

1

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

The End

2

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

Tonight on Unsolved Mysteries

3

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

Over a three-day period in Houston, Texas, investigators are called to the scene of two brutal murders.

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

Both women are found in their cars. They look surprisingly alike.

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

And most shocking of all, they share the same name, Mary Morris.

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

Is there a connection? Or are these crimes an astonishing coincidence?

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

An Oklahoma dairy farmer leaves his home with a mysterious stranger and never returns.

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

Several sightings have given his family hope that he is still alive.

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

After 35-year-old Leta Sullivan was found murdered, her husband, Jim, had this to say.

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

I had nothing to do with Leta's death.

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

However, Leta's mother said this.

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

I really would like to see Jim go to the electric chair.

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

Did Jim Sullivan hire a hitman?

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00:00:58,000 --> 00:01:02,000

With the wave of his hands, this Russian immigrant claims he can heal.

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00:01:02,000 --> 00:01:06,000

Dozens flock to his Boston office every week to be treated.

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00:01:06,000 --> 00:01:12,000

Can he relieve pain, cure phobias, and help smokers quit?

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00:01:12,000 --> 00:01:18,000

Does he truly have a magic touch, or is he too good to be true?

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00:01:18,000 --> 00:01:24,000

These four cases are among the most unusual and intriguing that we have yet encountered.

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00:01:24,000 --> 00:01:30,000

Join me for this fascinating edition of Unsolved Mysteries.

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00:01:48,000 --> 00:02:14,000

Music

21

00:02:14,000 --> 00:02:16,000

Houston, Texas.

22

00:02:16,000 --> 00:02:22,000

Very early one clear October morning, Jay Morris saw his wife, Mary, off to work.

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00:02:22,000 --> 00:02:28,000

Mary Morris was a 48-year-old bank loan officer with many friends and a successful career.

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00:02:28,000 --> 00:02:32,000

However, by early that afternoon, Jay began to worry about his wife.

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00:02:32,000 --> 00:02:38,000

He had tried to phone her several times, but she hadn't returned any of his calls.

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00:02:38,000 --> 00:02:42,000

So I called the supervisor and found out she wasn't at work.

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00:02:42,000 --> 00:02:48,000

And then that's when I knew immediately that there was something wrong, because she didn't miss work.

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00:02:48,000 --> 00:02:58,000

Meanwhile, about three miles east of the Morris home, a passerby made a gruesome discovery.

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00:02:58,000 --> 00:03:04,000

Inside a smoldering car, he found a body burned beyond recognition.

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00:03:04,000 --> 00:03:11,000

The police were notified, and the crime scene investigation unit was soon combing the area for evidence.

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00:03:12,000 --> 00:03:15,000

By that time, Jay had begun to think the worst.

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00:03:15,000 --> 00:03:19,000

So when he heard from a friend about a burned-out car found near the interstate,

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00:03:19,000 --> 00:03:25,000

he picked up his stepdaughter Marilyn Blalock and drove to the scene.

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00:03:25,000 --> 00:03:30,000

Marilyn and I went down and the police was there, but they had everything blocked off,

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00:03:30,000 --> 00:03:33,000

and they told us to turn around and come back home.

36

00:03:33,000 --> 00:03:40,000

I was frustrated that they wouldn't tell me, but at that point I still wasn't thinking that it was her.

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00:03:40,000 --> 00:03:45,000

However, within a few hours, detectives delivered the terrible news.

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00:03:45,000 --> 00:03:49,000

They had identified the victim in the car as Mary Morris.

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00:03:49,000 --> 00:03:54,000

Because of the condition of the body, it was impossible to determine how Mary had been killed.

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00:03:54,000 --> 00:03:59,000

The crime was so brutal, police did not suspect robbery was the motive.

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00:03:59,000 --> 00:04:05,000

But soon, every other avenue of investigation also turned into a dead end.

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00:04:05,000 --> 00:04:09,000

There was no reason for it whatsoever.

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00:04:09,000 --> 00:04:14,000

She was just a really good person. Never did anything bad to anybody.

44

00:04:16,000 --> 00:04:22,000

They asked everything from gambling to drugs to affairs to anything, and all the answers were no.

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00:04:22,000 --> 00:04:25,000

She didn't gamble, she didn't drink, nothing.

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00:04:28,000 --> 00:04:33,000

Just three days after Mary Morris' death, however, the case took a strange twist.

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00:04:33,000 --> 00:04:37,000

And the circumstances were as chilling as they were unbelievable.

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00:04:37,000 --> 00:04:43,000

Not far from where Mary's body was found, another woman had been viciously murdered.

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00:04:43,000 --> 00:04:50,000

She too was killed in her car, and incredibly, her name was also Mary Morris.

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00:04:53,000 --> 00:05:01,000

Two women, both named Mary Morris, both found murdered in their cars in the Houston area just three days apart.

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

On top of all that, the two Mary's also bore a certain resemblance.

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

However, to find a possible link, detectives would first have to piece together the events surrounding the death of the second victim.

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00:05:13,000 --> 00:05:18,000

Mary McGuinness Morris was 39 years old when the first Mary was killed,

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00:05:18,000 --> 00:05:24,000

and like Mary Lou Morris, she too was a successful professional with a sunny disposition.

55

00:05:25,000 --> 00:05:31,000

Mary was like an angel. She was very joyful, always happy, making people laugh.

56

00:05:32,000 --> 00:05:37,000

Not enough words really to describe her. I mean, she was just really loved by everybody.

57

00:05:38,000 --> 00:05:44,000

Mary was a nurse practitioner in charge of several clinics for a major industrial corporation.

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00:05:44,000 --> 00:05:47,000

She was dedicated and excelled at her job.

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00:05:48,000 --> 00:05:51,000

Anything basically a doctor would do, Mary did.

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00:05:51,000 --> 00:05:58,000

She would work 14 hours a day, not think twice, go back in of an evening, weekends, whenever she was needed.

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00:05:59,000 --> 00:06:07,000

Mary got along well with her staff, but according to friends, one new employee, a male nurse, was a poor fit right from the start.

62

00:06:08,000 --> 00:06:14,000

And the relationship quickly went from bad to worse. Mary became increasingly nervous and distraught.

63

00:06:16,000 --> 00:06:22,000

She told me that she was afraid of this person that she worked with, and I said, do you really think he could hurt you?

64

00:06:22,000 --> 00:06:26,000

And she said, yes, I do, and I think he could do worse.

65

00:06:27,000 --> 00:06:34,000

Soon after, Mary told friends she stopped by her office one evening to pick up some papers, only to make a disturbing discovery.

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00:06:37,000 --> 00:06:43,000

She found things out of place on her desk. Pictures turned to face the wrong direction.

67

00:06:46,000 --> 00:06:53,000

On his desk was written the words death to her, which she assumed was written about her.

68

00:06:53,000 --> 00:07:00,000

She made a phone call to me on her way home, and I could tell that she was shaken.

69

00:07:02,000 --> 00:07:04,000

Okay, baby, what's going on?

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

I think this whole thing is really out of control.

71

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

She got home and she asked me if I would provide her with a gun to carry with her for her own protection.

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00:07:16,000 --> 00:07:22,000

She asked me to go over the handling and use of the gun.

73

00:07:24,000 --> 00:07:29,000

When we were finished, she asked me to place the gun in her car under the driver's seat.

74

00:07:32,000 --> 00:07:38,000

A few weekends later, Mary met her friend Laurie Gemmel at the clinic to give her an allergy shot.

75

00:07:39,000 --> 00:07:45,000

Mary seemed fine that Sunday, and we chatted a little bit about her making dinner for the family.

76

00:07:45,000 --> 00:07:50,000

She had a couple of errands to do, and she was only going to stay a couple of hours, and then she was going to go home.

77

00:07:53,000 --> 00:07:58,000

Later that afternoon, Laurie says she received an alarming phone call from Mary.

78

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

Hi, it's me.

79

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

When she was in the drugstore, she saw somebody that gave her the creeps.

80

00:08:05,000 --> 00:08:12,000

She said, I'm just going to run across the bridge and turn off my computer and sign out of the building and go home.

81

00:08:15,000 --> 00:08:22,000

Police aren't sure what happened next, but 12 minutes after saying goodbye to Laurie, Mary made a frantic call to 911.

82

00:08:24,000 --> 00:08:27,000

We're not releasing the content of the tape.

83

00:08:28,000 --> 00:08:38,000

It covers the attack that happened to Mary, and anybody that's ever heard that tape has just had their blood shield listening to it.

84

00:08:38,000 --> 00:08:41,000

It's a very chilling, disturbing call.

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00:08:44,000 --> 00:08:47,000

The details of Mary's abduction are unclear.

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00:08:47,000 --> 00:08:52,000

However, the medical examiner's report revealed that she was viciously beaten and shot in the head.

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00:08:53,000 --> 00:08:57,000

The investigation first led police to Mary's coworker at the clinic.

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00:08:57,000 --> 00:09:03,000

Allegedly, he had left on bad terms, quitting his job after several failed attempts to discredit Mary.

89

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

Detectives say they have evidence that may link the coworker to the crime, and he remains a suspect.

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00:09:10,000 --> 00:09:14,000

Investigators also had questions for Mike Morris, Mary's husband.

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

Morris claimed he was at the movies with his daughter at the time of the murder.

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00:09:18,000 --> 00:09:23,000

Detectives had concerns about his alibi and uncovered several other troubling issues.

93

00:09:23,000 --> 00:09:33,000

First, according to police, Morris intentionally stonewalled the investigation through his own actions and by refusing to allow his daughter to be questioned.

94

00:09:34,000 --> 00:09:37,000

He wouldn't meet with us without an attorney.

95

00:09:37,000 --> 00:09:39,000

Witnesses don't need attorneys.

96

00:09:39,000 --> 00:09:43,000

Suspects generally have attorneys.

97

00:09:44,000 --> 00:09:48,000

Mike Morris says he was simply following the advice of some trusted friends.

98

00:09:49,000 --> 00:10:01,000

Several of these people suggested that I'd take an attorney with me, not because I had anything to hide, but just to have somebody with me that was familiar with the procedures.

99

00:10:02,000 --> 00:10:07,000

Detectives were also suspicious about Morris' refusal to take a polygraph test.

100

00:10:08,000 --> 00:10:13,000

I was on anti-anxiety medications. I was on anti-depressants.

101

00:10:13,000 --> 00:10:23,000

I wasn't really sure that this polygraph examination that they were talking about could adequately compensate for all of those conditions.

102

00:10:24,000 --> 00:10:30,000

Further, according to friends, Mike and Mary Morris were having serious problems with their marriage.

103

00:10:31,000 --> 00:10:37,000

When Mike heard rumors of an alleged affair between Mary and a family friend, he confronted them head on.

104

00:10:38,000 --> 00:10:48,000

I can tell you that at the time that that happened, they both looked me in the eye and they both told me that there had been nothing inappropriate in their relationship.

105

00:10:49,000 --> 00:10:52,000

And I didn't see any betrayal in their eyes.

106

00:10:53,000 --> 00:10:55,000

Then there was a question of motive.

107

00:10:55,000 --> 00:11:02,000

What detectives say compelled them to follow the money, a life insurance policy that would pay out \$700,000.

108

00:11:03,000 --> 00:11:10,000

There was a large amount of life insurance on Mary Morris, which Mike Morris was the beneficiary to.

109

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

There were a lot of reasons right there for, in the way of a motive for Mike.

110

00:11:18,000 --> 00:11:28,000

Finally, what police consider most curious of all the evidence against Mike Morris was a call he made to Mary's cell phone around the time detectives believed she was murdered.

111

00:11:29,000 --> 00:11:37,000

There was a phone call some two hours after Mary Morris made a very desperate and chilling call to 911.

112

00:11:37,000 --> 00:11:39,000

That call was made by Mike Morris.

113

00:11:40,000 --> 00:11:44,000

The problem is, this phone call lasted for four minutes.

114

00:11:45,000 --> 00:11:50,000

This was, by all indications of the cellular telephone company, a completed call.

115

00:11:51,000 --> 00:12:00,000

What you have to wonder is, what did that phone call either say in motion or end?

116

00:12:01,000 --> 00:12:12,000

Normally, the cellular service would have kicked in and said that the party you were calling was unavailable.

117

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

I didn't get that. I don't know why I didn't get that.

118

00:12:15,000 --> 00:12:23,000

But as long as the phone was ringing and I thought that there was a possibility that she would answer it, I let it ring.

119

00:12:24,000 --> 00:12:30,000

But if the call went unanswered, detectives questioned why it showed up on Mary's cell phone bill.

120

00:12:31,000 --> 00:12:38,000

I don't accept that Mike made this phone call and that the phone rang for four minutes. It's not possible.

121

00:12:38,000 --> 00:12:45,000

The question is, who answered the phone on the other end? That's what the big question is.

122

00:12:45,000 --> 00:12:48,000

And what did they talk about for the four minutes?

123

00:12:50,000 --> 00:12:56,000

Was Mike Morris talking to his white killer? He adamantly denies any involvement in her death.

124

00:12:57,000 --> 00:13:01,000

I had absolutely nothing to do with the arrangement of Mary's murder.

125

00:13:01,000 --> 00:13:09,000

It's a hurtful insinuation, but I know that it's absolutely untrue.

126

00:13:12,000 --> 00:13:18,000

Despite Mike Morris' denial, police say they have not eliminated him as a suspect in his wife's murder.

127

00:13:19,000 --> 00:13:29,000

Mary's co-worker is also still under suspicion. Perhaps the answer lies in the possible link between the deaths of Mary McGinnis Morris and Mary Lou Morris.

128

00:13:31,000 --> 00:13:39,000

One theory speculated that an inept contract killer had been hired to murder the second Mary Morris and kill the first Mary Morris by mistake.

129

00:13:40,000 --> 00:13:45,000

That theory was fueled in part by a telephone call allegedly made to a Houston newspaper.

130

00:13:47,000 --> 00:13:52,000

A call came into the Houston Chronicle and I verified this with somebody at the Chronicle.

131

00:13:53,000 --> 00:14:04,000

Between the time the first Mary Morris was killed and the time my friend was killed, saying something to the effect that they got the wrong Mary Morris the first time.

132

00:14:06,000 --> 00:14:13,000

The hit-gone-wrong theory was further bolstered when detectives determined that the wedding ring of the first Mary Morris was missing.

133

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

If someone had put a head out on a person, that's what they take back to show that they actually killed that person.

134

00:14:23,000 --> 00:14:29,000

Despite speculation that the two murders may have been connected, detectives had their doubts.

135

00:14:30,000 --> 00:14:41,000

Well, with the remoteness of the location where the victim was found, as well as the effort that was taken to destroy the evidence and the vehicle, that would be consistent with the contract killing.

136

00:14:42,000 --> 00:14:45,000

But with the background of the victim, that doesn't seem likely.

137

00:14:46,000 --> 00:14:53,000

That the first Mary Morris was a mistake, it was a missed hit, a botched hit, something like that.

138

00:14:54,000 --> 00:15:00,000

There's not anything that we found that would support that.

139

00:15:02,000 --> 00:15:08,000

Detectives continued their search for any clues that might connect the two Mary Morris' but came up empty.

140

00:15:09,000 --> 00:15:16,000

They later concluded that with nearly 300 homicides in Harris County that year, the murders were a bizarre coincidence.

141

00:15:17,000 --> 00:15:22,000

However, the family and friends of both Mary's believe that explanation is simply too far-fetched.

142

00:15:24,000 --> 00:15:36,000

The astronomical odds that two Mary Morris' was killed three days apart, very similar in looks, to me is, that's what it is, an astronomical effort not connected.

143

00:15:36,000 --> 00:15:39,000

I can't help but think they have to be related.

144

00:15:41,000 --> 00:15:52,000

I can't imagine that two women with the same name would be murdered within three days of each other, both found in their cars, and not have that be related.

145

00:15:53,000 --> 00:15:59,000

It began as a typical morning at Leonard Derrickson's dairy farm near Cheyenne, Oklahoma.

146

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

Jared, breakfast is ready.

147

00:16:01,000 --> 00:16:09,000

Leonard made breakfast for his 19-year-old son, Jared, and the two sat down to eat before a long day of chores.

148

00:16:10,000 --> 00:16:15,000

Then at 9 am, a visitor arrived unannounced in a white pickup truck.

149

00:16:17,000 --> 00:16:20,000

Jared, you know whose truck that is.

150

00:16:25,000 --> 00:16:29,000

It's a black truck, a black truck.

151

00:16:29,000 --> 00:16:33,000

Jared, you know whose truck that is.

152

00:16:37,000 --> 00:16:39,000

I'll go see what it wants.

153

00:16:43,000 --> 00:16:45,000

You wait inside.

154

00:16:45,000 --> 00:16:58,000

Leonard spent several minutes talking to the driver of the truck.

155

00:16:58,000 --> 00:17:03,000

They did not appear to know each other, but their conversation was cordial.

156

00:17:08,000 --> 00:17:13,000

When Leonard returned, he told Jared that the man wanted to look at one of his stud horses.

157

00:17:13,000 --> 00:17:20,000

Leonard gave no sign that he found anything unusual about the stranger.

158

00:17:23,000 --> 00:17:26,000

So he told me that he was going to go with him.

159

00:17:26,000 --> 00:17:32,000

He said to stay here and go to Elk and get some feed, and go feed the cows, and he'd be back that afternoon.

160

00:17:34,000 --> 00:17:40,000

Three years later, Jared Derrickson is still waiting for his father to come home.

161

00:17:44,000 --> 00:17:51,000

On March 14, Leonard Derrickson voluntarily left his home with an unidentified man and never returned.

162

00:17:51,000 --> 00:17:54,000

Nobody has any idea what happened to him.

163

00:17:54,000 --> 00:18:01,000

To this day, police have found no signs of a struggle, no evidence of foul play, and no body.

164

00:18:01,000 --> 00:18:05,000

Their only clue is a mysterious man who came to Leonard's house.

165

00:18:05,000 --> 00:18:10,000

Authorities believe he is the key to explaining Leonard Derrickson's baffling disappearance.

166

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

After leaving his home, Leonard Derrickson did not simply vanish.

167

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

Two hours later, a waitress claims to have seen him eating breakfast with another man at a local coffee shop.

168

00:18:26,000 --> 00:18:35,000

Now that's a little odd to us, because at nine o'clock, Leonard just got through eating breakfast with his son.

169

00:18:35,000 --> 00:18:40,000

It's extremely odd to eat two breakfasts in the same day, two hours apart.

170

00:18:41,000 --> 00:18:49,000

They were sitting there in the restaurant, and the unknown man that we're trying to identify was doing most of the talking,

171

00:18:49,000 --> 00:18:55,000

and Leonard was just drinking coffee and listening to the man talk.

172

00:18:56,000 --> 00:19:01,000

The man at the diner matched the description of the man who picked Leonard up at his home.

173

00:19:03,000 --> 00:19:07,000

There was nothing suspicious about his behavior.

174

00:19:07,000 --> 00:19:13,000

Then if he had meant to harm Leonard, why would he be seen with him in a public place?

175

00:19:14,000 --> 00:19:21,000

Police next checked the barn where Leonard kept his stud horse, but Leonard never came there that day.

176

00:19:21,000 --> 00:19:30,000

In fact, an exhaustive investigation turned up absolutely no information on Leonard's whereabouts, until six months after he vanished.

177

00:19:37,000 --> 00:19:41,000

But this sighting was even more perplexing than the first.

178

00:19:42,000 --> 00:19:46,000

A man at a barn in Amarillo, Texas, phoned the police.

179

00:19:46,000 --> 00:19:51,000

Yeah, I want to report this guy. Leonard Derrickson, he's supposed to be missing.

180

00:19:51,000 --> 00:19:59,000

The individual that called stated, I know Leonard Derrickson, I'm from Elk City, I can't give you my name, but he's in this bar.

181

00:19:59,000 --> 00:20:01,000

I know who he is, I know this is him.

182

00:20:01,000 --> 00:20:05,000

I'm watching him, he's wearing a blue check shirt, and he's drunk.

183

00:20:05,000 --> 00:20:12,000

Yeah, I'm at the highway bar in Amarillo. Yeah, yeah, yeah, I'll wait till you get here.

184

00:20:14,000 --> 00:20:16,000

And then the call terminates.

185

00:20:17,000 --> 00:20:24,000

By the time local police arrived at the remote bar, both the caller and the man he claims as Leonard Derrickson were gone.

186

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

Hi. Hi. My name is Joey.

187

00:20:27,000 --> 00:20:32,000

The following day, the Roger Mills County Sheriff's Department interviewed the bartender.

188

00:20:32,000 --> 00:20:35,000

I remember the guy who made the two phone calls.

189

00:20:35,000 --> 00:20:39,000

She remembered the caller being at the bar and corroborated his story.

190

00:20:40,000 --> 00:20:49,000

We had no reason to disbelieve it. It almost stretched the imagination that a guy would dance around in the bar, scream in the hall, and it's Leonard, it's Leonard, and it not be Leonard.

191

00:20:50,000 --> 00:20:53,000

I believe he was in the bar in Amarillo.

192

00:20:54,000 --> 00:21:00,000

But why was Leonard Derrickson hanging out in an Amarillo bar six months after being reported missing?

193

00:21:02,000 --> 00:21:06,000

Could he have voluntarily disappeared? If so, why?

194

00:21:09,000 --> 00:21:17,000

Leonard had recently suffered through a painful divorce, and investigators believe his dairy business was collapsing, along with a rapidly dropping price of milk.

195

00:21:18,000 --> 00:21:24,000

Could Leonard have decided to escape both his alleged financial and personal problems once and for all?

196

00:21:25,000 --> 00:21:27,000

It's entirely possible that Leonard left on his own.

197

00:21:27,000 --> 00:21:41,000

I don't know where he would be today. I believe it's possible that he's working as a ranch hand somewhere, or on a dairy, or a cattle ranch, or even horses.

198

00:21:42,000 --> 00:21:45,000

There is only one problem with that scenario.

199

00:21:47,000 --> 00:21:49,000

Leonard's son, Jared.

200

00:21:50,000 --> 00:21:52,000

Me and my dad, we was together every day.

201

00:21:53,000 --> 00:21:56,000

Every morning we'd go work, do the chores, and I'd go to school.

202

00:21:58,000 --> 00:22:07,000

I don't think he would have ever left me and not ever come back to sit me or nothing, because we was close, and I don't think he'd ever done that to me.

203

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

And there's no way he would have ever left Jared and gone off, and not ever let anybody know he was too close. We were all too close, a family, to do that.

204

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

I don't think he would have ever left.

205

00:22:25,000 --> 00:22:35,000

If Leonard would not have left his son behind, the focus then switches back to the mysterious man. One aspect of this case is always troubled investigators.

206

00:22:36,000 --> 00:22:43,000

Jared did not know the man, and Leonard did not act as if he did either.

207

00:22:43,000 --> 00:22:51,000

But then how did the stranger know where Leonard lived? And why was he asking about a horse that Leonard had not advertised as for sale?

208

00:22:54,000 --> 00:23:02,000

Where Leonard lived, north of Cheyenne, Oklahoma, the man would have had to know how to have gotten there, because it's just not a straight drive there.

209

00:23:03,000 --> 00:23:05,000

The way you have to turn and go on the back roads and things.

210

00:23:06,000 --> 00:23:14,000

So he knew the area to get there. Someone had given him directions how to get to Leonard's home.

211

00:23:17,000 --> 00:23:28,000

There's a possibility that this man was involved in setting Leonard up to be murdered. If this man didn't do the murder, he may have taken Leonard somewhere to someone that wanted to. That's a possibility.

212

00:23:29,000 --> 00:23:34,000

We just, we don't have a moaty for that. I have not found one.

213

00:23:36,000 --> 00:23:46,000

Without a moaty, the search for Leonard Derrickson will continue to be hampered. Until then, his family can only pray that Leonard is safe and well somewhere, and will someday return home.

214

00:23:47,000 --> 00:24:12,000

To never ever hear anything, it's hard because there's no end to it. And for a year after I would listen to the news and they would say they had found a body someplace, you know, I would just think maybe that's him, maybe this is it. But nothing, anywhere.

215

00:24:13,000 --> 00:24:30,000

This is a composite drawing of the man last seen with Leonard Derrickson. He was driving a white Ford pickup and wearing a baseball hat with a phrase, no fear on the front. Police would like to question him regarding Leonard's disappearance.

216

00:24:31,000 --> 00:24:42,000

Leonard Derrickson is six feet tall, has brown hair and weighs approximately 200 pounds.

217

00:24:42,000 --> 00:25:11,000

January 1987. The exclusive area of Buckhead in Atlanta, Georgia. A woman lay dead in the doorway of her home. Her name was Lita McClinton Sullivan, the daughter of one of Georgia's most politically prominent African American women.

218

00:25:13,000 --> 00:25:29,000

Her husband was James Sullivan, heir to a million dollar family fortune. Police had no idea who killed Lita or why. The only clue was a dozen blood-spattered roses.

219

00:25:30,000 --> 00:25:45,000

Who killed Lita Sullivan? Authorities who left with a baffling mystery. Could Lita have been the victim of a random robbery attempt? Or could her own husband have been involved in a conspiracy to commit murder?

220

00:25:46,000 --> 00:25:58,000

James Sullivan met Lita McClinton at an Atlanta mall in 1975. Lita was training to be a clothing buyer for a department store.

221

00:25:58,000 --> 00:26:03,000

Excuse me. Hi. Can I help you find something?

222

00:26:03,000 --> 00:26:09,000

A Boston native James Sullivan was refined and charming. Lita soon fell in love.

223

00:26:09,000 --> 00:26:13,000

How about a trip to Paris?

224

00:26:13,000 --> 00:26:16,000

I don't think so.

225

00:26:16,000 --> 00:26:28,000

When James Sullivan married into Lita's family, her parents feared that his real motive was to capitalize on the political influence that the McClinton family had earned through years of public service.

226

00:26:28,000 --> 00:26:40,000

I think that was one of his attractions to Lita. He needed someone who could give him a better social standing and status.

227

00:26:40,000 --> 00:26:44,000

Eventually the couple moved into this home in Palm Beach, Florida.

228

00:26:44,000 --> 00:26:48,000

I'm going back to work. You can't stop me.

229

00:26:48,000 --> 00:26:55,000

Lita's parents say that in time, Sullivan wanted to control every aspect of their daughter's life.

230

00:26:55,000 --> 00:27:11,000

He had originally said that he did not want her to work, but then he would give her such a small budget that it was no way practical to quote buy groceries to take care of the household and things like that.

231

00:27:12,000 --> 00:27:19,000

In 1985, Lita filed for divorce and left her husband, moving into a townhouse they owned in Atlanta.

232

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

Lita's family says Sullivan was outraged and feared he could lose millions in a divorce settlement.

233

00:27:27,000 --> 00:27:35,000

The day Lita was scheduled to testify in her divorce case was the same day she was murdered.

234

00:27:35,000 --> 00:27:41,000

Police would discover that a witness had seen a man come to the door carrying a box of flowers.

235

00:27:44,000 --> 00:27:45,000

Who is it?

236

00:27:45,000 --> 00:27:47,000

Flowers for Lita Sullivan.

237

00:27:49,000 --> 00:27:50,000

Are you Lita Sullivan?

238

00:27:50,000 --> 00:27:51,000

Yes.

239

00:27:54,000 --> 00:27:59,000

Although the suspect was seen fleeing the property, he could not be identified.

240

00:27:59,000 --> 00:28:05,000

At the time of the killing, Lita's husband, James, was at the couple's home in Palm Beach.

241

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

He had an alibi, unless it was a contract killing.

242

00:28:11,000 --> 00:28:17,000

40 minutes later, Jim Sullivan was used to collect phone calls from outside Atlanta.

243

00:28:17,000 --> 00:28:24,000

And when I retraced the time from Buckhead where Lita was murdered to where the phone was, it was exactly 40 minutes.

244

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

I believe the killer was calling Sullivan and telling him that the job is done.

245

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

Police traced the flowers to a shop where a clerk remembered a nervous man buying them before the murder.

246

00:28:36,000 --> 00:28:47,000

They said the telephone records show that just before the killing, three men who had checked into a Georgia motel using false identification made calls to Sullivan's home.

247

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

Police now thought they had a case to take to trial.

248

00:28:52,000 --> 00:28:54,000

They were wrong.

249

00:28:54,000 --> 00:28:57,000

The judge dismissed the case for lack of evidence.

250

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

A relieved James Sullivan spoke with the press following the decision.

251

00:29:02,000 --> 00:29:10,000

I want everyone listening to this to know that I am absolutely innocent.

252

00:29:10,000 --> 00:29:14,000

I had nothing to do with Lita's death.

253

00:29:14,000 --> 00:29:18,000

Her death was a great tragedy.

254

00:29:18,000 --> 00:29:25,000

And I thank God and my attorneys that this ordeal is over.

255

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

Lita's family believed James Sullivan was getting away with murder.

256

00:29:31,000 --> 00:29:40,000

Jim had Lita killed because of money. Jim loved money.

257

00:29:43,000 --> 00:29:47,000

Just eight months after the murder, Sullivan married again.

258

00:29:47,000 --> 00:29:48,000

Perfect.

259

00:29:48,000 --> 00:29:51,000

This time to a woman named Suki Rogers.

260

00:29:51,000 --> 00:29:58,000

But three years later, Suki and Sullivan were involved in their own bitter divorce.

261

00:29:58,000 --> 00:30:06,000

In 1991, Suki told police that Sullivan admitted to her that he hired someone to kill Lita.

262

00:30:06,000 --> 00:30:12,000

The McClinton's filed a four million dollar civil suit against Sullivan and won.

263

00:30:12,000 --> 00:30:14,000

We're not interested in the money.

264

00:30:14,000 --> 00:30:23,000

It was really knowing that Jim was a perpetrator.

265

00:30:23,000 --> 00:30:25,000

He was a cause of our daughter's death.

266

00:30:25,000 --> 00:30:28,000

And we wanted to bring him to trial.

267

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

Officials believe Sullivan's motive for murder was his intense desire not to part with any of his fortune.

268

00:30:35,000 --> 00:30:40,000

But they still didn't think there was enough physical evidence to win a criminal conviction.

269

00:30:40,000 --> 00:30:46,000

Lita's devastated family said James Sullivan had gotten away with murder.

270

00:30:46,000 --> 00:30:54,000

February 1998, Georgia investigators arrest a man they suspect helped set up Lita's murder.

271

00:30:54,000 --> 00:30:59,000

I had a business arrangement with Mr. Sullivan about 11 years ago.

272

00:30:59,000 --> 00:31:04,000

The man alleged that James Sullivan masterminded the killing.

273

00:31:04,000 --> 00:31:08,000

Finally a warrant was issued for Sullivan's arrest.

274

00:31:08,000 --> 00:31:11,000

He was charged with murder and aggravated assault.

275

00:31:11,000 --> 00:31:15,000

But before police could find him, Sullivan disappeared.

276

00:31:15,000 --> 00:31:19,000

Sullivan had an Irish passport and authorities believe he may have fled to Ireland.

277

00:31:19,000 --> 00:31:22,000

He planned it.

278

00:31:22,000 --> 00:31:26,000

And I really, really feel that he should.

279

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

I just feel that he should pay with his life.

280

00:31:29,000 --> 00:31:33,000

I tell him what he already knows.

281

00:31:33,000 --> 00:31:35,000

He'll never beat me.

282

00:31:35,000 --> 00:31:38,000

I will get him.

283

00:32:05,000 --> 00:32:20,000

This brownstone in Boston is filled with patients, people with real ailments hoping to be healed.

284

00:32:20,000 --> 00:32:25,000

I'm here to quit smoking and I've been smoking over 30 years.

285

00:32:25,000 --> 00:32:28,000

Fear of crowds like this.

286

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

And I came to stop biting my fingernails.

287

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

But this is not a medical facility.

288

00:32:35,000 --> 00:32:42,000

It is the office of Yafim Shubensov, a Soviet immigrant affectionately known as the mad Russian.

289

00:32:42,000 --> 00:32:43,000

Relax, make yourself comfortable.

290

00:32:43,000 --> 00:32:45,000

My name is Yafim Shubensov.

291

00:32:45,000 --> 00:32:49,000

Yafim seems to have an unexplained power that cures.

292

00:32:49,000 --> 00:32:57,000

Thousands have flocked from all over the world to experience his healing touch.

293

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

For me right now people can make appointments.

294

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

Smoking, drinking, drugs, all kinds of bad habits, phobias, anorexia, believe me, weight loss.

295

00:33:07,000 --> 00:33:13,000

Knee pain, back pain.

296

00:33:13,000 --> 00:33:15,000

Yes.

297

00:33:15,000 --> 00:33:18,000

Can this Russian wonder really heal?

298

00:33:18,000 --> 00:33:21,000

Or is he a charlatan playing on people's hopes?

299

00:33:21,000 --> 00:33:24,000

Can a simple wave of a hand change a life?

300

00:33:24,000 --> 00:33:26,000

You be the judge.

301

00:33:28,000 --> 00:33:34,000

Miranda Beeson is a successful New York businesswoman with an addiction.

302

00:33:34,000 --> 00:33:37,000

She couldn't quit smoking.

303

00:33:37,000 --> 00:33:40,000

I really adored smoking and I smoked great cigarettes.

304

00:33:40,000 --> 00:33:42,000

I won't name the brand.

305

00:33:42,000 --> 00:33:44,000

I loved them all.

306

00:33:44,000 --> 00:33:51,000

I had tried numerous other kinds of ways of smoking cessation and they had not been successful.

307

00:33:51,000 --> 00:33:54,000

And I thought, I have nothing to lose.

308

00:33:55,000 --> 00:34:03,000

So Miranda went to Boston for a session with Yafim and smoked what she hoped was her last cigarette.

309

00:34:03,000 --> 00:34:07,000

Okay, okay, be brave, be brave, be brave.

310

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

Inside, Miranda joined a dozen others looking for a final cure to their chronic pain or addiction.

311

00:34:13,000 --> 00:34:20,000

For \$65 per session, Yafim holds a group healing followed by individual meetings.

312

00:34:20,000 --> 00:34:24,000

Initially, he tries to alleviate any overt pain.

313

00:34:24,000 --> 00:34:26,000

I want to ask a question here of everybody.

314

00:34:26,000 --> 00:34:29,000

Who have pain, phobia, some addiction of some sort?

315

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

Who have everybody? Why are you here?

316

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

I want to quit smoking.

317

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

He's incredibly dynamic.

318

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

Can you have other pain?

319

00:34:37,000 --> 00:34:38,000

Yes.

320

00:34:38,000 --> 00:34:39,000

Where do you have pain?

321

00:34:39,000 --> 00:34:40,000

In my back.

322

00:34:40,000 --> 00:34:45,000

It's a power of focus so that when he focuses on you, you're engaged.

323

00:34:45,000 --> 00:34:47,000

I give you everything.

324

00:34:48,000 --> 00:34:56,000

He kind of sent this fireball across the room and that pain is gone.

325

00:34:56,000 --> 00:35:04,000

Yafim claims his hand gestures are a reorganization of what he calls bioenergy.

326

00:35:04,000 --> 00:35:08,000

It's like somebody throwing a really fast curveball.

327

00:35:08,000 --> 00:35:13,000

You're the catcher, he's the pitcher, you're there, you catch it.

328

00:35:13,000 --> 00:35:19,000

What I want you to do is to think in your mind the very first puff of cigarette that you take.

329

00:35:19,000 --> 00:35:23,000

In her one-on-one session, they discuss her specific problem,

330

00:35:23,000 --> 00:35:27,000

Miranda's 20-year addiction to cigarettes.

331

00:35:27,000 --> 00:35:33,000

Some people say he sort of sneezes on you, which is not what he does at all.

332

00:35:33,000 --> 00:35:38,000

But he kind of gives you this parting gift.

333

00:35:38,000 --> 00:35:43,000

After her session, Miranda's desire for cigarettes disappeared.

334

00:35:43,000 --> 00:35:47,000

She claims the craving stopped.

335

00:35:47,000 --> 00:35:50,000

I was somehow profoundly changed.

336

00:35:50,000 --> 00:35:54,000

I just know that I'm greater than this habit at this point.

337

00:35:54,000 --> 00:35:57,000

So it cannot move in.

338

00:35:57,000 --> 00:36:01,000

Since her visit to Yafim over two years ago,

339

00:36:01,000 --> 00:36:09,000

Miranda has remained a non-smoker and believes that Yafim was key to her success.

340

00:36:09,000 --> 00:36:13,000

According to Yafim, he has helped thousands like Miranda

341

00:36:13,000 --> 00:36:19,000

and thousands more who suffer from another common addiction, overeating.

342

00:36:19,000 --> 00:36:22,000

For a weight loss, I help dramatically.

343

00:36:22,000 --> 00:36:24,000

I remove desire to eat whatever you want.

344

00:36:24,000 --> 00:36:26,000

I remove desire to eat in between meals.

345

00:36:26,000 --> 00:36:29,000

I remove desire to eat big portions, etc., etc.

346

00:36:29,000 --> 00:36:32,000

But excesses I cannot do instead of you.

347

00:36:32,000 --> 00:36:37,000

Louise Cole is a single mother living in Brightonton, Florida.

348

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

When both her young children became seriously ill,

349

00:36:40,000 --> 00:36:44,000

the emotional stress and financial pressure were overwhelming,

350

00:36:44,000 --> 00:36:47,000

and Louise began to overeat.

351

00:36:47,000 --> 00:36:50,000

It's okay. It'll make you better.

352

00:36:50,000 --> 00:36:56,000

I would actually hide food just for emergencies for me,

353

00:36:56,000 --> 00:36:58,000

because I knew that it did comfort me.

354

00:36:58,000 --> 00:37:01,000

So after things were quiet and everything was taken care of,

355

00:37:01,000 --> 00:37:06,000

instead of falling apart emotionally and exhaustedly, crying, or just falling asleep,

356

00:37:06,000 --> 00:37:10,000

I would go to the kitchen and bring out my goodies.

357

00:37:10,000 --> 00:37:13,000

Chocolate is probably one of my favorite things,

358

00:37:13,000 --> 00:37:18,000

and I would get so excited because I'm looking through the top of the chocolate,

359

00:37:18,000 --> 00:37:21,000

and I'm thinking, okay, this is my favorite, I'm going to eat this, I'm going to eat that.

360

00:37:21,000 --> 00:37:25,000

Knowing in the back of my mind, it didn't matter which one I started with,

361

00:37:25,000 --> 00:37:28,000

because I was going to finish the box.

362

00:37:28,000 --> 00:37:31,000

Louise tried to end the binging, but couldn't.

363

00:37:31,000 --> 00:37:38,000

When I reached 187 pounds, I realized that now it's not an ego issue, it's a health issue.

364

00:37:38,000 --> 00:37:44,000

I went from the high protein diets, the low carb diets, the watermelon diet,

365

00:37:44,000 --> 00:37:49,000

a grapefruit diet, I took prescription diet pills, and none of these worked.

366

00:37:49,000 --> 00:37:53,000

Just could not get it.

367

00:37:53,000 --> 00:37:57,000

Louise decided to take a chance and visit Yafim.

368

00:37:57,000 --> 00:38:05,000

After her session, she immediately felt different, and within three months saw positive results.

369

00:38:05,000 --> 00:38:09,000

I had lost 17 pounds, and now it's down to 20 pounds.

370

00:38:09,000 --> 00:38:11,000

So I feel good about that.

371

00:38:11,000 --> 00:38:17,000

I think it's a very healthy one to two pounds a week, and I like that.

372

00:38:17,000 --> 00:38:21,000

I have a new feeling and outlook emotionally towards food.

373

00:38:21,000 --> 00:38:25,000

It will never have the power over me that it wants had.

374

00:38:25,000 --> 00:38:29,000

But where did Yafim's gift for healing come from?

375

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

As he tells it, he was delivering artwork one day, and a stranger walked up to him on the street

376

00:38:35,000 --> 00:38:40,000

and said something about his having a very strong energy field.

377

00:38:40,000 --> 00:38:46,000

It turned out to be a researcher from a Soviet laboratory that was studying the paranormal.

378

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

And this person persuaded him to come to the laboratory and have some tests conducted.

379

00:38:52,000 --> 00:38:58,000

Evidently, when he put his hands on or over plants, the plants perked right up.

380

00:38:58,000 --> 00:39:02,000

At one point, a researcher in the laboratory was suffering from a migraine,

381

00:39:02,000 --> 00:39:07,000

and without really quite knowing what he was doing, he removed the pain.

382

00:39:07,000 --> 00:39:11,000

He took the pain away.

383

00:39:11,000 --> 00:39:15,000

And that's when he realized that although he wasn't quite sure what he was doing,

384

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

he was definitely doing something to heal people.

385

00:39:20,000 --> 00:39:27,000

In 1979, Yafim moved to America, where his curative powers were soon touted by the media.

386

00:39:27,000 --> 00:39:31,000

Yafim also attracted the attention of the medical world.

387

00:39:31,000 --> 00:39:37,000

In 1982, two Harvard University Health Service doctors decided to do a clinical trial.

388

00:39:37,000 --> 00:39:41,000

The goal was to verify Yafim's success rate.

389

00:39:41,000 --> 00:39:47,000

Two psychotherapists asked Yafim to come and work with a number of patients of theirs

390

00:39:47,000 --> 00:39:49,000

whom they had treated without success.

391

00:39:49,000 --> 00:39:54,000

These were people with fear of needles, phobias, smoking, pain.

392

00:39:55,000 --> 00:39:58,000

They first observed the healing sessions.

393

00:39:58,000 --> 00:39:59,000

Are you actually a doctor?

394

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

No, I'm not a doctor.

395

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

Can you help me get over my fear of needles?

396

00:40:02,000 --> 00:40:05,000

Well, of course I can. Of course. I want you to sit in this chair.

397

00:40:05,000 --> 00:40:08,000

Come over here. Sit here. I watch.

398

00:40:08,000 --> 00:40:10,000

Watch. Watch.

399

00:40:11,000 --> 00:40:14,000

Anybody have questions for me? Nobody question?

400

00:40:14,000 --> 00:40:18,000

The doctors then kept track of the trial group for four months.

401

00:40:19,000 --> 00:40:24,000

He saw all of these patients and managed to cure 85% of them.

402

00:40:25,000 --> 00:40:26,000

Tell me about the tetanus shot.

403

00:40:26,000 --> 00:40:29,000

Well, when I went into the doctor's office, I wasn't nervous at all.

404

00:40:29,000 --> 00:40:31,000

I had no fear of the needle.

405

00:40:31,000 --> 00:40:35,000

When the Harvard doctors studied what he had done,

406

00:40:35,000 --> 00:40:39,000

they were able to conclude that he had not hypnotized anyone.

407

00:40:39,000 --> 00:40:41,000

No, no, it wasn't like hypnosis at all.

408

00:40:42,000 --> 00:40:44,000

In fact, they weren't really sure what he had done.

409

00:40:44,000 --> 00:40:47,000

They just knew that whatever he did, it worked.

410

00:40:49,000 --> 00:40:54,000

The published results from the Harvard trial state that Yafim's powers were genuine,

411

00:40:54,000 --> 00:40:57,000

as were the positive results.

412

00:40:58,000 --> 00:41:03,000

The Harvard study at most shows that there is some real effect here,

413

00:41:03,000 --> 00:41:05,000

most probably a placebo effect.

414

00:41:05,000 --> 00:41:09,000

And when they state that something real happened,

415

00:41:09,000 --> 00:41:12,000

they don't mean real psychic power or anything like that,

416

00:41:12,000 --> 00:41:17,000

but that a real mental power in the patients themselves happened.

417

00:41:17,000 --> 00:41:20,000

I don't think Yafim has any special power at all,

418

00:41:20,000 --> 00:41:25,000

other than the power to convince people that they can implement change in their own lives.

419

00:41:27,000 --> 00:41:30,000

Although Yafim's gift remains undefinable,

420

00:41:30,000 --> 00:41:33,000

both Miranda and Louise believe in it.

421

00:41:33,000 --> 00:41:35,000

I don't think anybody knows how it works.

422

00:41:35,000 --> 00:41:39,000

I just know that it does work, and I've been very successful with it.

423

00:41:42,000 --> 00:41:46,000

You may go see him and say, I don't understand a word this man says.

424

00:41:46,000 --> 00:41:48,000

I don't know what he's doing.

425

00:41:48,000 --> 00:41:51,000

You can be suspect or you can say, you know what, I go around once.

426

00:41:51,000 --> 00:41:53,000

What do I have to lose?

427

00:41:57,000 --> 00:41:59,000

I don't know what I have to lose.

428

00:42:01,000 --> 00:42:06,000

It is hard not to be intrigued by the mad Russian and his mystifying energy,

429

00:42:06,000 --> 00:42:09,000

but is he able to heal with a wave of a hand?

430

00:42:09,000 --> 00:42:13,000

Or is it only the part of suggestion that it will work here?

431

00:42:13,000 --> 00:42:17,000

The truth remains an unsolved mystery.

432

00:42:17,000 --> 00:42:23,000

For more cases that are stranger than fiction,

433

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stories all the more remarkable because they are true.

434

00:42:27,000 --> 00:42:31,000

Join me next time on Unsolved Mysteries.

435

00:43:17,000 --> 00:43:21,000

Unsolved Mysteries