

1

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

The Police of Austin, Texas

2

00:00:04,000 --> 00:00:09,800

Tonight on Unsolved Mysteries.

3

00:00:09,800 --> 00:00:11,440

Rock and roll star Kurt Cobain

4

00:00:11,440 --> 00:00:13,320

was renowned for his music and announced

5

00:00:13,320 --> 00:00:15,880

for his drug-addicted lifestyle.

6

00:00:15,880 --> 00:00:19,880

To many, his suicide in 1994 seemed understandable.

7

00:00:19,880 --> 00:00:23,000

But what if Kurt Cobain did not take his own life?

8

00:00:23,000 --> 00:00:25,080

At least one investigator is convinced

9

00:00:25,080 --> 00:00:29,280

that the official ruling was a rush to judgment.

10

00:00:29,280 --> 00:00:31,560

The police have always valued the phenomenal nose

11

00:00:31,560 --> 00:00:34,320

of the dog, whether it's tracking a fugitive,

12

00:00:34,320 --> 00:00:37,760

detecting a bomb, or uncovering a stash of drugs.

13

00:00:37,760 --> 00:00:40,280

Now the medical world is catching on.

14

00:00:40,280 --> 00:00:42,480

Can a dog's remarkable sense of smell

15

00:00:42,480 --> 00:00:47,080

be used to sniff out deadly cancer cells?

16

00:00:47,080 --> 00:00:49,200

Tommy Ziegler is a condemned man,

17

00:00:49,200 --> 00:00:52,080

sentenced to the electric chair for a Christmas Eve rampage

18

00:00:52,080 --> 00:00:55,600

that left four people dead, including his own wife.

19

00:00:55,600 --> 00:00:57,480

Recently, an independent lie detector

20

00:00:57,480 --> 00:01:00,880

test suggested that Ziegler may in fact be innocent.

21

00:01:00,880 --> 00:01:02,320

You be the judge.

22

00:01:02,320 --> 00:01:05,880

The final appeal of Tommy Ziegler.

23

00:01:05,880 --> 00:01:09,840

Join me for another intriguing edition of Unsolved Mysteries.

24

00:01:39,840 --> 00:02:07,920

The cure for cancer is medicine's holy grail.

25

00:02:07,920 --> 00:02:12,120

In the absence of a cure, early diagnosis is our best hope.

26

00:02:12,120 --> 00:02:15,160

Amazingly, one of mother nature's most ingenious designs

27

00:02:15,160 --> 00:02:19,040

may have given us an astonishingly accurate detection device.

28

00:02:19,040 --> 00:02:21,880

This unsolved mystery could save your life.

29

00:02:26,760 --> 00:02:29,960

A dog's nose, as sensitive as radar,

30

00:02:29,960 --> 00:02:32,560

is accurate as a heat-seeking missile.

31

00:02:32,560 --> 00:02:35,000

It's been estimated that a dog's sense of smell

32

00:02:35,000 --> 00:02:37,480

is more than 200 million times stronger

33

00:02:37,480 --> 00:02:39,200

than that of humans.

34

00:02:39,200 --> 00:02:41,200

Over the centuries, we've trained dogs

35

00:02:41,200 --> 00:02:43,480

to find anything we needed.

36

00:02:43,480 --> 00:02:45,240

Incredibly, our four-legged friends

37

00:02:45,240 --> 00:02:48,520

may also be able to detect some kinds of cancer,

38

00:02:48,520 --> 00:02:51,400

as long as two years before doctors can diagnose it.

39

00:02:55,360 --> 00:02:57,680

Dwayne Pickle has been training dogs professionally

40

00:02:57,680 --> 00:02:59,800

for more than three decades.

41

00:02:59,800 --> 00:03:01,960

He worked with them during the Vietnam War

42

00:03:01,960 --> 00:03:05,080

and during his 22 years with the Tallahassee Florida Police

43

00:03:05,080 --> 00:03:06,760

Department.

44

00:03:06,760 --> 00:03:08,480

When a local dermatologist wondered

45

00:03:08,480 --> 00:03:12,280

if cancer had a signature scent and if dogs could smell it,

46

00:03:12,280 --> 00:03:15,200

Dwayne decided to find out.

47

00:03:15,200 --> 00:03:17,080

I talked to several nurses at the hospital,

48

00:03:17,080 --> 00:03:20,560

and they said, yes, I can smell cancer myself.

49

00:03:20,560 --> 00:03:23,560

And said, Vance, when you get off the elevator floor

50

00:03:23,560 --> 00:03:26,320

at the hospital, there's something unique about that floor,

51

00:03:26,320 --> 00:03:28,120

as far as smell is concerned.

52

00:03:28,120 --> 00:03:30,640

Not necessarily offensive, but something very unique.

53

00:03:31,640 --> 00:03:34,320

The initial experiment centered on skin cancer

54

00:03:34,320 --> 00:03:36,000

for two reasons.

55

00:03:36,000 --> 00:03:38,640

First, it affects more people than any other cancer

56

00:03:38,640 --> 00:03:40,880

killing thousands every year.

57

00:03:40,880 --> 00:03:43,920

Second, skin cancer is extremely difficult for doctors

58

00:03:43,920 --> 00:03:47,440

to detect visually, especially the most dangerous type,

59

00:03:47,440 --> 00:03:49,440

melanoma.

60

00:03:49,440 --> 00:03:51,840

Melanoma begins on the surface of the skin,

61

00:03:51,840 --> 00:03:54,440

and at that point is 100% curable.

62

00:03:54,440 --> 00:03:58,440

However, if you ignore it, it will grow deeper into the skin,

63

00:03:59,440 --> 00:04:01,440

and eventually it will reach the blood vessels.

64

00:04:01,440 --> 00:04:03,440

Once it reaches the blood vessels,

65

00:04:03,440 --> 00:04:06,440

it can spread around the body and reach the vital organs.

66

00:04:06,440 --> 00:04:09,440

Once it's done that, there is no treatment.

67

00:04:12,440 --> 00:04:16,440

Dwayne hit real melanoma cells inside plastic tubes,

68

00:04:16,440 --> 00:04:19,440

hoping the scent was strong enough for a dog to detect.

69

00:04:22,440 --> 00:04:23,440

Come on, George.

70

00:04:23,440 --> 00:04:25,440

Dwayne started the experiment with George.

71

00:04:25,440 --> 00:04:29,440

A standard schnauzer already trained to sniff out bombs.

72

00:04:29,440 --> 00:04:33,440

Once George was given the scent, Dwayne hid the canister.

73

00:04:34,440 --> 00:04:38,440

I wasn't sure whether it was going to have a strong smell,

74

00:04:38,440 --> 00:04:40,440

or whether it was going to be like a salt

75

00:04:40,440 --> 00:04:42,440

and have a very weak smell.

76

00:04:42,440 --> 00:04:45,440

And we found out that it has a very strong smell,

77

00:04:45,440 --> 00:04:50,440

and if you're going to compare the ease of finding cancer

78

00:04:50,440 --> 00:04:52,440

with the ease of finding drugs,

79

00:04:52,440 --> 00:04:54,440

you'd have to equate cancer with marijuana.

80

00:04:54,440 --> 00:04:57,440

It's very strong odor, very odourous,

81

00:04:57,440 --> 00:04:59,440

very easy for the dog to find.

82

00:05:02,440 --> 00:05:04,440

Dwayne Pickle took pains to make certain

83

00:05:04,440 --> 00:05:06,440

George was actually finding cancer cells.

84

00:05:06,440 --> 00:05:09,440

To be sure the dog couldn't be thrown off,

85

00:05:09,440 --> 00:05:13,440

he also tested George's ability on a variety of other cells.

86

00:05:14,440 --> 00:05:17,440

We used normal lung tissue from pigs.

87

00:05:17,440 --> 00:05:21,440

We used normal lung tissue and skin tissue from people.

88

00:05:21,440 --> 00:05:22,440

We used necrotic tissue.

89

00:05:22,440 --> 00:05:24,440

We used everything we could to make sure

90

00:05:24,440 --> 00:05:28,440

that the dog was really, truly trained to find cancer.

91

00:05:29,440 --> 00:05:31,440

Show me where it's at.

92

00:05:33,440 --> 00:05:34,440

Good boy.

93

00:05:34,440 --> 00:05:35,440

Okay.

94

00:05:35,440 --> 00:05:37,440

Then we knew that we hadn't made.

95

00:05:37,440 --> 00:05:41,440

The dog was doing a good job and was indeed finding cancer.

96

00:05:43,440 --> 00:05:46,440

The first part of the experiment seemed a clear success.

97

00:05:46,440 --> 00:05:51,440

Out of 451 searches, George and other cancer-trained dogs

98

00:05:51,440 --> 00:05:54,440

had a 99.8% success rate.

99

00:05:56,440 --> 00:05:58,440

Now Dwayne went to the next level.

100

00:05:58,440 --> 00:06:02,440

Kim Edwards, a nurse, became a human volunteer.

101

00:06:02,440 --> 00:06:04,440

During each of a dozen tests,

102

00:06:04,440 --> 00:06:06,440

she placed bandages on her body.

103

00:06:06,440 --> 00:06:09,440

Sometimes there were live cancer cells beneath them.

104

00:06:09,440 --> 00:06:11,440

Sometimes there were none.

105

00:06:12,440 --> 00:06:16,440

I actually would use long underwear to completely cover everything

106

00:06:16,440 --> 00:06:18,440

so that George wouldn't have any indications

107

00:06:18,440 --> 00:06:19,440

of where the bandages might be placed

108

00:06:19,440 --> 00:06:21,440

or where the cancer cells might be placed.

109

00:06:23,440 --> 00:06:25,440

Hey, Kim, let's just go ahead and lay down.

110

00:06:25,440 --> 00:06:26,440

We'll get started.

111

00:06:26,440 --> 00:06:29,440

And Dwayne would not know how many bandages I had on

112

00:06:29,440 --> 00:06:32,440

or even whether I had any cancerous bandages on.

113

00:06:32,440 --> 00:06:34,440

Come on, George. Let's go. Check.

114

00:06:34,440 --> 00:06:36,440

Good. Check.

115

00:06:36,440 --> 00:06:37,440

Come on.

116

00:06:37,440 --> 00:06:38,440

Okay.

117

00:06:38,440 --> 00:06:39,440

Okay.

118

00:06:39,440 --> 00:06:40,440

Okay.

119

00:06:40,440 --> 00:06:41,440

Okay.

120

00:06:41,440 --> 00:06:42,440

Okay.

121

00:06:42,440 --> 00:06:43,440

Okay.

122

00:06:43,440 --> 00:06:44,440

Okay.

123

00:06:44,440 --> 00:06:45,440

Okay.

124

00:06:45,440 --> 00:06:46,440

There we go.

125

00:06:46,440 --> 00:06:47,440

All right.

126

00:06:47,440 --> 00:06:48,440

Okay.

127

00:06:48,440 --> 00:06:49,440

Is that where you put it?

128

00:06:49,440 --> 00:06:50,440

Yep.

129

00:06:50,440 --> 00:06:51,440

That's the spot.

130

00:06:51,440 --> 00:06:52,440

Show me again.

131

00:06:52,440 --> 00:06:53,440

Where's it at?

132

00:06:53,440 --> 00:06:56,440

Every time George indicated only on the cancer cells,

133

00:06:56,440 --> 00:06:58,440

he hit every one of them every time, or if there were none,

134

00:06:58,440 --> 00:07:00,440

he never indicated on them.

135

00:07:02,440 --> 00:07:04,440

While you're doing that, we're going to have the dog check here.

136

00:07:04,440 --> 00:07:05,440

We're going to start at the head.

137

00:07:05,440 --> 00:07:08,440

Eddie Messer, a Tallahassee police officer,

138

00:07:08,440 --> 00:07:11,440

also volunteered as a human guinea pig.

139

00:07:11,440 --> 00:07:13,440

A biopsy on a suspicious spot on Eddie's back

140

00:07:13,440 --> 00:07:16,440

had already tested negative for skin cancer.

141

00:07:19,440 --> 00:07:21,440

Let's find this out.

142

00:07:21,440 --> 00:07:24,440

George slowly went over Eddie's body,

143

00:07:24,440 --> 00:07:26,440

checking each bandage thoroughly.

144

00:07:40,440 --> 00:07:43,440

When George reached the suspicious spot,

145

00:07:43,440 --> 00:07:45,440

his nose smelled skin cancer.

146

00:07:45,440 --> 00:07:46,440

Show me.

147

00:07:47,440 --> 00:07:50,440

When George first put his nose to that spot,

148

00:07:50,440 --> 00:07:53,440

it felt a little funny there.

149

00:07:53,440 --> 00:07:57,440

But knowing and being in the background that I've been in,

150

00:07:57,440 --> 00:08:01,440

and working with dogs at the airport and what have you,

151

00:08:01,440 --> 00:08:04,440

it makes you think there, maybe he knows what he's talking about.

152

00:08:07,440 --> 00:08:09,440

For a second opinion,

153

00:08:09,440 --> 00:08:12,440

Duane's partner Glenda Manuse brought in her cancer-trained

154

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

dog, Breeze.

155

00:08:15,440 --> 00:08:17,440

Breeze confirmed George's diagnosis.

156

00:08:17,440 --> 00:08:19,440

Eddie had a second biopsy.

157

00:08:19,440 --> 00:08:21,440

It was still negative.

158

00:08:21,440 --> 00:08:23,440

Duane was sure it was wrong.

159

00:08:23,440 --> 00:08:26,440

They called me and said, well, the spot came back negative.

160

00:08:26,440 --> 00:08:27,440

I said, I'm very sorry.

161

00:08:27,440 --> 00:08:29,440

My dog said it's melanoma.

162

00:08:29,440 --> 00:08:30,440

It's melanoma.

163

00:08:30,440 --> 00:08:33,440

So then they took off the whole lesion,

164

00:08:33,440 --> 00:08:36,440

and they froze it, and they sent it to a lab in Cleveland.

165

00:08:36,440 --> 00:08:39,440

They shaved it, just one little stroke at a time.

166

00:08:39,440 --> 00:08:41,440

It actually took four and a half days later

167

00:08:41,440 --> 00:08:45,440

before they found that there was a spot in the middle of that lesion

168

00:08:45,440 --> 00:08:48,440

that was amelanomic level three.

169

00:08:50,440 --> 00:08:52,440

If it hadn't been for the dog,

170

00:08:52,440 --> 00:08:55,440

if it hadn't been for this pathologist checking on this one spot

171

00:08:55,440 --> 00:08:57,440

for four and a half days and finding yes,

172

00:08:57,440 --> 00:08:59,440

proving the dog was right.

173

00:08:59,440 --> 00:09:02,440

In a couple of years, it could have been B. Ron Repair.

174

00:09:02,440 --> 00:09:06,440

But now we found it early enough so that it is repairable.

175

00:09:06,440 --> 00:09:08,440

And that you're going to do fine.

176

00:09:08,440 --> 00:09:10,440

This could lead to some exciting research

177

00:09:10,440 --> 00:09:13,440

finding out what is it that the dog's smelling,

178

00:09:13,440 --> 00:09:15,440

and that that may lead to blood tests

179

00:09:15,440 --> 00:09:18,440

or other tests to find these molecules

180

00:09:18,440 --> 00:09:21,440

as a detection system for cancers.

181

00:09:23,440 --> 00:09:28,440

Coming up, the mysterious case of rock and roll star Kurt Cobain

182

00:09:28,440 --> 00:09:32,440

is there more to his untimely death than suicide?

183

00:09:32,440 --> 00:09:35,440

But first, a judge put him on death row

184

00:09:35,440 --> 00:09:38,440

for the cold-blooded murder of four people,

185

00:09:38,440 --> 00:09:42,440

while an independent lie detector test suggests he may be innocent.

186

00:09:42,440 --> 00:09:45,440

Also, Lou Hinesian joins us from the phone center

187

00:09:45,440 --> 00:09:47,440

with an intriguing update.

188

00:10:02,440 --> 00:10:06,440

You may recall this harrowing scene from a previous broadcast.

189

00:10:08,440 --> 00:10:10,440

Here it is.

190

00:10:27,440 --> 00:10:31,440

The double murder was as mystifying as it was ruthless.

191

00:10:31,440 --> 00:10:34,440

Michele Cartagena and Grant Hendrickson,

192

00:10:34,440 --> 00:10:36,440

two straight-laced, deans-less college students,

193

00:10:36,440 --> 00:10:40,240

had been killed in a barrage of semi-automatic rifle fire.

194

00:10:40,240 --> 00:10:42,640

Michelle's body had been dragged from the car

195

00:10:42,640 --> 00:10:46,040

and her clothing left in disarray.

196

00:10:46,040 --> 00:10:48,720

One eyewitness reported seeing a Honda CRX

197

00:10:48,720 --> 00:10:52,220

near the lakeside park where Grant and Michelle were killed.

198

00:10:52,220 --> 00:10:55,520

Others described a similar car speeding from the area

199

00:10:55,520 --> 00:10:58,820

just after the murders.

200

00:10:58,820 --> 00:11:01,000

At the scene, the only clues were spent

201

00:11:01,000 --> 00:11:04,900

shells from the Colt AR-15 semi-automatic rifle.

202

00:11:04,960 --> 00:11:08,500

To solve the crime, authorities would need a run of luck.

203

00:11:08,500 --> 00:11:13,140

In a classic case of detective work, they made their own.

204

00:11:13,140 --> 00:11:15,880

Keely Shea Smith is still on maternity leave.

205

00:11:15,880 --> 00:11:18,780

Here's Lou Honessian with the tales of the investigation

206

00:11:18,780 --> 00:11:21,180

that cracked the case.

207

00:11:21,180 --> 00:11:22,080

Thanks, Bob.

208

00:11:22,080 --> 00:11:23,780

For nearly two years, investigators

209

00:11:23,780 --> 00:11:26,280

checked the records of every major pawn shop and gun

210

00:11:26,280 --> 00:11:29,260

dealer within 150 miles of Macon, Georgia.

211

00:11:29,260 --> 00:11:31,120

They interviewed every single person

212

00:11:31,120 --> 00:11:34,620

who had sold or pawned a Colt AR-15.

213

00:11:34,680 --> 00:11:37,380

The first 2,000 leads turned out to be dead ends.

214

00:11:37,380 --> 00:11:40,120

Still, they persisted.

215

00:11:40,120 --> 00:11:44,260

One of the agents found some pawn records on an assault

216

00:11:44,260 --> 00:11:47,100

rifle that he was following up.

217

00:11:47,100 --> 00:11:48,800

When he followed up those records,

218

00:11:48,800 --> 00:11:51,460

that's where he located Mr. Andy Cook.

219

00:11:51,460 --> 00:11:54,960

And he, in a routine interview there, interviewed him.

220

00:11:54,960 --> 00:11:58,340

And the suspect acting somewhat suspicious made him want

221

00:11:58,340 --> 00:12:00,340

to follow that up a little further.

222

00:12:00,340 --> 00:12:04,080

And that's how he was developed as a suspect.

223

00:12:04,140 --> 00:12:06,700

The suspect, 22-year-old Andy Cook,

224

00:12:06,700 --> 00:12:09,940

had also owned a Honda CRX, similar to the one

225

00:12:09,940 --> 00:12:11,480

spotted at the scene.

226

00:12:11,480 --> 00:12:13,740

Authorities kept Cook under surveillance.

227

00:12:13,740 --> 00:12:16,340

And within a week, he managed to get himself arrested

228

00:12:16,340 --> 00:12:18,220

on a hunting violation.

229

00:12:18,220 --> 00:12:21,220

Later that day, Cook's father told authorities

230

00:12:21,220 --> 00:12:26,020

his son had confessed to the double murder.

231

00:12:26,020 --> 00:12:28,100

A ballistics test was the clincher.

232

00:12:28,100 --> 00:12:30,060

Police say slugs from Cook's rifle

233

00:12:30,060 --> 00:12:33,060

matched those that had killed Grant Hendrickson and Michelle

234

00:12:33,120 --> 00:12:34,020

Cartagena.

235

00:12:34,020 --> 00:12:59,900

The

236

00:13:04,020 --> 00:13:07,940

For convicted murderers on death row,

237

00:13:07,940 --> 00:13:11,180

it's just a few short steps to eternity.

238

00:13:11,180 --> 00:13:14,700

The electric chair awaits, ready to exact the ultimate price

239

00:13:14,700 --> 00:13:15,780

for the ultimate crime.

240

00:13:18,540 --> 00:13:21,140

Unless his last ditch legal appeal succeeds,

241

00:13:21,140 --> 00:13:23,460

51-year-old Tommy Ziegler will someday

242

00:13:23,460 --> 00:13:26,020

be led from his cell and executed.

243

00:13:26,020 --> 00:13:30,540

Florida's retribution for a savage multiple murder.

244

00:13:30,540 --> 00:13:31,860

I did not kill Eunice.

245

00:13:31,860 --> 00:13:33,580

I did not kill Mr. and Ms. Edwards.

246

00:13:33,580 --> 00:13:35,900

And I did not kill Charlie Mase.

247

00:13:35,900 --> 00:13:37,500

I have not killed anybody.

248

00:13:40,620 --> 00:13:43,260

Tommy Ziegler was wealthy and well-known.

249

00:13:43,260 --> 00:13:45,380

His family owned Ziegler's furniture store

250

00:13:45,380 --> 00:13:48,060

and several apartment buildings in the town of Wintergarden,

251

00:13:48,060 --> 00:13:49,340

Florida.

252

00:13:49,340 --> 00:13:51,820

Ziegler was married, attended church,

253

00:13:51,820 --> 00:13:56,980

called the mayor and chief of police by their first names.

254

00:13:56,980 --> 00:14:00,740

According to prosecutors, it wasn't enough for Tommy Ziegler.

255

00:14:00,740 --> 00:14:03,660

This is a scenario they presented in court.

256

00:14:03,660 --> 00:14:05,340

Ziegler murdered his wife, Eunice,

257

00:14:05,340 --> 00:14:07,660

in the kitchen area of the furniture store

258

00:14:07,660 --> 00:14:10,620

on Christmas Eve in 1975.

259

00:14:10,620 --> 00:14:11,660

His motive?

260

00:14:11,660 --> 00:14:14,060

To turn half a million dollars of life insurance

261

00:14:14,060 --> 00:14:16,660

into cold cash.

262

00:14:16,660 --> 00:14:20,940

My marriage was very good, very sound.

263

00:14:20,940 --> 00:14:23,540

Eunice and I loved each other greatly.

264

00:14:23,540 --> 00:14:25,420

I couldn't kill her.

265

00:14:25,420 --> 00:14:29,220

There's just no way I could kill her.

266

00:14:29,420 --> 00:14:31,020

I loved her.

267

00:14:31,020 --> 00:14:32,220

She was my life.

268

00:14:32,220 --> 00:14:35,820

That was just all there was to it.

269

00:14:35,820 --> 00:14:39,500

The killings didn't stop with Eunice, say prosecutors.

270

00:14:39,500 --> 00:14:41,500

Her parents, Perry, and Virginia Edwards

271

00:14:41,500 --> 00:14:43,220

were also at the store that night.

272

00:14:48,220 --> 00:14:51,300

By pre-arrangement, a customer named Charlie Mase stopped

273

00:14:51,300 --> 00:14:53,540

by to pick up a television set.

274

00:14:53,540 --> 00:14:55,060

Ziegler's plan?

275

00:14:55,060 --> 00:14:57,780

To kill Mase and frame him for robbing the store

276

00:14:57,780 --> 00:14:59,460

and murdering Eunice and her parents.

277

00:15:03,500 --> 00:15:05,780

Mase would be found with store receipts and cash

278

00:15:05,780 --> 00:15:06,940

stuffed in his pockets.

279

00:15:09,940 --> 00:15:13,620

Ziegler entered the blood bath with a final dramatic flourish.

280

00:15:13,620 --> 00:15:16,620

He shot himself in the side to ensure that he, too,

281

00:15:16,620 --> 00:15:17,780

would be seen as a victim.

282

00:15:21,260 --> 00:15:24,260

Prosecutors say they never fell for the charade.

283

00:15:24,260 --> 00:15:25,980

Ziegler was still in the hospital when

284

00:15:25,980 --> 00:15:28,020

he was charged with the killings.

285

00:15:28,020 --> 00:15:31,300

Soon after, he was convicted and condemned to death.

286

00:15:31,300 --> 00:15:33,300

Assistance State Attorney Jeffrey Ashton

287

00:15:33,300 --> 00:15:37,540

will represent Florida if Ziegler is granted an appeal.

288

00:15:37,540 --> 00:15:40,180

I think that Tommy Ziegler will ultimately

289

00:15:40,180 --> 00:15:42,860

die for killing those four people.

290

00:15:42,860 --> 00:15:45,100

And I believe he is the right man to die for it.

291

00:15:45,100 --> 00:15:46,580

And I believe that he will deserve it.

292

00:15:49,300 --> 00:15:51,740

This is how Tommy Ziegler tells it.

293

00:15:51,740 --> 00:15:54,620

He planned to meet Eunice and her parents at the store.

294

00:15:54,620 --> 00:15:57,180

He says he was unaware that they were already dead

295

00:15:57,180 --> 00:16:02,260

when he opened the back door and found the lights not working.

296

00:16:02,260 --> 00:16:05,180

I walked from there into the main showroom through the door

297

00:16:05,180 --> 00:16:06,460

and I was hitting the back of the head.

298

00:16:09,500 --> 00:16:12,540

As I was getting up, there were two blurs coming at me.

299

00:16:12,540 --> 00:16:14,380

One was a shorter stocking man.

300

00:16:14,380 --> 00:16:16,500

One was a big burly man.

301

00:16:20,900 --> 00:16:22,220

I was just being bounced around.

302

00:16:22,220 --> 00:16:23,180

Glass was breaking.

303

00:16:23,180 --> 00:16:25,780

Things were being knocked over and knocked down.

304

00:16:25,780 --> 00:16:29,140

I was thrown back into the hallway.

305

00:16:29,140 --> 00:16:31,500

Ziegler kept large amounts of cash at the store

306

00:16:31,500 --> 00:16:34,540

and carried a handgun for protection.

307

00:16:34,540 --> 00:16:37,620

He believes he may have wounded one of the assailants.

308

00:16:37,620 --> 00:16:42,020

Then he himself was shot in the side.

309

00:16:42,020 --> 00:16:44,060

Before filming this segment, we insisted

310

00:16:44,060 --> 00:16:46,740

that Tommy Ziegler submit to a lie detector test

311

00:16:46,740 --> 00:16:48,900

with no attorneys present.

312

00:16:48,900 --> 00:16:51,780

Ziegler was examined by one of the country's most respected

313

00:16:51,820 --> 00:16:55,340

forensic specialist, John Paul Matier.

314

00:16:55,340 --> 00:16:57,540

After talking to Tommy Ziegler for the period of time

315

00:16:57,540 --> 00:17:00,660

that I did in assessing all of the other information

316

00:17:00,660 --> 00:17:03,380

that I had, it was my professional opinion

317

00:17:03,380 --> 00:17:06,620

that Tommy Ziegler was telling the truth

318

00:17:06,620 --> 00:17:10,980

and that in fact, he had walked into probably

319

00:17:10,980 --> 00:17:13,620

an armed robbery in progress or that

320

00:17:13,620 --> 00:17:19,060

was staged for his benefit and that he was in fact a victim.

321

00:17:19,060 --> 00:17:22,540

Condemned killer Tommy Ziegler won't go quietly.

322

00:17:22,540 --> 00:17:24,900

For more than 20 years, from a hospital bed,

323

00:17:24,900 --> 00:17:27,060

from a courtroom, now from death row,

324

00:17:27,060 --> 00:17:29,820

he is loudly proclaimed as innocence.

325

00:17:29,820 --> 00:17:32,020

Ziegler and his attorneys say they have new evidence

326

00:17:32,020 --> 00:17:33,700

that debunks the prosecution case

327

00:17:33,700 --> 00:17:36,020

and makes liars of its witnesses.

328

00:17:36,020 --> 00:17:38,180

The state stands by the verdict.

329

00:17:38,180 --> 00:17:40,300

Tommy Ziegler is guilty.

330

00:17:40,300 --> 00:17:41,620

His motive?

331

00:17:41,620 --> 00:17:46,900

A life insurance payout of \$500,000.

332

00:17:47,620 --> 00:17:49,980

Tommy, Tommy, Tommy.

333

00:17:49,980 --> 00:17:52,020

On the night of the murder, Ziegler stumbled out

334

00:17:52,020 --> 00:17:54,900

of the store at 9.25.

335

00:17:54,900 --> 00:17:57,300

Minutes earlier, Ziegler had called the police chief

336

00:17:57,300 --> 00:17:59,900

at a private party to report that he'd been shot.

337

00:17:59,900 --> 00:18:01,020

Is anyone here?

338

00:18:01,020 --> 00:18:03,260

Almost immediately, evidence in the store

339

00:18:03,260 --> 00:18:05,180

raised troubling questions.

340

00:18:05,180 --> 00:18:07,100

First, the body of Ziegler's wife, Eunice.

341

00:18:10,380 --> 00:18:14,060

Her oddly unruffled pose, coat on, hand in pocket,

342

00:18:14,060 --> 00:18:18,460

suggested to police that her killer was no stranger.

343

00:18:18,460 --> 00:18:21,980

I think it's very unlikely that any unknown assailant

344

00:18:21,980 --> 00:18:25,460

could get in a position where they could surprise Eunice Ziegler

345

00:18:25,460 --> 00:18:26,740

in that kind of circumstance.

346

00:18:26,740 --> 00:18:28,700

And shoot her in the back of the head

347

00:18:28,700 --> 00:18:31,980

and catch her in that way.

348

00:18:31,980 --> 00:18:34,500

Second problem, blood type.

349

00:18:34,500 --> 00:18:37,740

Ziegler's father-in-law, Perry Edwards, was Type A.

350

00:18:37,740 --> 00:18:40,700

Tommy Ziegler's shirt was stained with a quantity of Type A

351

00:18:40,700 --> 00:18:44,940

blood in addition to his own Type O.

352

00:18:44,940 --> 00:18:46,580

His story didn't account for that

353

00:18:46,580 --> 00:18:49,140

as to how he got someone else's blood on his shirt.

354

00:18:49,140 --> 00:18:52,500

And the blood type matched Perry Edwards,

355

00:18:52,500 --> 00:18:55,060

which would indicate that he was involved in that struggle

356

00:18:55,060 --> 00:18:58,820

with Perry Edwards that resulted in his death.

357

00:18:58,820 --> 00:19:00,940

During the course of his struggle in the store

358

00:19:00,940 --> 00:19:03,820

when Tommy first came in, he was in a fight

359

00:19:03,820 --> 00:19:05,420

with a couple of people.

360

00:19:05,420 --> 00:19:08,060

One of those people he had a struggle with

361

00:19:08,060 --> 00:19:10,260

and was hitting him with a gun.

362

00:19:10,300 --> 00:19:12,020

It would have caused bleeding and it could have

363

00:19:12,020 --> 00:19:13,020

caused the blood there.

364

00:19:16,180 --> 00:19:19,100

Scattered among the bodies were five handguns,

365

00:19:19,100 --> 00:19:21,820

four of them wiped clean of fingerprints.

366

00:19:21,820 --> 00:19:24,140

Two of the guns were inexpensive Saturday night

367

00:19:24,140 --> 00:19:28,420

specials made by a company named RG.

368

00:19:28,420 --> 00:19:29,820

Of the five guns found in the store,

369

00:19:29,820 --> 00:19:34,340

three of them were documented as belonging to Tommy Ziegler.

370

00:19:34,340 --> 00:19:37,620

The other two that were there, which was the cheaper guns,

371

00:19:37,620 --> 00:19:39,740

were not registered to him.

372

00:19:39,740 --> 00:19:42,660

But they were connected to him through another witness.

373

00:19:42,660 --> 00:19:45,100

I bought good high quality guns when I bought guns

374

00:19:45,100 --> 00:19:47,820

and I had good high quality guns.

375

00:19:47,820 --> 00:19:49,980

From what I understand and from what I saw at trial,

376

00:19:49,980 --> 00:19:52,900

those are G's or garbage.

377

00:19:52,900 --> 00:19:54,740

State your name, please.

378

00:19:54,740 --> 00:19:56,180

Felton Thomas, sir.

379

00:19:56,180 --> 00:19:57,900

One of the key witnesses for the state

380

00:19:57,900 --> 00:20:00,060

was a man named Felton Thomas.

381

00:20:00,060 --> 00:20:01,900

Thomas was a friend of Charlie May's,

382

00:20:01,900 --> 00:20:03,900

one of the four victims.

383

00:20:03,900 --> 00:20:05,460

Tommy Ziegler says, you count, you're

384

00:20:05,460 --> 00:20:08,700

about to hear as a total fabrication start to finish.

385

00:20:08,740 --> 00:20:10,140

You went to Furniture Store.

386

00:20:10,140 --> 00:20:13,660

About what time did you get to the Furniture Store?

387

00:20:13,660 --> 00:20:16,260

Felton Thomas testified that on the night of the murders,

388

00:20:16,260 --> 00:20:18,540

he had gone to Ziegler's store with Charlie May's.

389

00:20:18,540 --> 00:20:19,940

Oh, sorry I'm late.

390

00:20:19,940 --> 00:20:21,260

Oh, that's all right.

391

00:20:21,260 --> 00:20:23,100

Hey, this is Felton Thomas.

392

00:20:23,100 --> 00:20:24,980

He come to help to get the TV set.

393

00:20:24,980 --> 00:20:26,660

Listen, the guy with the keys isn't here yet.

394

00:20:26,660 --> 00:20:29,300

But while we're waiting for him, why don't we take a ride?

395

00:20:29,300 --> 00:20:31,700

I got something I want to show you.

396

00:20:31,700 --> 00:20:32,600

All right.

397

00:20:32,600 --> 00:20:34,580

All right, come on, Felton.

398

00:20:34,580 --> 00:20:37,140

Thomas told the court that Ziegler took them to a nearby

399

00:20:37,180 --> 00:20:40,980

orange grove to show off some new guns.

400

00:20:40,980 --> 00:20:42,380

Smooth, clean action.

401

00:20:42,380 --> 00:20:43,280

Yeah.

402

00:20:43,280 --> 00:20:44,780

All right, I'm going to step out and fire all the stuff.

403

00:20:44,780 --> 00:20:45,700

No, no, no, no, no, no.

404

00:20:45,700 --> 00:20:47,500

Right here.

405

00:20:47,500 --> 00:20:49,460

Just do it for the window.

406

00:20:49,460 --> 00:20:51,420

Prosecutors charged as Ziegler's plan

407

00:20:51,420 --> 00:20:54,540

was to taint Thomas and May's with gunshot residue

408

00:20:54,540 --> 00:20:58,420

and taint the weapons with their fingerprints.

409

00:20:58,420 --> 00:21:02,180

If, in fact, that was his purpose for doing that,

410

00:21:02,180 --> 00:21:04,820

so that he could set up Charlie May's and Felton Thomas

411

00:21:04,860 --> 00:21:07,020

and have their prints on the guns,

412

00:21:07,020 --> 00:21:10,140

why were all of the guns wiped clean?

413

00:21:10,140 --> 00:21:12,220

What happened later at the store?

414

00:21:12,220 --> 00:21:13,660

May told Ziegler he'd go around and get it.

415

00:21:13,660 --> 00:21:15,980

Thomas testified that once back at the store,

416

00:21:15,980 --> 00:21:18,180

Ziegler asked him to kill the power.

417

00:21:18,180 --> 00:21:19,700

Thomas complied.

418

00:21:19,700 --> 00:21:20,600

You sure about that?

419

00:21:20,600 --> 00:21:21,500

Yeah, pull it down.

420

00:21:21,500 --> 00:21:22,100

All right.

421

00:21:22,100 --> 00:21:24,900

Ziegler then made a more startling proposal.

422

00:21:24,900 --> 00:21:26,460

Break in.

423

00:21:26,460 --> 00:21:27,620

Come on.

424

00:21:27,620 --> 00:21:28,860

OK, Charlie.

425

00:21:28,860 --> 00:21:32,260

Pick yourself up a piece of pipe and help us out.

426

00:21:32,260 --> 00:21:35,540

To prosecutors, it was all part of Ziegler's plan.

427

00:21:35,540 --> 00:21:38,260

Create evidence of a robbery to explain the murders

428

00:21:38,260 --> 00:21:39,540

of Eunice and her parents.

429

00:21:39,540 --> 00:21:40,860

Oh, I ain't doing it.

430

00:21:40,860 --> 00:21:44,180

All right, well, maybe I've got an extra key back home.

431

00:21:44,180 --> 00:21:46,740

Why don't we go and pick it up?

432

00:21:46,740 --> 00:21:47,660

I don't want time to do that.

433

00:21:47,660 --> 00:21:50,140

Thomas told the court that they next drove to Ziegler's house

434

00:21:50,140 --> 00:21:51,460

for the key.

435

00:21:51,460 --> 00:21:52,900

Then they went back to the store.

436

00:21:56,900 --> 00:21:59,580

Felton, you going to come in and help us with the TV?

437

00:21:59,580 --> 00:22:04,940

According to Thomas, Maze and Ziegler went inside and he left.

438

00:22:04,940 --> 00:22:07,700

Prosecutors say that once inside the store,

439

00:22:07,700 --> 00:22:08,820

Ziegler killed Maze.

440

00:22:11,620 --> 00:22:15,060

The defense completely dismisses Thomas' account.

441

00:22:15,060 --> 00:22:17,740

To begin with, they claim his entire scenario

442

00:22:17,740 --> 00:22:20,340

would have to occur in less than 21 minutes.

443

00:22:20,340 --> 00:22:21,940

We get out of this box.

444

00:22:21,940 --> 00:22:24,220

Felton Thomas is a joke.

445

00:22:24,220 --> 00:22:26,620

I have no idea why Felton Thomas would make up

446

00:22:26,620 --> 00:22:28,100

a story like that.

447

00:22:28,100 --> 00:22:31,140

I had never laid eyes on him until he walked in that courtroom

448

00:22:31,140 --> 00:22:32,060

to testify against me.

449

00:22:35,900 --> 00:22:37,420

Another key witness for the state

450

00:22:37,420 --> 00:22:40,420

was Ed Williams, who had known and worked for the Ziegler family

451

00:22:40,420 --> 00:22:44,220

during the previous 10 years.

452

00:22:44,220 --> 00:22:46,300

Williams testified that on the night of the murder,

453

00:22:46,300 --> 00:22:48,500

Ziegler gave him a handgun.

454

00:22:48,500 --> 00:22:50,540

Later that night, Williams turned the weapon over

455

00:22:50,540 --> 00:22:53,060

to authorities.

456

00:22:53,060 --> 00:22:55,740

Holistic's test would reveal that bullets from that gun

457

00:22:55,740 --> 00:22:57,540

killed Perry and Virginia Edwards.

458

00:23:01,100 --> 00:23:04,380

Edward Williams in the last 20 years, as far as we know,

459

00:23:04,380 --> 00:23:06,100

has been an upstanding citizen.

460

00:23:06,100 --> 00:23:08,540

Hasn't done anything wrong.

461

00:23:08,540 --> 00:23:12,460

And there's no reason not to believe Edward Williams.

462

00:23:12,460 --> 00:23:14,780

However, Ziegler testified that the gun in question

463

00:23:14,780 --> 00:23:18,500

had been taken from his truck two weeks before the murders.

464

00:23:18,500 --> 00:23:21,780

Among those who had ready access to the vehicle was Ed Williams.

465

00:23:22,300 --> 00:23:24,780

A witness also linked Williams to the weapon that killed

466

00:23:24,780 --> 00:23:26,900

Eunice Ziegler, one of the Saturday night

467

00:23:26,900 --> 00:23:28,300

specials found at the scene.

468

00:23:31,900 --> 00:23:34,060

The witness, called by the prosecution,

469

00:23:34,060 --> 00:23:37,860

testified that he had purchased the two guns for Tommy Ziegler.

470

00:23:37,860 --> 00:23:41,500

However, he admitted they had never met face to face.

471

00:23:41,500 --> 00:23:44,420

The deal had actually been made through an intermediary,

472

00:23:44,420 --> 00:23:48,060

identified by the witness as Ed Williams.

473

00:23:48,140 --> 00:23:51,220

Edward Williams is, in fact, the one that purchased the two

474

00:23:51,220 --> 00:23:54,300

Saturday night specials that did the killing.

475

00:23:54,300 --> 00:23:57,420

And the only person that was found with a murder weapon

476

00:23:57,420 --> 00:24:00,020

on him was Edward Williams.

477

00:24:00,020 --> 00:24:03,620

They are all directly traceable to Edward Williams,

478

00:24:03,620 --> 00:24:06,260

not to Tommy Ziegler.

479

00:24:06,260 --> 00:24:08,900

It was not just the witnesses who took the stand that

480

00:24:08,900 --> 00:24:10,900

troubles Ziegler and his attorneys.

481

00:24:10,900 --> 00:24:14,220

It was also those who were never called.

482

00:24:14,220 --> 00:24:16,140

The defense court, who was the witness,

483

00:24:17,140 --> 00:24:20,020

the defense claims that two people verify Ziegler's

484

00:24:20,020 --> 00:24:25,420

contention that unidentified individuals had been at the store.

485

00:24:25,420 --> 00:24:29,100

A husband and wife reported to the sheriff's department

486

00:24:29,100 --> 00:24:31,860

that they had been driving by the Ziegler furniture store

487

00:24:31,860 --> 00:24:35,980

on the night of the crime, and that they had seen four cars,

488

00:24:35,980 --> 00:24:38,020

not two as the state had contended,

489

00:24:38,020 --> 00:24:41,380

outside the furniture store, including a white Cadillac,

490

00:24:41,380 --> 00:24:43,900

all of which is completely inconsistent with the state's

491

00:24:43,900 --> 00:24:45,420

version of events.

492

00:24:45,420 --> 00:24:49,300

In addition, they saw a man who generally fit the description

493

00:24:49,300 --> 00:24:53,300

of Charlie Mays, who we believe was one of the perpetrators.

494

00:24:53,300 --> 00:24:56,300

And none of that was reported to the court.

495

00:24:56,300 --> 00:24:58,260

None of it was presented to the jury.

496

00:24:58,260 --> 00:25:01,220

And none of it was reported to the trial lawyers

497

00:25:01,220 --> 00:25:02,820

for Mr. Ziegler.

498

00:25:02,820 --> 00:25:04,460

Any witness who comes by and claims

499

00:25:04,460 --> 00:25:07,060

to be an eye or ear witness at the time of a murder

500

00:25:07,060 --> 00:25:08,540

is going to be interviewed.

501

00:25:08,540 --> 00:25:10,660

Is going to be a statement is going to be taken.

502

00:25:10,660 --> 00:25:12,660

So I think they're claimed that they went by the police

503

00:25:12,700 --> 00:25:16,660

department to talk about the case is not very credible.

504

00:25:20,460 --> 00:25:22,260

Ziegler's trial lasted four weeks

505

00:25:22,260 --> 00:25:25,620

and filled nearly 3,000 pages of transcripts.

506

00:25:25,620 --> 00:25:28,220

In the end, the jury voted to convict.

507

00:25:28,220 --> 00:25:31,180

They recommended life in prison, but they were overruled

508

00:25:31,180 --> 00:25:33,660

by Judge Maurice Paul.

509

00:25:33,660 --> 00:25:35,380

Notwithstanding the recommendation

510

00:25:35,380 --> 00:25:39,540

of a majority of the jury, it is the sentence of the law

511

00:25:39,540 --> 00:25:43,220

and the judgment of this court that you, William Thomas

512

00:25:43,220 --> 00:25:46,260

Ziegler, Jr. shall be put to death

513

00:25:46,260 --> 00:25:47,940

by means of elect procution.

514

00:25:47,940 --> 00:25:51,580

Nobody in their right mind can look at that trial transcript

515

00:25:51,580 --> 00:25:54,940

can say that there was a fair trial in Ziegler versus State.

516

00:25:54,940 --> 00:25:56,740

It was a railroad from day one.

517

00:25:59,820 --> 00:26:01,860

And Judge Paul orchestrated the whole thing.

518

00:26:04,780 --> 00:26:07,380

Ziegler believes Judge Paul had held a grudge against him

519

00:26:07,380 --> 00:26:09,620

since they testified for opposing sides

520

00:26:09,620 --> 00:26:12,700

on a better legal dispute.

521

00:26:12,700 --> 00:26:16,500

Within months thereafter, Tommy Ziegler

522

00:26:16,500 --> 00:26:19,620

was standing at the defendants table accused of murder.

523

00:26:19,620 --> 00:26:23,900

And Judge Paul was sitting on the bench making decisions

524

00:26:23,900 --> 00:26:25,700

that would affect his life.

525

00:26:25,700 --> 00:26:30,060

Judge Maurice Paul was a very respected member

526

00:26:30,060 --> 00:26:32,660

of the judiciary of Orange County.

527

00:26:32,660 --> 00:26:35,900

He is now a federal district court judge up

528

00:26:35,900 --> 00:26:37,420

in northern part of Florida.

529

00:26:37,420 --> 00:26:39,660

And his reputation and ethics have never

530

00:26:39,660 --> 00:26:40,660

been subject to question.

531

00:26:40,660 --> 00:26:43,100

No one has even ever alleged he has anything

532

00:26:43,100 --> 00:26:45,140

other than an honest man.

533

00:26:45,140 --> 00:26:48,540

Nothing that I've heard the defense claiming outside

534

00:26:48,540 --> 00:26:52,940

of court in books or on TV is in any way convincing

535

00:26:52,940 --> 00:26:54,860

once you analyze it.

536

00:26:54,860 --> 00:26:56,500

Once you analyze all of their claims,

537

00:26:56,500 --> 00:26:58,100

you see that they really are nothing.

538

00:27:00,940 --> 00:27:05,300

On May 19, 1986, Ziegler stood at the precipice.

539

00:27:05,300 --> 00:27:08,100

Less than 24 hours remained before he would face

540

00:27:08,100 --> 00:27:10,620

the electric chair.

541

00:27:10,620 --> 00:27:13,140

Then a federal court granted a stay.

542

00:27:13,140 --> 00:27:15,260

Ziegler filed an appeal.

543

00:27:15,260 --> 00:27:19,020

In 1987, his attorneys used Florida's Freedom of Information

544

00:27:19,020 --> 00:27:21,940

Act to open up the prosecution files.

545

00:27:21,940 --> 00:27:24,060

They found previously undisclosed evidence.

546

00:27:26,740 --> 00:27:29,860

You're about to hear excerpts of a tape recorded conversation

547

00:27:29,860 --> 00:27:31,820

between a prosecution investigator

548

00:27:31,820 --> 00:27:33,820

and an apparent witness.

549

00:27:33,820 --> 00:27:35,780

The young man was staying at this motel

550

00:27:35,780 --> 00:27:37,460

on the night of the murders.

551

00:27:37,460 --> 00:27:41,940

His room faced the back of Ziegler's store.

552

00:27:41,940 --> 00:27:45,180

The man said that at about 8.30 he saw a policeman,

553

00:27:45,180 --> 00:27:49,100

service revolver drawn, hunkered down behind the store.

554

00:27:49,100 --> 00:27:53,180

Around 9, he heard shots.

555

00:27:53,180 --> 00:27:56,860

This is obviously significant because if it was at 9 o'clock,

556

00:27:56,860 --> 00:28:00,820

this was 20 minutes at least before the time Tommy

557

00:28:00,820 --> 00:28:03,300

called for help.

558

00:28:03,300 --> 00:28:06,340

It would mean that Tommy would have been in the store

559

00:28:06,340 --> 00:28:07,700

at this time.

560

00:28:07,700 --> 00:28:10,500

And if there was a policeman outside with his gun drawn

561

00:28:10,500 --> 00:28:12,980

and there were shots going off, then the police

562

00:28:12,980 --> 00:28:15,140

had to have been involved.

563

00:28:15,140 --> 00:28:19,020

It appears to have shots being fired after the police arrived,

564

00:28:19,020 --> 00:28:22,220

which clearly couldn't be related to the murder.

565

00:28:22,220 --> 00:28:24,820

Maybe some sound that sounded like a gunshot.

566

00:28:24,820 --> 00:28:28,460

So the information itself is meaningless.

567

00:28:28,460 --> 00:28:30,540

Was a police officer involved?

568

00:28:30,540 --> 00:28:32,300

We may never know.

569

00:28:32,300 --> 00:28:34,780

The prosecution did not inform Ziegler's attorneys

570

00:28:34,780 --> 00:28:37,220

of this account, nor did they call the witness

571

00:28:37,220 --> 00:28:39,980

to testify at the trial.

572

00:28:39,980 --> 00:28:43,300

No, as long as you heard the gunshots after you saw

573

00:28:43,300 --> 00:28:46,060

the police cars, that wouldn't help us a bit.

574

00:28:48,980 --> 00:28:51,940

Today, Tommy Ziegler is asking for a new trial in which

575

00:28:51,940 --> 00:28:54,140

a new judge and jury can listen to the tape

576

00:28:54,140 --> 00:28:56,300

and review all the evidence.

577

00:28:56,300 --> 00:28:59,220

A ruling on Ziegler's appeal is still pending.

578

00:28:59,220 --> 00:29:01,380

Of course, the question remains.

579

00:29:01,420 --> 00:29:04,140

Even if Tommy Ziegler wins another day in court,

580

00:29:04,140 --> 00:29:05,900

will the verdict be any different?

581

00:29:19,300 --> 00:29:23,180

Next, when rock and roll singer Kurt Cobain committed suicide,

582

00:29:23,180 --> 00:29:25,140

few questioned the official ruling.

583

00:29:25,140 --> 00:29:27,060

But private investigator Tom Grant

584

00:29:27,060 --> 00:29:29,580

is convinced that the truth about Cobain's death

585

00:29:29,580 --> 00:29:30,740

has yet to be revealed.

586

00:29:45,460 --> 00:29:47,780

April 8, 1994.

587

00:29:47,780 --> 00:29:50,020

Music fans worldwide were horrified

588

00:29:50,020 --> 00:29:53,060

to learn of the tragic death of reluctant rock star Kurt

589

00:29:53,060 --> 00:29:55,020

Cobain.

590

00:29:55,020 --> 00:29:56,860

Cobain's body was found in a room

591

00:29:56,860 --> 00:29:59,900

above the garage of a Seattle, Washington home.

592

00:29:59,900 --> 00:30:02,500

He had apparently taken a large dose of heroin

593

00:30:02,500 --> 00:30:04,100

and killed himself with a shotgun.

594

00:30:08,060 --> 00:30:11,820

Even as the morning commenced, rumors began to circulate.

595

00:30:11,820 --> 00:30:14,580

What if Kurt Cobain did not kill himself?

596

00:30:14,580 --> 00:30:17,580

What if Kurt Cobain was murdered?

597

00:30:17,580 --> 00:30:19,900

One private investigator who's been on the case

598

00:30:19,900 --> 00:30:24,900

from the very beginning believes the official ruling is wrong.

599

00:30:24,900 --> 00:30:27,820

I don't believe Kurt Cobain committed suicide.

600

00:30:27,820 --> 00:30:30,780

I believe there was someone with him in that room.

601

00:30:30,780 --> 00:30:32,980

I believe it was someone that he knew.

602

00:30:32,980 --> 00:30:35,100

They were doing heroin together.

603

00:30:35,100 --> 00:30:38,700

I believe at a certain point, more heroin

604

00:30:38,700 --> 00:30:41,860

was injected into Kurt Cobain than what he wanted injected

605

00:30:41,860 --> 00:30:43,780

into himself.

606

00:30:43,780 --> 00:30:46,820

And after that point, he was shot with a shotgun

607

00:30:46,820 --> 00:30:50,860

once he had become totally incapacitated.

608

00:30:50,860 --> 00:30:53,780

Our detectives actually went into this investigation

609

00:30:53,780 --> 00:30:56,820

on the premise that this was a homicide.

610

00:30:56,820 --> 00:30:59,380

That's the way they conducted this investigation,

611

00:30:59,380 --> 00:31:02,260

so that there was a very thorough, comprehensive

612

00:31:02,260 --> 00:31:04,980

investigation done from the very beginning.

613

00:31:04,980 --> 00:31:09,100

And everything that the detectives encountered

614

00:31:09,100 --> 00:31:11,780

indicated to them that this was a suicide.

615

00:31:11,780 --> 00:31:15,180

We actually found nothing to indicate

616

00:31:15,180 --> 00:31:17,660

that this was anything but a suicide.

617

00:31:21,060 --> 00:31:23,460

Kurt Cobain was a lead singer and creative force

618

00:31:23,460 --> 00:31:27,980

for Nirvana, a wildly popular grunge rock band.

619

00:31:27,980 --> 00:31:33,300

But Cobain also made headlines for his drug-addicted lifestyle.

620

00:31:33,300 --> 00:31:36,980

This photograph was taken on March 4, 1994,

621

00:31:36,980 --> 00:31:40,780

as Cobain was being rushed to a hospital in Rome, Italy.

622

00:31:40,780 --> 00:31:45,740

He had overdosed on sedatives and alcohol and nearly died.

623

00:31:45,740 --> 00:31:48,780

Three weeks later, on March 30, family and friends

624

00:31:48,780 --> 00:31:51,980

persuaded Cobain to check into the Exodus Recovery Center

625

00:31:51,980 --> 00:31:55,780

in Marina del Rey, California.

626

00:31:55,780 --> 00:31:57,820

But in less than 48 hours, Cobain

627

00:31:57,820 --> 00:32:01,660

walked out and took a late night flight back to Seattle.

628

00:32:01,660 --> 00:32:04,620

A limo driver dropped Cobain off at his home,

629

00:32:04,620 --> 00:32:06,860

where his daughter's male nanny saw him on the morning

630

00:32:06,860 --> 00:32:10,180

of April 2.

631

00:32:10,180 --> 00:32:13,900

The next day, Cobain's wife, fellow rocker Courtney Love,

632

00:32:13,900 --> 00:32:17,200

is said to have contacted Tom Grant, a Los Angeles-based

633

00:32:17,200 --> 00:32:20,100

private investigator and former LA County Sheriff's

634

00:32:20,100 --> 00:32:22,380

Deputy.

635

00:32:22,380 --> 00:32:25,900

Grant claims he met with Love at a Beverly Hills hotel.

636

00:32:25,900 --> 00:32:28,300

He also says she did not mention that Cobain had been

637

00:32:28,300 --> 00:32:32,500

seen at their Seattle home the day before.

638

00:32:32,500 --> 00:32:37,460

We set up a surveillance in Seattle on a couple of locations.

639

00:32:37,460 --> 00:32:40,620

And we were attempting to locate Kurt

640

00:32:40,620 --> 00:32:44,100

and try to determine what he was doing, where he was,

641

00:32:44,100 --> 00:32:45,500

where he was going.

642

00:32:45,500 --> 00:32:47,860

Courtney asked us, of course, not to contact him,

643

00:32:47,860 --> 00:32:49,340

not to make any contact with him,

644

00:32:49,340 --> 00:32:53,900

just to report back where he was and what was going on.

645

00:32:53,900 --> 00:32:57,740

When the surveillance failed, Grant himself flew to Seattle.

646

00:32:57,740 --> 00:33:01,300

He claims he and one of Cobain's friends began searching.

647

00:33:01,300 --> 00:33:03,740

They checked Cobain's usual hangouts.

648

00:33:03,740 --> 00:33:06,780

Then about 2 AM on April 7, Grant says

649

00:33:06,780 --> 00:33:09,580

they went to Cobain's house.

650

00:33:09,580 --> 00:33:12,380

And we searched the entire interior of the house,

651

00:33:12,380 --> 00:33:15,740

the basement, the living room, the upstairs, the attic.

652

00:33:15,740 --> 00:33:18,460

We looked all through the house for Kurt.

653

00:33:18,460 --> 00:33:20,340

His friend, when we went in the house,

654

00:33:20,340 --> 00:33:22,820

made a comment that he'd never seen the house as clean before.

655

00:33:22,820 --> 00:33:28,780

Apparently, it's never been that straightened up.

656

00:33:28,780 --> 00:33:30,900

We didn't locate Kurt.

657

00:33:30,900 --> 00:33:33,940

We didn't see any indication that he had been at the house.

658

00:33:33,940 --> 00:33:35,900

And about this location right here.

659

00:33:35,900 --> 00:33:39,260

Some 20 hours later, Tom Grant says he and Cobain's friend

660

00:33:39,260 --> 00:33:41,380

searched the house again.

661

00:33:41,380 --> 00:33:43,700

This time, Grant claims they found a note left

662

00:33:43,700 --> 00:33:46,660

for Cobain by the male nanny.

663

00:33:46,660 --> 00:33:49,340

The first line of the note started off, Kurt,

664

00:33:49,340 --> 00:33:51,660

I can't believe you managed to be in this house without me

665

00:33:51,660 --> 00:33:54,020

knowing.

666

00:33:54,020 --> 00:33:57,580

We searched the entire interior of the residence once again

667

00:33:57,580 --> 00:33:59,660

for any evidence that Kurt might have been there the night

668

00:33:59,660 --> 00:34:03,820

before, or since we had left the location the first time.

669

00:34:03,820 --> 00:34:06,740

And we found no evidence that he had been there.

670

00:34:06,740 --> 00:34:08,900

The next day, an electrician discovered

671

00:34:08,900 --> 00:34:11,100

Cobain's body in a room above the garage

672

00:34:11,100 --> 00:34:12,580

known as the greenhouse.

673

00:34:12,580 --> 00:34:16,620

The only place Grant says he and Cobain's friend did not check.

674

00:34:16,620 --> 00:34:19,300

According to Grant, he was never told about the room,

675

00:34:19,300 --> 00:34:22,420

and it was too dark to see it.

676

00:34:22,420 --> 00:34:23,860

It just really seemed strange to me

677

00:34:23,860 --> 00:34:26,100

that the one place in that entire property

678

00:34:26,100 --> 00:34:30,460

that we didn't search was a place that I was never told about.

679

00:34:30,460 --> 00:34:32,780

And of course, the medical examiner later

680

00:34:32,780 --> 00:34:34,340

determined that Kurt had been laying up there

681

00:34:34,340 --> 00:34:36,180

dead for several days.

682

00:34:36,180 --> 00:34:37,900

So while we were searching the main house,

683

00:34:37,900 --> 00:34:42,140

Kurt Cobain was lying dead up above the garage.

684

00:34:42,140 --> 00:34:45,740

This is a diagram of Tom Grant's depiction of the death scene,

685

00:34:45,740 --> 00:34:48,820

the 20-gauge shotgun was still cradled across Kurt Cobain's

686

00:34:48,820 --> 00:34:49,780

body.

687

00:34:49,780 --> 00:34:53,300

His heroin kit was at his side, and a note apparently written

688

00:34:53,300 --> 00:34:56,220

by Cobain was in plain sight.

689

00:34:56,220 --> 00:34:58,260

The first officers to arrive at the house

690

00:34:58,260 --> 00:35:02,420

reported that they were on the scene of a suicide.

691

00:35:02,420 --> 00:35:05,700

I contacted the police the day the body was found.

692

00:35:05,700 --> 00:35:08,060

I attempted on the telephone to get them

693

00:35:08,060 --> 00:35:11,500

to slow down a little bit.

694

00:35:11,500 --> 00:35:14,220

I indicated I felt something was wrong.

695

00:35:14,220 --> 00:35:15,860

They basically told me on the phone, hey,

696

00:35:15,860 --> 00:35:19,980

we know a suicide when we see a suicide.

697

00:35:19,980 --> 00:35:22,500

Tom Grant strongly disagrees and believes

698

00:35:22,500 --> 00:35:25,740

he has found a number of notable inconsistencies.

699

00:35:25,740 --> 00:35:28,260

Item number one, according to Grant,

700

00:35:28,260 --> 00:35:31,380

Kurt Cobain carried only one credit card.

701

00:35:31,380 --> 00:35:33,780

Courtney Leved reportedly canceled that card

702

00:35:33,780 --> 00:35:38,420

shortly after Cobain left the drug rehab in California.

703

00:35:38,420 --> 00:35:41,860

Now, Courtney told me that she had stopped this credit card

704

00:35:41,860 --> 00:35:45,380

so that she could track Kurt's activities as he attempted

705

00:35:45,380 --> 00:35:47,180

to use the credit card.

706

00:35:47,180 --> 00:35:49,860

In actuality, stopping the credit card

707

00:35:49,860 --> 00:35:52,300

is what made it more difficult.

708

00:35:52,300 --> 00:35:54,300

After the credit card was canceled,

709

00:35:54,300 --> 00:35:57,220

the bank apparently recorded only the dates, the amounts,

710

00:35:57,220 --> 00:36:00,300

and generic information, not where the attempts were

711

00:36:00,300 --> 00:36:03,100

made to use the card.

712

00:36:03,100 --> 00:36:06,140

There was an attempt made on April 6th

713

00:36:06,140 --> 00:36:09,060

in an amount of over \$1,500.

714

00:36:09,060 --> 00:36:12,660

There was another attempt made on April 8th, which was Friday,

715

00:36:12,660 --> 00:36:16,980

the day the body was found, for an amount of \$43.

716

00:36:16,980 --> 00:36:19,500

Now, according to the medical examiner,

717

00:36:19,500 --> 00:36:26,020

Kurt had died sometime on April 5th, the previous Tuesday.

718

00:36:26,020 --> 00:36:29,020

Who was using the credit card?

719

00:36:29,020 --> 00:36:31,980

The information we've been able to receive from the bank

720

00:36:31,980 --> 00:36:34,940

has only been able to identify for us

721

00:36:34,940 --> 00:36:39,180

when the information was logged onto their mainframe computer

722

00:36:39,180 --> 00:36:42,780

and not specifically when the attempt was made or who it

723

00:36:42,780 --> 00:36:45,140

was made by.

724

00:36:45,140 --> 00:36:46,980

Now, after the body was discovered, of course,

725

00:36:46,980 --> 00:36:50,380

the police searched Kurt's property.

726

00:36:50,380 --> 00:36:52,420

Two other cards were found in the wallet,

727

00:36:52,420 --> 00:36:56,380

but the actual credit card that Courtney had canceled,

728

00:36:56,380 --> 00:36:58,660

the same card that someone was attempting

729

00:36:58,660 --> 00:37:02,100

to use after we now know Kurt was already did,

730

00:37:02,100 --> 00:37:06,580

was not found in Kurt's property.

731

00:37:06,580 --> 00:37:09,360

Item number two, the autopsy reportedly

732

00:37:09,360 --> 00:37:12,000

showed Kurt Cobain's blood contained a tranquilizer,

733

00:37:12,000 --> 00:37:14,380

diazepam, and heroin.

734

00:37:14,380 --> 00:37:17,500

According to Tom Grant in published news articles,

735

00:37:17,500 --> 00:37:21,220

the level was 1.52 milligrams per liter.

736

00:37:21,220 --> 00:37:23,780

Some medical experts say that much heroin

737

00:37:23,780 --> 00:37:27,900

could kill a non-addict three times over.

738

00:37:27,900 --> 00:37:31,900

Could he, with that much heroin and diazepam in his system,

739

00:37:31,940 --> 00:37:34,780

could he even pick up that shotgun?

740

00:37:34,780 --> 00:37:38,860

Wouldn't he be incapacitated within seconds?

741

00:37:38,860 --> 00:37:44,100

For most people, including addicts, 1.52 milligrams

742

00:37:44,100 --> 00:37:48,540

per liter of morphine is a significant level.

743

00:37:48,540 --> 00:37:51,820

And for most of them, the great percentage,

744

00:37:51,820 --> 00:37:56,740

it will be a level that will induce a state of unconsciousness

745

00:37:56,740 --> 00:38:01,220

quite quickly, talking about seconds, not minutes.

746

00:38:01,260 --> 00:38:04,700

Cyril Wecht is a nationally known forensic pathologist.

747

00:38:04,700 --> 00:38:07,540

Even though he hasn't seen the autopsy report,

748

00:38:07,540 --> 00:38:10,420

Wecht believes a suicide ruling is correct.

749

00:38:10,420 --> 00:38:14,460

However, he does find the high level of heroin intriguing.

750

00:38:14,460 --> 00:38:17,740

I just cannot tell you that it would have been impossible

751

00:38:17,740 --> 00:38:22,100

for him to have shot himself because it was found

752

00:38:22,100 --> 00:38:27,260

that he had a level of 1.52 milligrams per liter of morphine

753

00:38:27,260 --> 00:38:29,620

at the postmortem examination.

754

00:38:29,620 --> 00:38:33,260

It's certainly within the realm of possibility,

755

00:38:33,260 --> 00:38:37,860

but it does raise a question as to whether or not

756

00:38:37,860 --> 00:38:40,740

he shot that shotgun.

757

00:38:40,740 --> 00:38:44,020

Dr. Donald Ray, chief medical examiner of King County,

758

00:38:44,020 --> 00:38:46,460

inspected Cobain's body at the scene.

759

00:38:46,460 --> 00:38:50,820

He does not find Cobain's heroin intake problematic.

760

00:38:50,820 --> 00:38:52,300

It's really an issue of tolerance.

761

00:38:52,300 --> 00:38:53,700

How much is this person used to?

762

00:38:53,700 --> 00:38:57,620

If a person has gradually, over months or years,

763

00:38:57,660 --> 00:39:03,260

increased the dose, a person could function

764

00:39:03,260 --> 00:39:08,020

with that amount of drugs, narcotics, or whatever it is

765

00:39:08,020 --> 00:39:08,940

present in the system.

766

00:39:08,940 --> 00:39:12,940

Again, so much of it depends upon individual tolerance

767

00:39:12,940 --> 00:39:15,220

over a period of time.

768

00:39:15,220 --> 00:39:18,580

Item number three, police have checked the shotgun,

769

00:39:18,580 --> 00:39:20,540

the shotgun shells, and the pen used

770

00:39:20,540 --> 00:39:23,260

to write the suicide note for fingerprints.

771

00:39:23,260 --> 00:39:26,620

There were no legible prints on any of them.

772

00:39:26,700 --> 00:39:28,100

I think it's clear that anyone who

773

00:39:28,100 --> 00:39:31,060

is familiar with firearms and their use

774

00:39:31,060 --> 00:39:34,620

would know that as they hold a weapon, that frequently

775

00:39:34,620 --> 00:39:37,060

that weapon will move in their hand.

776

00:39:37,060 --> 00:39:39,140

Additionally, when that weapon is discharged,

777

00:39:39,140 --> 00:39:41,260

that causes a jerking motion, which

778

00:39:41,260 --> 00:39:45,020

causes the hands to move over the surface of the weapon.

779

00:39:45,020 --> 00:39:49,140

And all of those factors could cause any fingerprints

780

00:39:49,140 --> 00:39:53,900

that may have been left on the weapon to be unusable.

781

00:39:53,900 --> 00:39:56,980

Item number four, the alleged suicide note.

782

00:39:56,980 --> 00:39:59,660

Tom Grant believes it was actually a retirement letter

783

00:39:59,660 --> 00:40:02,300

to Cobain's fans.

784

00:40:02,300 --> 00:40:04,580

There were rumors that Cobain was feeling burned out

785

00:40:04,580 --> 00:40:07,420

and was planning to adopt a lower profile.

786

00:40:07,420 --> 00:40:10,940

He had recently pulled out of the annual Lala Palooza tour,

787

00:40:10,940 --> 00:40:13,700

a decision which some speculate could have cost Cobain

788

00:40:13,700 --> 00:40:17,820

and others involved millions of dollars.

789

00:40:17,820 --> 00:40:21,500

This is a copy of the note that has been widely circulated.

790

00:40:21,500 --> 00:40:24,060

Tom Grant suggests that only the last four lines

791

00:40:24,060 --> 00:40:26,580

indicate suicide.

792

00:40:26,580 --> 00:40:30,420

They read, please keep going, Courtney, for Francis,

793

00:40:30,420 --> 00:40:33,740

for her life which will be so much happier without me.

794

00:40:33,740 --> 00:40:34,780

I love you.

795

00:40:34,780 --> 00:40:36,740

I love you.

796

00:40:36,740 --> 00:40:38,380

Curiously, these lines are written

797

00:40:38,380 --> 00:40:40,780

in much larger characters than the rest of the note.

798

00:40:43,300 --> 00:40:45,900

Unsolved Mysteries asked handwriting expert Marcel

799

00:40:45,900 --> 00:40:49,100

Matley to compare a copy of Cobain's alleged suicide note

800

00:40:49,100 --> 00:40:53,500

with copies of two pages of lyrics handwritten by Cobain.

801

00:40:53,500 --> 00:40:56,900

Matley believes a bulk of the note was written by Cobain,

802

00:40:56,900 --> 00:41:00,700

but finds the last four lines questionable.

803

00:41:00,700 --> 00:41:04,740

As to the last four lines, there are more than a dozen

804

00:41:04,740 --> 00:41:07,540

differences that should give us pause.

805

00:41:07,540 --> 00:41:10,860

And we would have to reasonably explain these differences

806

00:41:10,860 --> 00:41:14,660

before we can conclude that the same person wrote the four

807

00:41:14,660 --> 00:41:17,420

lines that wrote the body of it.

808

00:41:17,460 --> 00:41:20,660

Handwriting expert Reginald Alton of Oxford University

809

00:41:20,660 --> 00:41:23,140

also compared copies of Cobain's handwriting

810

00:41:23,140 --> 00:41:25,380

to a copy of the note.

811

00:41:25,380 --> 00:41:27,780

In a five-page written report, Alton

812

00:41:27,780 --> 00:41:30,540

pointed out more than a dozen discrepancies.

813

00:41:30,540 --> 00:41:32,700

Alton believes a bulk of the suicide note

814

00:41:32,700 --> 00:41:35,620

was written by Cobain, but raises questions

815

00:41:35,620 --> 00:41:39,740

about the first line and the last four lines.

816

00:41:39,740 --> 00:41:42,340

His report concludes, quote, there

817

00:41:42,340 --> 00:41:43,780

are many indications that there may

818

00:41:43,780 --> 00:41:46,580

have been a second hand at work.

819

00:41:46,580 --> 00:41:49,580

Alton cautions, however, that the copies are not good enough

820

00:41:49,580 --> 00:41:53,020

to make any firm pronouncement.

821

00:41:53,020 --> 00:41:56,420

We did take the note from the scene

822

00:41:56,420 --> 00:42:01,620

and have it examined at the Washington State Crime Lab.

823

00:42:01,620 --> 00:42:05,500

And their handwriting analyst has indicated

824

00:42:05,500 --> 00:42:08,460

that it is her belief that this note was

825

00:42:08,460 --> 00:42:12,660

written by Mr. Cobain.

826

00:42:12,660 --> 00:42:16,300

Kurt Cobain had made an important decision in his life.

827

00:42:16,300 --> 00:42:19,020

He wanted out of the entertainment business.

828

00:42:19,020 --> 00:42:20,260

He didn't want to tour anymore.

829

00:42:20,260 --> 00:42:22,140

He didn't want to perform anymore.

830

00:42:22,140 --> 00:42:23,140

He wanted to be left alone.

831

00:42:23,140 --> 00:42:28,940

He never liked that aspect of being a performer.

832

00:42:28,940 --> 00:42:30,940

This decision that he had made was

833

00:42:30,940 --> 00:42:33,740

going to affect a lot of other people.

834

00:42:33,740 --> 00:42:37,700

He was no longer the money machine that he once was.

835

00:42:37,700 --> 00:42:42,860

Now Cobain was worth more dead than he was alive.

836

00:42:42,860 --> 00:42:45,380

But who would have wanted Kurt Cobain dead?

837

00:42:45,380 --> 00:42:48,620

Could it have been a mysterious user of his credit card?

838

00:42:48,620 --> 00:42:51,380

Did that same person add critical lines to Cobain's alleged

839

00:42:51,380 --> 00:42:53,500

suicide note?

840

00:42:53,500 --> 00:42:56,020

For now, those questions remain unanswered.

841

00:42:58,980 --> 00:43:01,180

Despite the controversy, the Seattle police

842

00:43:01,180 --> 00:43:03,180

are confident they made the correct ruling.

843

00:43:03,180 --> 00:43:05,820

They consider the case closed.

844

00:43:05,820 --> 00:43:07,820

Tom Grant does not.

845

00:43:07,820 --> 00:43:10,220

He believes the investigation should be reopened

846

00:43:10,220 --> 00:43:12,820

and the inconsistencies resolve once and for all.

847

00:43:16,060 --> 00:43:24,460

On our next Unsaugh Mysteries, in 1994,

848

00:43:24,460 --> 00:43:26,460

fragments of a giant comet set off

849

00:43:26,460 --> 00:43:30,180

a series of cataclysmic explosions on the planet Jupiter.

850

00:43:30,180 --> 00:43:33,060

Is there more destruction lurking in the night sky?

851

00:43:33,060 --> 00:43:36,340

Will Earth be the next target?

852

00:43:36,340 --> 00:43:39,540

Also, the crash of a presidential helicopter

853

00:43:39,540 --> 00:43:42,300

in Maryland prompt speculation that the craft was down

854

00:43:42,300 --> 00:43:45,780

by friendly fire in the form of an experimental top secret

855

00:43:45,780 --> 00:43:48,220

weapon.

856

00:43:48,220 --> 00:43:51,380

Join me next time for another intriguing addition

857

00:43:51,380 --> 00:43:52,540

of Unsaugh Mysteries.