvarado, wrote

36

00:03:18,280 --> 00:03:22,680

to his senator about Marine misconduct.

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00:03:22,680 --> 00:03:28,200

We didn't actually decide to have a Code Red for Alvarado on our own.

38

00:03:28,200 --> 00:03:37,080

Our platoon commander had given us an implied order that if we were good Marines something

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00:03:37,080 --> 00:03:43,440

should happen to Alvarado.

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00:03:43,440 --> 00:03:48,400

Saturday night we went into Alvarado's room.

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00:03:48,400 --> 00:04:04,400

We blindfolded him and gagged him and then dragged him off of his bed.

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00:04:04,400 --> 00:04:10,200

Dave started shaving his head and within five minutes he had stopped struggling so we knew

43

00:04:10,200 --> 00:04:12,600

something was wrong with him.

44

00:04:12,600 --> 00:04:22,000

David Cox convinced his platoon mates to stop the hazing.

45

00:04:22,000 --> 00:04:26,920

So we removed the gag and tied him and he still didn't come around.

46

00:04:26,920 --> 00:04:29,240

He was still unconscious.

47

00:04:29,240 --> 00:04:32,320

So at that point we started to panic.

48

00:04:32,320 --> 00:04:34,520

Everybody else get to your rooms.

49

00:04:34,520 --> 00:04:36,240

Alvarado was rushed to the hospital.

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00:04:36,240 --> 00:04:40,680

He recovered but his 10 attackers were slapped with charges.

51

00:04:40,680 --> 00:04:41,680

Relax, Cox.

52

00:04:41,680 --> 00:04:42,680

Yes, sir.

53

00:04:42,680 --> 00:04:43,680

That's relaxing.

54

00:04:43,680 --> 00:04:44,680

Come on.

55

00:04:44,680 --> 00:04:45,680

Sit down.

56

00:04:45,680 --> 00:04:48,240

Don Marquari was appointed to defend David Cox.

57

00:04:48,240 --> 00:04:51,240

They're going to charge you with attempted murder.

58

00:04:51,240 --> 00:04:54,840

They got a confession from you and they got a pretty beat up Marine.

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00:04:54,840 --> 00:04:56,040

It doesn't look too good.

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00:04:56,040 --> 00:04:59,480

Sir, I was just following orders, sir.

61

00:04:59,480 --> 00:05:03,840

David claimed the Code Red started with implied orders from his superior officers.

62

00:05:03,840 --> 00:05:08,600

They're prepared to offer you an administrative discharge.

63

00:05:08,600 --> 00:05:11,640

It's less than honorable but there'd be no court martial proceeding and you wouldn't

64

00:05:11,640 --> 00:05:14,160

be looking at 20 years if you were found guilty.

65

00:05:14,160 --> 00:05:16,520

Sir, but I'm not guilty, sir.

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00:05:16,520 --> 00:05:21,640

I told David that this was a defense obedience to orders that had not been successful at

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00:05:21,640 --> 00:05:27,400

Nuremberg, had not been successful with Lieutenant Calli at Mylie and plus we had a colonel denying

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00:05:27,400 --> 00:05:28,840

he ever gave an order.

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00:05:28,840 --> 00:05:32,760

So we had the additional burning of now saying he was following an implied order.

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00:05:32,760 --> 00:05:35,920

Then it was a very difficult case to win and I told David that.

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00:05:36,280 --> 00:05:39,440

All right, Cox, we'll do it your way.

72

00:05:39,440 --> 00:05:43,520

He decided he wanted to fight it because he believed in his heart that he didn't do any

73

00:05:43,520 --> 00:05:44,520

wrong.

74

00:05:44,520 --> 00:05:48,800

David's gamble was a qualified success.

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00:05:48,800 --> 00:05:53,840

He was convicted only of simple assault and sentenced to time already served in the brig.

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00:05:53,840 --> 00:05:58,560

He then completed his hitch, received an honorable discharge and returned to civilian life in

77

00:05:58,560 --> 00:06:02,680

his hometown in the Boston area.

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00:06:02,680 --> 00:06:05,880

Jack Nicholson was so mean.

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00:06:05,880 --> 00:06:10,760

Six years later, when a few good men hit the theaters, David felt the movie makers had

80

00:06:10,760 --> 00:06:11,760

stolen his story.

81

00:06:11,760 --> 00:06:16,360

Other than that, there was a lot of parts that didn't really happen like that.

82

00:06:16,360 --> 00:06:18,360

I mean, for one, the guy didn't die.

83

00:06:18,360 --> 00:06:19,360

I mean, you know that.

84

00:06:19,360 --> 00:06:20,360

I saved him.

85

00:06:20,360 --> 00:06:23,800

David's reaction was that he was stunned.

86

00:06:23,800 --> 00:06:24,800

Here he was.

87

00:06:24,800 --> 00:06:30,240

He was watching his life in front of him and he wasn't getting any of the credit from it.

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00:06:30,240 --> 00:06:36,560

The anchor came a little bit later because he was this movie company that was making

89

00:06:36,560 --> 00:06:39,360

tons, millions of money off of his story.

90

00:06:39,360 --> 00:06:45,560

And if it weren't for him, the story never would have existed in the first place.

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00:06:45,560 --> 00:06:49,640

David and some of the other Marines involved in the Code Red filed suit against the movie

92

00:06:49,640 --> 00:06:51,080

production company.

93

00:06:51,080 --> 00:06:56,480

While it was pending, David spoke out about his case on radio talk shows.

94

00:06:57,200 --> 00:07:07,080

By January of 1994, David and his girlfriend, Delaney, had set up housekeeping together.

95

00:07:07,080 --> 00:07:11,280

David was hoping a temporary job at United Parcel Service would become permanent.

96

00:07:11,280 --> 00:07:12,280

Good.

97

00:07:12,280 --> 00:07:14,280

And what about the job?

98

00:07:14,280 --> 00:07:15,760

Are they going to keep you?

99

00:07:15,760 --> 00:07:16,760

Oh, I don't know.

100

00:07:16,760 --> 00:07:19,600

I mean, I'm doing everything I should do.

101

00:07:19,600 --> 00:07:22,880

David was very enthusiastic about getting on board with them.

102

00:07:23,880 --> 00:07:31,720

I think it was something where he felt that he could have a full-time, steady occupation.

103

00:07:31,720 --> 00:07:37,040

David expected to hear about the UPS job on January 5, 1994.

104

00:07:37,040 --> 00:07:40,400

Because of a back problem, he spent the night before on the couch.

105

00:07:40,400 --> 00:07:42,400

I hope UPS calls.

106

00:07:42,400 --> 00:07:45,400

Have a good day.

107

00:07:45,400 --> 00:07:52,160

Elaine left about 8.30, shortly after noon she called home.

108

00:07:52,160 --> 00:07:55,440

David didn't answer, but there was a message for him on the machine.

109

00:07:55,440 --> 00:07:58,440

Hi, message for David Cox.

110

00:07:58,440 --> 00:07:59,440

This is Jim at UPS.

111

00:07:59,440 --> 00:08:00,440

Cut some good news for you.

112

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

Give me a call.

113

00:08:01,440 --> 00:08:02,440

Thank you.

114

00:08:02,440 --> 00:08:03,440

So I was really excited.

115

00:08:03,440 --> 00:08:08,440

I was like, oh, Cole, Dave's going to get this job and he's going to be so excited.

116

00:08:08,440 --> 00:08:12,560

And then I called back again at 1 o'clock to check the messages, and that message was

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00:08:12,560 --> 00:08:16,520

still there, and the UPS guy had called again, too.

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00:08:16,520 --> 00:08:19,360

David!

119

00:08:19,360 --> 00:08:22,160

At 5.30, Elaine returned home.

120

00:08:22,160 --> 00:08:23,160

David?

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00:08:23,160 --> 00:08:30,920

When I came into the house that night after work, I realized right away that the doors

122

00:08:30,920 --> 00:08:35,880

to all the rooms were open, and our rabbit, who we usually just kept in the kitchen, was

123

00:08:35,880 --> 00:08:37,880

hopping all over the place.

124

00:08:37,880 --> 00:08:38,880

Hi, David.

125

00:08:38,880 --> 00:08:39,880

It's Jim again at UPS.

126

00:08:39,880 --> 00:08:40,880

Please come back home.

127

00:08:40,880 --> 00:08:41,880

Thank you.

128

00:08:41,880 --> 00:08:49,240

David's truck was still in the driveway, the keys and the ignition.

129

00:08:49,240 --> 00:08:54,120

David left an uncashed paycheck on the dashboard and his 9-millimeter gun in the glove box,

130

00:08:54,120 --> 00:08:58,400

but David himself was gone.

131

00:08:58,400 --> 00:09:03,520

I immediately had a feeling of dread because I know David well enough, David would not

132

00:09:03,520 --> 00:09:05,680

just disappear.

133

00:09:05,680 --> 00:09:08,960

And right from the start, I was very concerned.

134

00:09:08,960 --> 00:09:12,720

As the days went on, and there was nothing, there was no news from him.

135

00:09:12,720 --> 00:09:15,400

I mean, we checked his bank account and his bank account.

136

00:09:15,400 --> 00:09:18,800

There was no activity on his bank account.

137

00:09:18,800 --> 00:09:25,840

You start to believe that maybe something did happen, but why?

138

00:09:25,840 --> 00:09:29,120

There would be no answers until the spring thaw.

139

00:09:29,120 --> 00:09:34,760

On April 2, 1994, the body of David Cox was discovered on the banks of the Charles River

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00:09:34,760 --> 00:09:41,120

in Medfield, Massachusetts, approximately five miles from his apartment.

141

00:09:41,120 --> 00:09:47,480

He was shot, according to the ME, four times, once at the base of the rear of the neck and

142

00:09:47,600 --> 00:09:52,840

three times in the left-side torso area.

143

00:09:52,840 --> 00:09:57,240

David's wallet was still in his back pocket, cash and credit cards intact.

144

00:09:57,240 --> 00:10:01,280

It seemed obvious that robbery was not the motive, and police have since ruled out a

145

00:10:01,280 --> 00:10:05,040

random attack.

146

00:10:05,040 --> 00:10:10,920

They are convinced David left his home with someone he knew.

147

00:10:10,920 --> 00:10:15,920

It's our belief that he'd get in the car willingly, that he knew who was coming to pick him up,

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00:10:15,920 --> 00:10:22,920

and that he went to this area and walked into the woods with this person.

149

00:10:22,960 --> 00:10:27,120

We really believe that David was what we would call a scrapper.

150

00:10:27,120 --> 00:10:34,120

If he knew there was some danger loitering ahead, he would do his best to get out of that.

151

00:10:35,680 --> 00:10:40,440

I think that if it was somebody that was just holding a gun in him or something like that,

152

00:10:40,440 --> 00:10:44,400

they would do it within the first 30 or 40 yards into the woods.

153

00:10:44,400 --> 00:10:51,400

Someone was found almost three-quarters to a mile walk into the woods.

154

00:10:56,480 --> 00:10:58,320

I don't know why David was killed.

155

00:10:58,320 --> 00:11:02,600

I personally believe it had something to do with the military.

156

00:11:02,600 --> 00:11:05,840

He was taken out of his house without signs of struggle.

157

00:11:05,840 --> 00:11:09,400

He was wearing his Marine Corps jacket, which he never wore.

158

00:11:09,400 --> 00:11:16,400

He was found between two hunting ranges where gunshots would not be unusual, and he was

159

00:11:16,440 --> 00:11:18,400

murdered execution style.

160

00:11:18,400 --> 00:11:22,000

Now, there is a movie opening tonight called A Few Good Men.

161

00:11:22,000 --> 00:11:26,600

After the release of A Few Good Men, David had been highly vocal about his story and

162

00:11:26,600 --> 00:11:29,280

the U.S. activities in Cuba.

163

00:11:29,280 --> 00:11:32,840

David's family believes he may have talked too much.

164

00:11:32,840 --> 00:11:37,840

To say the least, we were trying to provoke a war pretty much every day.

165

00:11:37,840 --> 00:11:38,840

Because of this colonel?

166

00:11:38,840 --> 00:11:43,240

Yeah, he would never say anything directly, but it was certainly implied, absolutely.

167

00:11:43,240 --> 00:11:48,560

After I heard that interview on the radio, I spoke to him and I said, I don't like what

168

00:11:48,560 --> 00:11:51,720

you're doing. I think what you're doing is dangerous.

169

00:11:51,720 --> 00:11:53,840

The colonel had implied...

170

00:11:53,840 --> 00:11:58,280

I think he felt far too free to just speak his mind.

171

00:11:58,280 --> 00:12:01,280

...to his congressman saying that...

172

00:12:01,280 --> 00:12:04,400

Police checked out the military angle to David's murder.

173

00:12:04,400 --> 00:12:08,720

We realized there was something going wrong because he wasn't fighting back after a while.

174

00:12:08,720 --> 00:12:14,440

There's nothing there that shows us that the military in any way, shape or form, are involved

175

00:12:14,440 --> 00:12:18,600

with David's death. But we're certainly open to anything that comes our way in regards

176

00:12:18,600 --> 00:12:19,600

to the military.

177

00:12:19,600 --> 00:12:23,360

There's this guy there. He's a supervisor.

178

00:12:23,360 --> 00:12:28,000

David's brother suggested another possible scenario, a UPS connection.

179

00:12:28,000 --> 00:12:32,320

They're taking the good packages and taking them away from the regular...

180

00:12:32,320 --> 00:12:33,320

Stealing.

181

00:12:33,320 --> 00:12:34,320

Yeah, they're stealing.

182

00:12:34,320 --> 00:12:39,840

A couple of months before David disappeared, he had mentioned to me that he had come upon

183

00:12:39,840 --> 00:12:45,640

a supervisor and one of the drivers involved in some type of activity, what he believed

184

00:12:45,640 --> 00:12:47,440

to be, was theft.

185

00:12:47,440 --> 00:12:53,320

I interviewed a number of people. They were candid with me, I felt. Certainly if there

186

00:12:53,320 --> 00:12:58,600

was anything there with UPS, I think as far as they were concerned, Paramount was David's

187

00:12:58,600 --> 00:13:02,640

death and they would have certainly told me anything that UPS was involved with.

188

00:13:02,640 --> 00:13:08,320

At this point, the investigation's still open. It'll remain open until we solve it.

189

00:13:08,320 --> 00:13:15,920

Again, we'll follow any leads that come through vigorously and remain to do that until it

190

00:13:15,920 --> 00:13:17,160

is solved.

191

00:13:17,160 --> 00:13:24,120

I'm angry what happened to my son. I'm angry that someone can do that and get away with

192

00:13:24,120 --> 00:13:28,480

it.

193

00:13:28,480 --> 00:13:33,600

My life has been devastated by his murder. It really has. A death would be bad enough.

194

00:13:33,600 --> 00:13:36,400

A murder is just dreadful.

195

00:13:36,400 --> 00:13:45,040

At this point, police have only one hope. Someone saw David Cox leave his home between

196

00:13:45,040 --> 00:13:51,800

8.30 a.m. on January 5, 1994. Perhaps someone saw the person who picked him up for the vehicle

197

00:13:51,800 --> 00:13:55,680

they left in.

198

00:13:55,680 --> 00:14:00,880

Coming up, for a disabled woman, a harrowing brush with death apparently culminates in a

199

00:14:00,880 --> 00:14:07,800

miraculous rebirth. But first, NFL superstar Reggie White asked for your help to find the

200

00:14:07,800 --> 00:14:21,920

arsonist who burned down his church.

201

00:14:21,920 --> 00:14:27,160

The capture of a criminal suspect always brings us great satisfaction. Tonight, another fugitive

202

00:14:27,160 --> 00:14:32,120

is in custody, thanks to your calls.

203

00:14:32,120 --> 00:14:36,800

Thomas Dixon is the walking definition of career criminal. He was paroled in May of

204

00:14:36,800 --> 00:14:42,440

1984 after serving 10 years of hard time for armed robbery. It hadn't reformed him one

205

00:14:42,440 --> 00:14:43,440

bit.

206

00:14:43,440 --> 00:14:46,840

This is a hold up. Just stay cool.

207

00:14:46,840 --> 00:14:51,320

During the five months following his release from prison, Dixon and a series of accomplices

208

00:14:51,320 --> 00:14:58,160

knocked off seven banks in North Carolina. An FBI raid brought down Thomas Dixon in October

209

00:14:58,160 --> 00:15:05,440

of 1984, and he spent another decade behind bars. He was paroled in 1994 as unrepentant

210

00:15:05,440 --> 00:15:07,680

as ever.

211

00:15:07,680 --> 00:15:09,840

This is a hold up.

212

00:15:09,840 --> 00:15:15,040

Dixon again hit banks in the Carolinas, five and a seven week spree. He showed up in one

213

00:15:15,040 --> 00:15:17,760

surveillance tape after another.

214

00:15:17,760 --> 00:15:20,040

Have you FBI ever heard of Thomas Dixon?

215

00:15:20,640 --> 00:15:22,280

No, should we?

216

00:15:22,280 --> 00:15:27,680

But there was a disturbing new twist to Dixon's MO. Now he taunted the FBI with advanced

217

00:15:27,680 --> 00:15:30,800

notice of his bank jobs.

218

00:15:30,800 --> 00:15:35,640

When one of Dixon's getaway cars was discovered, federal investigators concluded that he had

219

00:15:35,640 --> 00:15:42,000

deliberately left it for them to find. Inside were photos of Dixon's impressive arsenal.

220

00:15:42,000 --> 00:15:47,120

In a note, Dixon threatened future robberies and warned of a bloody showdown if anyone tried

221

00:15:47,120 --> 00:15:49,840

to stop him.

222

00:15:49,840 --> 00:15:55,880

Dixon was alerting us to the fact that he is heavily armed and he has every intention

223

00:15:55,880 --> 00:16:01,080

of using those arms in a confrontation with law enforcement.

224

00:16:01,080 --> 00:16:06,320

One week before our broadcast, Thomas Dixon struck again this time in Pennsylvania. Here's

225

00:16:06,320 --> 00:16:10,320

Kealy with a dramatic conclusion to the case.

226

00:16:10,320 --> 00:16:15,640

Bob, thanks to one of our viewers, Dixon's most recent heist will probably be his last.

227

00:16:15,640 --> 00:16:19,800

After the robbery, Dixon fled Pennsylvania and eventually made his way to Clarksville,

228

00:16:19,800 --> 00:16:22,040

Tennessee.

229

00:16:22,040 --> 00:16:27,880

In Clarksville, Dixon took a room in this motel. Pam Poteet, a resident housekeeper,

230

00:16:27,880 --> 00:16:30,960

first became wary of Dixon when she cleaned his room.

231

00:16:30,960 --> 00:16:37,120

It's the way you act it. He was weird. I mean, he stood by the beds, in between the beds,

232

00:16:37,120 --> 00:16:41,880

by the luggage. He wouldn't ever sit down. He didn't want you to make the beds, you know,

233

00:16:41,880 --> 00:16:47,840

stuff like that. It's like he was on guard, you know, his luggage. He just was, you know,

234

00:16:47,840 --> 00:16:50,200

ready, watching you.

235

00:16:50,200 --> 00:16:58,000

When Dixon's story aired, Pam Poteet recognized him instantly. Within minutes, Pam had contacted

236

00:16:58,000 --> 00:17:04,640

both the Unsolved Mysteries Phone Center and the authorities in Tennessee. By sunrise, FBI

237

00:17:04,640 --> 00:17:08,640

agents had Dixon's hideaway staked out.

238

00:17:08,640 --> 00:17:13,960

We knew he was armed and dangerous and he'd vowed not to be taken alive. With that information,

239

00:17:13,960 --> 00:17:18,880

obviously you want to approach the subject with extreme caution. But once we got him

240

00:17:18,880 --> 00:17:25,640

seduced, he was very cooperative. All he said is, you got me good. Basically, that the way

241

00:17:25,640 --> 00:17:29,800

that you guys arrested me was the way you needed to arrest me. It was a lot better that way

242

00:17:29,800 --> 00:17:32,520

than, quote, throw bullets at each other.

243

00:17:38,640 --> 00:18:08,440

January 8, 1996. Fire ravages the inner city church in

244

00:18:09,000 --> 00:18:14,120

Knoxville, Tennessee. At first, it seemed an isolated tragedy, but it would soon become

245

00:18:14,120 --> 00:18:20,160

linked to what may be a series of vicious hate crimes targeting black churches. This

246

00:18:20,160 --> 00:18:26,600

church, however, has a famous voice speaking out on its behalf. Reggie White, the most

247

00:18:26,600 --> 00:18:31,960

feared defensive end in professional football, but the man opponent sees a six-foot-five,

248

00:18:31,960 --> 00:18:38,600

300-pound brick wall with legs, has another career. God sent Moses away for about 40

249

00:18:38,600 --> 00:18:44,440

years to get him ready to face Pharaoh. Reggie White is an ordained minister. When he's not

250

00:18:44,440 --> 00:18:51,440

tackling quarterbacks, he's back in his home state of Tennessee, saving souls. In 1993,

251

00:18:53,920 --> 00:18:58,760

Reggie White and two longtime friends in Knoxville founded the inner city church by merging two

252

00:18:58,840 --> 00:19:06,360

congregations into one. Their goal, to create a church that would serve poor people of all

253

00:19:06,360 --> 00:19:14,360

racess, their motto, together we can make a change. It's very important and it's very

254

00:19:14,640 --> 00:19:20,520

vital. I believe that our church is doing things in our communities that no other churches

255

00:19:20,520 --> 00:19:25,200

are doing. You know, the most sacred gate that already is in our country is on Sunday,

256

00:19:25,320 --> 00:19:30,280

11 to 12, because black school to black church is white, goes to white churches. We wanted

257

00:19:30,280 --> 00:19:34,080

to try to have a church to everybody with people well, but no matter what the color

258

00:19:34,080 --> 00:19:41,080

was. It was a noble undertaking with aggressive community outreach and self-help programs

259

00:19:41,200 --> 00:19:48,200

that church thrived. Then disaster. I believe in my heart that it was an attack from the

260

00:19:49,040 --> 00:19:56,040

devil himself, that there were devil inspired people that he used to fire by my church.

261

00:19:57,640 --> 00:20:02,480

We had a big snow on the ground. David Upton is a church's senior pastor. When I arrived

262

00:20:02,480 --> 00:20:07,480

there, it was a sickness feeling in my stomach to see the things we had fought for, the things

263

00:20:07,480 --> 00:20:13,480

we had worked so hard to establish over the years of a ministry, just to see it, just

264

00:20:13,480 --> 00:20:20,480

go up in flames. Within hours, agents from the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco

265

00:20:20,960 --> 00:20:27,960

and Firearms began to investigate. An immediate visit to this location indicated to us that

266

00:20:28,120 --> 00:20:32,320

it was a very deliberate criminal act. The sanctuary portion of the building had been

267

00:20:32,320 --> 00:20:37,320

totally destroyed, but there's another building that sets on the backside of the property

268

00:20:37,320 --> 00:20:41,760

that adjoins the rear of the sanctuary. It's a building in which there are classrooms and

269

00:20:41,760 --> 00:20:48,080

offices. As the agents went through that portion of the structure, they found multiple Molotov

270

00:20:48,080 --> 00:20:52,920

cocktails. They found that both floors of this structure had been saturated with gasoline

271

00:20:52,920 --> 00:20:57,760

and kerosene, and they found gasoline cans and kerosene cans scattered throughout this

272

00:20:57,760 --> 00:21:02,840

portion of the building.

273

00:21:02,840 --> 00:21:07,040

Agents also found racial epithets scrolled on the walls, leaving little doubt that the

274

00:21:07,040 --> 00:21:13,520

arson was a hate crime. Reggie White was appalled. That turned to outrage when he learned that

275

00:21:13,520 --> 00:21:16,800

his church had not been the first.

276

00:21:16,800 --> 00:21:21,120

The only reason that you're hearing about my church is because of me, but there have

277

00:21:21,120 --> 00:21:28,120

been 22 other churches that's been firebomb. That's a problem, and this problem needs to

278

00:21:28,200 --> 00:21:30,960

be rectified.

279

00:21:30,960 --> 00:21:36,120

The statistics are alarming. The count is now at least 24 black churches hit by arson

280

00:21:36,200 --> 00:21:41,760

in the past three years. The attacks have occurred throughout the south in Louisiana,

281

00:21:41,760 --> 00:21:48,760

Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Virginia, North and South Carolina. The most recent

282

00:21:50,600 --> 00:21:55,160

arson fire occurred on March 5th, 1996.

283

00:21:55,160 --> 00:22:02,160

Both the FBI and the ATF are looking to see if there are any links. We recognize that

284

00:22:02,160 --> 00:22:08,520

someone in Kansas, for example, might say, let's burn black churches, and associates

285

00:22:08,520 --> 00:22:12,920

in Tennessee and Alabama and Florida might go out and do those things, but they might

286

00:22:12,920 --> 00:22:15,000

use entirely different methods.

287

00:22:15,000 --> 00:22:19,760

I don't believe it was anyone that would be what you would call a professional. Based

288

00:22:19,760 --> 00:22:25,320

on the way the fuel was in the building, the way the setup was in the building, I think

289

00:22:25,320 --> 00:22:29,400

that they just thought if a little's good, a whole lot's better, and that's what they

290

00:22:29,400 --> 00:22:35,400

tried today. They just put enough fuel in there to do the job.

291

00:22:35,400 --> 00:22:40,360

Three days after the inner city church fire, fliers from two white supremacist groups,

292

00:22:40,360 --> 00:22:45,400

the BFI Brotherhood and Skinheads for White Justice, turned up in a bank that had ties

293

00:22:45,400 --> 00:22:51,320

to the church. However, the possibility remains that both the fliers and the graffiti were

294

00:22:51,320 --> 00:22:54,400

planted as decoys.

295

00:22:54,400 --> 00:22:58,840

With the deliberate act of arson, the arsonist wants us to look in a different direction

296

00:22:58,840 --> 00:23:04,760

away from him. So we have to consider the possibility that the racial graffiti was

297

00:23:04,760 --> 00:23:10,160

placed there to divert us into a different direction. So we have to consider the racial

298

00:23:10,160 --> 00:23:16,280

motivation as a possibility, but we also have to look at other motivations as well.

299

00:23:16,280 --> 00:23:20,840

The inner city church did not have enough fire insurance to cover all the damage, but

300

00:23:20,840 --> 00:23:25,880

with hard work from the parishioners and donations from the community, both black and white,

301

00:23:25,880 --> 00:23:26,880

they hoped to rebuild.

302

00:23:27,880 --> 00:23:34,160

But the problem is, because racism has alienated itself so that you can't touch it when it

303

00:23:34,160 --> 00:23:35,160

afflicts you.

304

00:23:35,160 --> 00:23:40,120

In the meantime, Reggie White and his fellow pastors keep the congregation's spirit strong

305

00:23:40,120 --> 00:23:44,200

with church services held at a local school auditorium.

306

00:23:44,200 --> 00:23:47,760

That's why we're shooting each other today. That's why we're allowing...

307

00:23:47,760 --> 00:23:51,200

This just makes me more determined, and I know that the only way that you defeat the

308

00:23:51,200 --> 00:23:57,800

devil is that you have to do it as a group. And that's why I would say I would call whites

309

00:23:57,800 --> 00:24:03,400

and blacks to come together and find how to work together because what kills the enemies

310

00:24:03,400 --> 00:24:09,200

of tactics is if a bunch of people of all ethnic backgrounds start loving each other.

311

00:24:22,200 --> 00:24:32,200

When we return, for many years, Mary Clamser struggled with the crippling effects of multiple

312

00:24:32,200 --> 00:24:37,280

sclerosis. Though her faith never wavered, Mary certainly didn't believe in miracles

313

00:24:37,280 --> 00:24:40,200

until a freak accident changed her life.

314

00:24:52,200 --> 00:25:01,200

The State of Oklahoma is a natural laboratory for studying the world's worst weather.

315

00:25:01,200 --> 00:25:08,040

Here at the National Weather Service in Oklahoma City, meteorologists track an average of one

316

00:25:08,040 --> 00:25:13,920

severe thunderstorm every week. Sometimes the storms bring tornado force winds, sometimes

317

00:25:13,920 --> 00:25:19,000

softball-sized hail. Not long ago, one of those storms brought with it a gift from the

318

00:25:19,000 --> 00:25:23,000

heavens, but one woman calls a modern-day miracle.

319

00:25:28,000 --> 00:25:35,000

August 17, 1994. Mary Clamser never thought of herself as a warrior, but for 23 years

320

00:25:35,000 --> 00:25:40,000

she had fought a battle against multiples sclerosis, a battle she was losing fast.

321

00:25:42,000 --> 00:25:48,000

Mary had no idea that this day an extraordinary event would erase her years of torment and

322

00:25:48,000 --> 00:25:50,000

give her back her freedom.

323

00:25:53,000 --> 00:26:00,000

In 1972, Mary was 19 years old, vibrantly healthy, and recently engaged to marry Ron Clamser.

324

00:26:01,000 --> 00:26:06,000

Six months before the wedding, she went to the hospital with what she thought was a bad case of flu.

325

00:26:07,000 --> 00:26:13,000

We didn't know whether I had some kind of intestinal bug or whatever, and shortly after being admitted

326

00:26:13,000 --> 00:26:18,000

to the hospital, a lot of neurological problems started coming up that we weren't even aware of.

327

00:26:23,000 --> 00:26:29,000

Mary and Ron were certain something was seriously wrong, but the doctors tried to shield them from the brutal facts.

328

00:26:29,000 --> 00:26:31,000

Can you move your legs at all?

329

00:26:33,000 --> 00:26:34,000

No.

330

00:26:34,000 --> 00:26:36,000

Can you feel this?

331

00:26:36,000 --> 00:26:39,000

I can't feel anything. I feel pain.

332

00:26:39,000 --> 00:26:46,000

It was extremely frustrating not knowing what was going on, feeling so many different changes in my body.

333

00:26:46,000 --> 00:26:53,000

The left leg was going out, there were bladder complications, so many things were going wrong.

334

00:26:53,000 --> 00:26:58,000

It was like I had no control over my own body.

335

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

The final diagnosis was devastating. Mary had multiple sclerosis.

336

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

Ron set out to learn exactly what that meant.

337

00:27:08,000 --> 00:27:14,000

It's a degenerative nerve disease. It affects the impulses from the brain to the muscles.

338

00:27:14,000 --> 00:27:17,000

So what stage is Mary in?

339

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

They don't know. I mean, one good thing is that she's young.

340

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

Ron found out that MS could attack Mary in waves, each episode lasting a few weeks.

341

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

Between bouts, Mary would appear to be disease-free sometimes for months.

342

00:27:31,000 --> 00:27:36,000

Over the years, however, attacks could get worse and more frequent.

343

00:27:36,000 --> 00:27:45,000

They told me that I probably would never walk again, and if we did proceed to go ahead and get married,

344

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

I would not be well enough to have children if I could have children at all.

345

00:27:49,000 --> 00:27:56,000

And Ron came in shortly after that, and we talked, and I said to him, you deserve better.

346

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

You deserve a wife that can walk and a wife that can grow with you and have children with you,

347

00:28:02,000 --> 00:28:05,000

and they're telling me I can't do any of this.

348

00:28:05,000 --> 00:28:10,000

And I took off the engagement ring and said to him, as much as I loved him with all my heart,

349

00:28:10,000 --> 00:28:14,000

the only way I could give love back to him was to let him go.

350

00:28:14,000 --> 00:28:20,000

I just gave it right back to her, and I said, no, I mean, I just have faith that things will work out,

351

00:28:20,000 --> 00:28:25,000

and, you know, when you get married, you get married for better or worse.

352

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

We're engaged to be married for better or worse.

353

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

To me, it was the same thing.

354

00:28:32,000 --> 00:28:35,000

Mary spent the months before her wedding in the hospital,

355

00:28:35,000 --> 00:28:38,000

two weeks to address the invitations herself.

356

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

Just two weeks before the ceremony, the disease relented,

357

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

giving Mary enough strength to walk down the aisle.

358

00:28:46,000 --> 00:28:49,000

The wedding day was only a brief respite.

359

00:28:49,000 --> 00:28:52,000

The MS soon returned.

360

00:28:52,000 --> 00:28:58,000

Despite her illness, Mary refused to give up her dream of being not only a wife, but a mother.

361

00:28:58,000 --> 00:29:02,000

Over the next 10 years, Mary struggled through three difficult pregnancies

362

00:29:02,000 --> 00:29:07,000

so she and Ron could have a family, two sons and a daughter.

363

00:29:07,000 --> 00:29:12,000

Our children have grown up with a mom that was in the hospital many times,

364

00:29:12,000 --> 00:29:15,000

a mom that couldn't walk many times.

365

00:29:15,000 --> 00:29:21,000

And it was incorporated into the family life because even when I was ill,

366

00:29:21,000 --> 00:29:25,000

my focus always was Ron and the children.

367

00:29:27,000 --> 00:29:28,000

It wasn't something that was easy.

368

00:29:28,000 --> 00:29:31,000

Not that I want to say she was a burden, but, you know, we had a carrier to the car,

369

00:29:31,000 --> 00:29:34,000

we had to take the scooter apart and put the wheelchair in.

370

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

So it became not a hassle, but it was a lot of work.

371

00:29:39,000 --> 00:29:45,000

After 23 years, the cycles of Mary's illness have become almost routine.

372

00:29:45,000 --> 00:29:51,000

A few weeks, perhaps a few months of disability, and another precious period of normalcy.

373

00:29:51,000 --> 00:29:56,000

In the summer of 1992, that cycle abruptly changed.

374

00:29:57,000 --> 00:30:00,000

This attack was different because it went past a year,

375

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

and prior to that, no attack had gone past six months.

376

00:30:05,000 --> 00:30:10,000

So we began to wonder when it went past a year, how long it was going to last.

377

00:30:10,000 --> 00:30:17,000

I could not leave the bed literally, and I would hear the children arguing amongst themselves.

378

00:30:17,000 --> 00:30:22,000

It was your turn to do this or that, or Ron coming home from work very frustrated.

379

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

And I remember one night feeling really kind of, the only way to describe it was,

380

00:30:28,000 --> 00:30:35,000

as if I had died, but I was laying in the back room listening to my family fall apart.

381

00:30:39,000 --> 00:30:42,000

Then came August 17, 1994.

382

00:30:45,000 --> 00:30:51,000

It could have been a metaphor for Mary's life, a beautiful day that suddenly turned dark and stormy.

383

00:30:52,000 --> 00:31:00,000

Mary decided to take a bath while she could, as the tub filled the storm intensified.

384

00:31:04,000 --> 00:31:10,000

I would have to say on that particular day was one of the worst storms I've ever seen in the 12 years we've been in Oklahoma.

385

00:31:10,000 --> 00:31:17,000

At that particular time, the leg brace was up against the porcelain part of the tub,

386

00:31:17,000 --> 00:31:24,000

and when I went to turn the knob, I saw the flash of lightning, but I never heard the thunder.

387

00:31:33,000 --> 00:31:38,000

At least 10,000 volts of electricity had coursed through Mary's body,

388

00:31:38,000 --> 00:31:41,000

enough force to launch her six feet across the room.

389

00:31:41,000 --> 00:31:43,000

Mom, are you all right?

390

00:31:43,000 --> 00:31:45,000

Mom, wake up.

391

00:31:45,000 --> 00:31:51,000

Mary was alive, a miracle by any standard, but there was an even greater one to come.

392

00:31:51,000 --> 00:31:54,000

Mary? Mary, I'm Dr. Lee.

393

00:31:54,000 --> 00:31:56,000

Tell me, what happened today?

394

00:31:56,000 --> 00:32:03,000

I remember feeling like my body was on fire, pins and needles shooting up and down my arms,

395

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

and being totally confused.

396

00:32:06,000 --> 00:32:08,000

Just one second, sir.

397

00:32:08,000 --> 00:32:10,000

Okay, Mary?

398

00:32:10,000 --> 00:32:14,000

Mary, listen to me. Take a deep breath. Breathe, honey. Breathe, man.

399

00:32:14,000 --> 00:32:17,000

All of a sudden, I'm feeling my legs.

400

00:32:17,000 --> 00:32:19,000

What's he doing?

401

00:32:19,000 --> 00:32:21,000

I can feel that.

402

00:32:21,000 --> 00:32:23,000

Oh, no, she can't.

403

00:32:23,000 --> 00:32:25,000

Yes, I can. I can feel that.

404

00:32:25,000 --> 00:32:29,000

And I started to get really, I guess, agitated.

405

00:32:29,000 --> 00:32:33,000

It was like, I feel you touching me. Why do I feel you touching me?

406

00:32:33,000 --> 00:32:40,000

Because you have to remember, for 23 years, I couldn't feel my left leg, and for two years, my right leg.

407

00:32:40,000 --> 00:32:46,000

And now, all of a sudden, for no reason, to my knowledge, I feel both of them.

408

00:32:46,000 --> 00:32:48,000

I can't feel it.

409

00:32:48,000 --> 00:32:53,000

I mean, I was dumbfounded and shocked, and I didn't know what to think.

410

00:32:55,000 --> 00:32:57,000

Neither did anyone else.

411

00:32:57,000 --> 00:33:03,000

Medical literature includes accounts of lightning making blind people see, and deaf people hear.

412

00:33:03,000 --> 00:33:10,000

But the doctor warned Ron that the effects are often temporary, usually lasting no more than 30 days.

413

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

More often than not, the patient can go back to her prior conditions.

414

00:33:14,000 --> 00:33:16,000

It could just be a temporary situation.

415

00:33:16,000 --> 00:33:18,000

She ran that thing up and down, and she felt it.

416

00:33:18,000 --> 00:33:20,000

I know. I can't explain it.

417

00:33:20,000 --> 00:33:22,000

In the next two weeks, I was in quite a bit of pain.

418

00:33:22,000 --> 00:33:24,000

I mean, I was miserable.

419

00:33:24,000 --> 00:33:27,000

I couldn't even get to enjoy feeling my legs.

420

00:33:27,000 --> 00:33:30,000

And every few hours, Ron would even call me and say,

421

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

I know you're hurting, but can you still feel your legs?

422

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

I mean, that was the \$64 question.

423

00:33:35,000 --> 00:33:37,000

You know, I was like, yes.

424

00:33:41,000 --> 00:33:45,000

Incredibly, Mary could soon do more than feel her legs.

425

00:33:45,000 --> 00:33:51,000

Two weeks after being struck by lightning, she walked across her kitchen without a second thought.

426

00:33:51,000 --> 00:33:58,000

She didn't even realize what she had done until she found herself at the refrigerator a dozen feet from her wheelchair.

427

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

Ron, honey.

428

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

I was at a part of the kitchen that to this day, I can't tell you how I got there.

429

00:34:05,000 --> 00:34:07,000

What are you doing over here?

430

00:34:07,000 --> 00:34:13,000

And I thought, well, I can't handle this anymore, because now I'm doing things I don't even know how I did them.

431

00:34:13,000 --> 00:34:14,000

You walked?

432

00:34:14,000 --> 00:34:16,000

Yes.

433

00:34:16,000 --> 00:34:18,000

You want to try it again?

434

00:34:19,000 --> 00:34:21,000

OK.

435

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

Hold on a minute, OK?

436

00:34:22,000 --> 00:34:23,000

OK.

437

00:34:23,000 --> 00:34:24,000

All right.

438

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

I took some real robotic toddler type kind of walk, and I mean, it was like three or four steps and went into his arms.

439

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

It was like, I just did that, didn't I?

440

00:34:36,000 --> 00:34:38,000

And he's like, yeah, mom, you did.

441

00:34:41,000 --> 00:34:43,000

Mary improved rapidly.

442

00:34:43,000 --> 00:34:49,000

A few days later, when Ron's senior arrived home from work, Mary was waiting with a big surprise.

443

00:34:49,000 --> 00:34:55,000

She had walked out the front door and down the sidewalk, completely under her own power.

444

00:34:55,000 --> 00:34:57,000

No leg brace, no support.

445

00:34:58,000 --> 00:34:59,000

No, stand back.

446

00:34:59,000 --> 00:35:00,000

Stand back.

447

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

Watch.

448

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

The clamzers were thrilled, but not yet ready to call the cure permanent.

449

00:35:06,000 --> 00:35:07,000

Oh, my.

450

00:35:08,000 --> 00:35:15,000

In the beginning, we did worry about, well, the 30 days, you know, what if they were wrong and it was 60 days?

451

00:35:16,000 --> 00:35:26,000

And then I started thinking, I'm not going to worry about it, because whatever amount of time, that's the time I had, we never thought I would have.

452

00:35:26,000 --> 00:35:29,000

It's almost like a second honeymoon.

453

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

I mean, it's almost like year one starts over again.

454

00:35:37,000 --> 00:35:43,000

Today, almost two years later, Mary exercises regularly and lives a completely normal life.

455

00:35:45,000 --> 00:35:47,000

I mean, we can dance again.

456

00:35:47,000 --> 00:35:51,000

We can go out together and walk again, go shopping together.

457

00:35:52,000 --> 00:35:57,000

There's just so many things that we're missing that we have back.

458

00:35:57,000 --> 00:36:00,000

And it's just, it's just like a rebirth.

459

00:36:08,000 --> 00:36:15,000

When we return, a tragic accident claims a life of a young woman.

460

00:36:15,000 --> 00:36:20,000

Now her daughter needs your help to uncover the secrets of her family's past.

461

00:36:20,000 --> 00:36:27,000

Recently, we received an unusual request from a woman named Ladonna Alfano.

462

00:36:27,000 --> 00:36:31,000

Ladonna was just a little girl when her mother died in a terrible accident.

463

00:36:31,000 --> 00:36:37,000

35 years later, Ladonna has no memories of her mother and only scant details about her mother's family.

464

00:36:37,000 --> 00:36:40,000

Tonight, she hopes that will change.

465

00:36:41,000 --> 00:36:44,000

December 29, 1961.

466

00:36:44,000 --> 00:36:48,000

In the early afternoon, a train left Dallas, Texas, heading west.

467

00:36:53,000 --> 00:36:57,000

The route would take it through the heart of downtown Abilene, Texas.

468

00:36:57,000 --> 00:37:01,000

The route would take it through the heart of downtown Abilene, Texas.

469

00:37:01,000 --> 00:37:05,000

The route would take it through the heart of downtown Abilene, Texas.

470

00:37:06,000 --> 00:37:12,000

Around the same time, two Army wives and Abilene, Darlene Alfano and Pinkie Johnson,

471

00:37:12,000 --> 00:37:15,000

gathered up their children for a trip into town.

472

00:37:15,000 --> 00:37:17,000

Got your dolls?

473

00:37:17,000 --> 00:37:24,000

At around 2, Pinkie and Darlene were heading north on Shelton Street towards the center of town.

474

00:37:24,000 --> 00:37:26,000

No one knows how or why it happened.

475

00:37:26,000 --> 00:37:32,000

But the route would take it through the heart of downtown Abilene, Texas.

476

00:37:32,000 --> 00:37:37,000

The route would take it through the heart of downtown Abilene, Texas.

477

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

The route would take it through the heart of downtown Abilene, Texas.

478

00:37:42,000 --> 00:37:47,000

No one knows how or why it happened.

479

00:37:47,000 --> 00:37:50,000

But the car ended up right in the middle of the tracks.

480

00:37:52,000 --> 00:37:56,000

Pinkie, there's a train! What's wrong?

481

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

What are you doing? You can't get into the tracks!

482

00:38:02,000 --> 00:38:04,000

It won't start! Look at our train coming!

483

00:38:04,000 --> 00:38:06,000

It won't start! There's a train!

484

00:38:12,000 --> 00:38:14,000

It's a train!

485

00:38:28,000 --> 00:38:30,000

The car was literally torn to shreds.

486

00:38:30,000 --> 00:38:32,000

Its roof sheared completely off.

487

00:38:32,000 --> 00:38:35,000

The human toll was incalculable.

488

00:38:36,000 --> 00:38:39,000

Two of the children died almost immediately.

489

00:38:39,000 --> 00:38:45,000

A third would die in the hospital, as would one of the mothers, Darlene Alfano.

490

00:38:45,000 --> 00:38:48,000

Her husband Fred was by her side.

491

00:38:51,000 --> 00:38:56,000

I was sitting with her, talking to her, and I was holding her hand.

492

00:38:56,000 --> 00:39:03,000

She took a very deep breath, held it for a few seconds, and very slowly let it out.

493

00:39:04,000 --> 00:39:06,000

And I knew she had expired.

494

00:39:09,000 --> 00:39:12,000

Fred Alfano found himself almost completely alone.

495

00:39:12,000 --> 00:39:15,000

He had lost his wife and two of his children.

496

00:39:15,000 --> 00:39:19,000

His other child, Ladonna, had survived, but was barely hanging on.

497

00:39:21,000 --> 00:39:24,000

They never gave me any hope for any of them surviving.

498

00:39:24,000 --> 00:39:30,000

They were all almost universally sure that Ladonna would not survive

499

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

because her facial damage extended all the way down to the base of her brain.

500

00:39:38,000 --> 00:39:40,000

It's me.

501

00:39:40,000 --> 00:39:42,000

Hi, Daddy.

502

00:39:42,000 --> 00:39:44,000

Hi.

503

00:39:44,000 --> 00:39:47,000

Ladonna had suffered catastrophic injuries to her face and head,

504

00:39:47,000 --> 00:39:50,000

but against all the odds, she began to recover.

505

00:39:50,000 --> 00:39:52,000

See?

506

00:39:52,000 --> 00:39:58,000

Two weeks passed before Fred could bring himself to tell Ladonna about her mother and sisters.

507

00:39:58,000 --> 00:40:02,000

What happened to Rosa and Liz when they were in Trisha?

508

00:40:05,000 --> 00:40:07,000

They're in heaven.

509

00:40:07,000 --> 00:40:10,000

And in a playground.

510

00:40:13,000 --> 00:40:15,000

So they can play together.

511

00:40:16,000 --> 00:40:18,000

What happened to Mommy?

512

00:40:22,000 --> 00:40:24,000

Mommy's an angel.

513

00:40:25,000 --> 00:40:27,000

Is she really an angel, Daddy?

514

00:40:27,000 --> 00:40:29,000

She sure is.

515

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

When my father told me that my mother and my sisters had died,

516

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

I thought, oh, the angels had come down and gotten them.

517

00:40:36,000 --> 00:40:38,000

I was happy that they were angels.

518

00:40:38,000 --> 00:40:42,000

Everybody would talk to her in the hospital, and first thing she would tell them

519

00:40:42,000 --> 00:40:45,000

was that my mommy and my sisters are angels in heaven.

520

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

I've got three angels watching me.

521

00:40:48,000 --> 00:40:50,000

I knew she would be fine.

522

00:40:50,000 --> 00:40:54,000

I felt if she had taken that attitude, she would be fine.

523

00:40:55,000 --> 00:40:58,000

Well, I used to think, why did I live?

524

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

Why was I the one that survived?

525

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

I believed that when I was a child, that I lived for my father,

526

00:41:04,000 --> 00:41:06,000

that my father wouldn't have survived it.

527

00:41:06,000 --> 00:41:09,000

I think her strength gave me strength.

528

00:41:09,000 --> 00:41:14,000

And my only direction in life then was to take care of Ladonna

529

00:41:15,000 --> 00:41:18,000

and make sure she survived and had a normal childhood.

530

00:41:19,000 --> 00:41:24,000

Over the years, Ladonna underwent a series of reconstructive surgeries on her face.

531

00:41:24,000 --> 00:41:27,000

But there was one thing the operations could not correct,

532

00:41:27,000 --> 00:41:30,000

the loss of her mother, Darlene.

533

00:41:30,000 --> 00:41:33,000

I have no memories of my mother at all.

534

00:41:33,000 --> 00:41:37,000

I look at pictures of her, and I try to remember something.

535

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

It's like looking at a magazine article of a woman.

536

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

I have recollections of my twin and my father and my little sister.

537

00:41:46,000 --> 00:41:50,000

My father has told me stories about us as children with my mom,

538

00:41:50,000 --> 00:41:55,000

and it doesn't bring back any memories whatsoever, none whatsoever.

539

00:41:57,000 --> 00:42:00,000

Compounding Ladonna's heartbreak was a fact that her father

540

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

had only met her mother's family a few times.

541

00:42:03,000 --> 00:42:07,000

Eventually, what little contact they did have ceased altogether.

542

00:42:08,000 --> 00:42:11,000

After the accident happened, it was just probably too painful

543

00:42:11,000 --> 00:42:13,000

to keep in touch with them.

544

00:42:13,000 --> 00:42:17,000

And now I've just decided I need to get in touch with them.

545

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

I'm trying to, you know, get some connection with my past

546

00:42:21,000 --> 00:42:26,000

and try to remember something so it will fill in the holes of missing my mother.

547

00:42:30,000 --> 00:42:33,000

One of the only clues Ladonna has is a letter she received

548

00:42:33,000 --> 00:42:36,000

from her maternal grandfather when she was 13.

549

00:42:37,000 --> 00:42:40,000

It contained a photograph of her mother's sister,

550

00:42:40,000 --> 00:42:43,000

Ladonna's aunt, Patricia Ann Hintz.

551

00:42:45,000 --> 00:42:48,000

My aunt Pat is the only survivor of my mother that I know of.

552

00:42:49,000 --> 00:42:52,000

I think finding my aunt Pat will definitely fill my emptiness.

553

00:42:52,000 --> 00:42:57,000

Just being able to touch her and knowing that she was a part of my mother

554

00:42:57,000 --> 00:42:59,000

is the only thing that I have of my mother.

555

00:42:59,000 --> 00:43:02,000

And just knowing her and meeting her and hugging her

556

00:43:02,000 --> 00:43:05,000

would be really even enough for me right now.

557

00:43:11,000 --> 00:43:13,000

Meanwhile,

558

00:43:26,000 --> 00:43:29,000

Join me again this Friday at our regular time

559

00:43:29,000 --> 00:43:32,000

for an all-new edition of Unsolved Mysteries.

560

00:43:40,000 --> 00:43:42,000

I'm not sure what to do with this.

561

00:43:42,000 --> 00:43:44,000

I'm just going to go back to the hotel.

562

00:43:44,000 --> 00:43:46,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

563

00:43:46,000 --> 00:43:48,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

564

00:43:48,000 --> 00:43:50,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

565

00:43:50,000 --> 00:43:52,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

566

00:43:52,000 --> 00:43:54,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

567

00:43:54,000 --> 00:43:56,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

568

00:43:56,000 --> 00:43:58,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

569

00:43:58,000 --> 00:44:00,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

570

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

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

571

00:44:02,000 --> 00:44:04,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

572

00:44:04,000 --> 00:44:06,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

573

00:44:06,000 --> 00:44:08,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.

574

00:44:08,000 --> 00:44:10,000

I'm going to go back to the hotel.