

True, creepy, unsolved mysteries

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Entertainment

Midnight Facts for Insomniacs

Podcast Transcript

(Note: transcript consists of episode outline)

Just a quick shoutout to everyone who has messaged us about our separations and the recent relocation. You've all been amazing, so warm fuzzies all around. Special thanks to our patrons who have reached out and *all* of the patrons because you make this show possible, and also our friends in the discord community, and of course all of you listeners in the midnight masses, this has been a very challenging but also truly heartwarming experience in a lot of ways. So we couldn't be more grateful. And I brought my last car load from the old house today, the move for me is finally official and complete. It's a huge relief.

Now, as the result of the way our release schedule works we have two standard Miffy episodes in October, and I'm planning for them both to be spooky themed. Last year we did the history of Halloween, so we won't repeat it, though I do recommend that episode— One of our more entertaining

historical romps in my opinion—but this year we're going to kick off the month of Sahwhen— not Sam Hain as we learned last year— with an episode about true, creepy, unsolved mysteries. These are not ghost stories per se although you can't rule anything out, but traditional Ghost stories don't scare me, because I don't believe in ghosts, but I do believe that crazy, scary, disturbing things happen all the time in real life with real consequence, actual mysteries do exist in the world, and that's what we're focused on today. these are three of the most famous unsolved creepy mysteries of all time, although I believe llama trauma chose these specific incidents partly because there are some very likely explanations that have been proposed, and two of them I would say are basically resolved, but there will never be consensus and we'll never know for sure. So the creep factor remains, at least for me.

We'll start with a famous chilling incident from the other side of the world. Pun intended.

The first thing to know about the skiing tragedy known as the Dyatlov pass incident is that at the time it had nothing to do with anything called a Dyatlov pass. It happened in the northern Ural mountains in Russia in 1959, near a pass that would eventually be named after one of the victims of the incident: Igor Dyatlov. So right from the beginning we have a weirdly retconned scenario, and not only that, but the Dyatlav Pass of today is about a mile away from where the

incident actually happened, so the name of the tragedy is perfectly apt because it is kind of baffling and make zero sense. Just like the incident itself. In February of 1959, ten young skiers set out on a skiing/hiking/camping expedition to reach Otorten mountain, a peak about six miles from the site of the eventual tragedy. The event was organized by the aforementioned 23-year-old Igor Dyatlov, and I don't want to come across as ageist or some fist-shaking lawn-boomer, but we may have discovered the first explanation for how this all went wrong. I'm not following a 23-year-old on a a frigid mountain odyssey... i'm not following a 23-year-old on a bar crawl. However, as barely-drinking-age Russian hikers go, Dyatlov was pretty badass. Like the rest of the party he was a student at the Ural polytechnical institute, an engineering college, but he was also a certified grade-2 hiker, meaning he was only one step down from the highest hiking certification available in the USSR at the time. I didn't know you could be hiking certified but hey, midnight fact. The certification is based on completing specific benchmarks...to achieve the next level of grade 3, he and his fellow hikers—all of whom shared his grade two certification—would have to complete a trek of 190 miles. So the excursion was a big deal for everyone involved, because if successfully completed it would end up promoting them all to the highest level of hiking certification available at the time. They'd be master hikers, the equivalent of a mountain

somalier. They could taste the snow and know...whether it had been peed on, I don't know.

February btw is the most challenging time of year to attempt that particular hike, and I was trying to think of reasons why choosing to make the trek in the dead of Russian winter would make sense... the only thing I could come up with was, once again, 23. I remember when it felt like a worthwhile accomplishment to do things the hard way. Like, there was a time when I thought there was something noble or admirable about overcoming obstacles that I put in my own path. There isn't. Always do things the easy way. Life is famously nasty, brutish, and short, don't make it any harder than it needs to be. Another Miffy motto: be lazy, and take the easy way out...we are true inspirations. Honestly just don't risk your life to begin with, a mountain isn't worth it. Plus when all of the scenery is covered in snow, everything looks the same, why do you need to experience the exact same visuals at a higher elevation, I don't understand it. But whatever.

So the hikers planned a multi week excursion, we're not talking about a couple of days here— it was scheduled for around two weeks, give or take — and the journey actually started right at the end of January, the 27th to be exact.

Only one day into the hike, on January 28, one of the ten members of the original party, Yuri Yudin, experienced joint pain and turned back. I'm sure he was super upset and disappointed at

the time. "Dammit, joints, always saving me from certain death."

Various members of the group kept diaries and took some photos, so their progress is fairly easy to track up until the mysterious event. We know that four days into the hike, on January 31, they reached the end of the flatland, quickly cached or stored some food and equipment to lighten their loads, and then headed upwards.

Weather conditions deteriorated, and as a result the group accidentally deviated from their course. By the time they figured it out, they decided to just go ahead and camp for the night on the slope, rather than heading back down to flatland, probably because they didn't want to waste any of their upward progress. Climbing is the hard part.

The journals and diaries end here, so everything from this point on is speculation. We do know the aftermath, though. The group was expected to return around February 12, but this was before cell phones and email and text messaging, so when no one heard from the group for a few days after the 12th, no one immediately panicked, the assumption was that they had been delayed and would get in touch by telegram upon their return. But by the 20th, more than a week after the anticipated conclusion of the journey, relatives of the hikers had lost all chill. Understandably. Also no pun intended that time. search and rescue teams were organized, eventually the military got involved, planes and helicopters were activated, it was an all

hands-on deck effort. The tent was located on the 26th of February, almost a week into the rescue operation. According to the student who actually found the tent, named Mikhail Sharavin "the tent was half torn down and covered with snow. It was empty, and all the group's belongings and shoes had been left behind." The tent was relocated to a lab, and forensics examinations concluded that the fabric had been slit open from the inside. footprints of all nine hikers were still detectable , which is a detail that I find weird and amazing, this is almost 2 weeks after the incident occurred and somehow there were still footprints? But regardless, those prints are notable because none of them actually included shoes or proper footwear, mostly barefoot or socks or in some cases one shoe. The tracks lead for about a mile before becoming indistinguishable, covered by snow, but the remains of a fire was discovered near where the tracks terminated, and that's also where the first two bodies were found, shoeless and wearing nothing but underwear. A nearby Pine tree featured some broken branches, and investigators assumed that one of the members of the party had climbed the tree, perhaps trying to spot the original campsite. three more bodies were subsequently located between the tree and the original campsite, and the assumption was that they had been attempting to return to the camp. it took more than two months to locate the remaining four bodies. they were found under 13 feet of snow about 200

feet from the pine tree.

The circumstances surrounding these last four were perplexing. The original five bodies had showed no signs of injury other than presumed hypothermia. There was a small crack on the skull of one of the victims, but nothing that would have been life-threatening. however, the four bodies that were located later were a different story. One had extreme skull damage, two of the other bodies sported dramatic chest wounds, basically a collapsed sternum, and investigators asserted that the kind of force required to cause those injuries would be comparable to a car crash. but there were no external signs of those chest injuries, the skin wasn't broken, all of this was internal, indicating crushing pressure rather than some kind of impact with a blunt weapon that would have torn and damaged flesh.

There were however external signs of damage to the *faces* of the four buried bodies. One of the female victims was missing her tongue, her eyes, portions of her lips and cheeks. Another hiker was also missing his eyes and one, weirdly enough, was missing his eyebrows. Investigators concluded that these injuries were postmortem, and I feel like the culprit here seems pretty obvious but we'll just go ahead and pretend that this adds to the mystery for now. The final and often repeated strange, mysterious detail is that one of the sets of clothing was found to contain traces of radiation.

So you're a smart guy Duncan,

applying your Sherlock Holmes like powers of deductive reasoning, tell me if you have a theory that could explain any of this. And then I'll tell you what Internet sleuths and conspiracy theorists and finally modern scientist have to say about the subject.

Let's start with the worst and most offensive theory, because we might as well get that out-of-the-way.

unfortunately you can't escape the fact that this was the 1950s and somehow ignorance and racism were going to rear their ugly heads... in this case, the area around the mountain was inhabited by an indigenous group of people known as the Mansi. (Mānsi). When the second group of bodies was found with wounds indicating a violent end, suspicion fell on the local indigenous tribe and many of them were "interrogated." I have a feeling it wasn't a particularly civilized and diplomatic form of interrogation. The rationale for blaming this tribe went something like this: the savage Mansi natives had taking offense to white people intruding on their domain and embarked on a murderous rampage, or perhaps they had taken mushrooms or some type of mind altering hallucinogen during one of their primitive rituals and become raving slobbering savages so I guess they attacked in the middle of the night, which somehow caused the hikers to cut their way out of their own tents, flee a mile and then start a fire, all while being savagely slaughtered, or wait I guess only four of them were Savagely slaughtered while the others

were slaughtered via hypothermia? And the Savage slaughter consist of not beating them or stabbing them but sitting on their chests, so as not to create any wounds, and I guess it was the entire tribe that sat on their chest because of the tremendous force that would've been needed, this was like a Yertle the turtle situation or whatever, with all of the Mansi people stacked on top of each other? Also, these Wiley savages were somehow so sneaky that they left no footprints, even though clear footprints of the nine hikers were easily identified. But we all know that natives know how to cover their tracks, they are very sneaky and move like ghosts through the forest, at least if you are a silly racist. This theory is bonkers and stupid and we're going to just let it go, which is what investigator should have done but again, 1950s. To be fair, government investigators eventually did mostly ruled out this possibility, which was very inconvenient for them because there were no other easy scapegoats and so all of the files from the investigation were promptly classified and hidden from public view. True story. I guess they just figured if they hid everything people would forget it happened, this was the infantile cover-your-eyes-and-no-one-can-see-you misunderstanding of object permanence,

The investigation wasn't officially reopened until 2019. One explanation proposed was that the specific conditions of the campsite had created essentially a wind vortex, a terrifying sound that might have panicked the

hikers and sent them into a frenzy. And, OK. I'm more afraid of freezing to death in my underwear than I am of loud noises but that's just me. I guess in this version some of the fleeing hikers fell into some type of snow hole and crush their chest, whatever. It's a theory. Somehow. This is a thing that enough people took seriously to write it down in articles about the case, it's a crazy world. another theory was that the Russian government might have been testing some type of weapon nearby. in particular the culprit was surmised to be so-called parachute mines, concussive explosives that are dropped from above and parachute to their targets, so maybe the hikers panicked at the sound and reverberations of the mines and fled the tent and a few of them were actually struck by the blasts while the others died of hypothermia. yet another theory involves alcohol and hormones. Maybe there was an argument or some type of sexual tryst gone wrong, and the group evolved into horny chaos, and slaughtered each other in the woods, again by crushing each other's chests, maybe it was a crushing fetish? We don't know Kingsham and also, this is stupid and definitely didn't happen.

The most popular conclusion is the one that seems the most obvious. An avalanche was originally ruled out due to the location of the campsite: it didn't seem like angle of the slope on which they were camped was severe enough to sustain an avalanche. However an

avalanche could have started at a higher elevation, an event known as a slab avalanche, which hit the tent of the hikers and probably jolted them awake, they would have cut their way out of the tent and fled to a lower elevation, splitting into multiple groups during the chaos, and hypothermia took four of them relatively quickly. A few of them were able to start a fire and climb a tree, but eventually succumbed to hypothermia as well. The final group was unlucky enough to either be hit by a subsequent slab avalanche and crushed to death or they fell into a snow pit and died. This is the part that still bothers me.

Scavenger animals would have been responsible for the facial wounds, obviously.

So this theory does fit all of the evidence, except maybe the radiation? Honestly there is no single theory that doesn't seem like a stretch, just because the circumstances are so strange. In particular I'm bothered by the four crushed bodies, how were they the only ones struck by an avalanche, was it a skinny avalanche? or if they fell into a hole, how did they fall so hard that they completely crushed their chests, it's a little bit baffling. This is one of those truly confounding mysteries that will never be fully resolved, and that's why we're covering it today and why it will continue to be a source of fascination for generations to come. Dyatlov Pass.

The hotel Cecil incident

This next real-life mystery exists at the nexus of so many different coincidences and urban legends and conspiracy theories and connected pieces of media that it couldn't help but become a phenomenon. It's disturbing and compelling and stomach-turning and genuinely creepy but above all just...sad.

And it all started with security footage from an elevator. Specifically one of the elevators at the historic Cecil hotel in downtown Los Angeles, a hotel with a long, seedy, complicated history and a reputation for nefarious criminal—and even paranormal—activity.

So I'm going to describe the footage as best I can. It's the last day of January, 2013. The black-and-white security camera is mounted on the rear, top left corner of the elevator. So anyone viewing the footage is looking across at the elevator doors from a slightly upward and off-axis angle. Elisa Lam, a 21-year-old tourist from Canada, enters the elevator, swinging her arms jauntily. She's ethnically Asian, slightly built, wearing a red sweatshirt, black workout shorts, and sandals. She initially seems carefree and relaxed, and the only unusual behavior is that she presses all of the buttons in a row. Presumably one of the buttons must be some type of door lock, because the elevator doors remain open as the subsequent events transpire. After a few moments she backs up against the wall of the elevator, and then seems to become agitated. She peers out of the elevator doors, and then backs up tightly against the wall again. Her

hands are clasped at her waist. And then she suddenly scoots over to the corner of the elevator closest to the doors and the buttons where she can't be seen. It's as if she's hiding, playing a game of hide and seek, every once in a while she creeps toward the open elevator door and glances out into the hallway. And this is when it gets increasingly strange and erratic. She steps out of the elevator, then begins an almost choreographed series of steps, first to the side, then a step back into the elevator, then out to the left, almost like a square dance with her hands in her pockets. she disappears out of frame to the left of the elevator doors. After a few moments she re-enters the elevator, this time clearly agitated. And the fact that the elevator doors haven't closed and the elevator hasn't moved does seem genuinely unsettling. She begins pressing the buttons compulsively, over and over again, not quite panicked but no longer calm. The elevator door stubbornly remain open, the elevator doesn't move. She exits again, moves out of frame to the left, and then her right arm reappears and she begins what seems to be some new dance, less square dance and more fluid, almost like a hippy at a Grateful Dead concert. moving her arms rhythmically, and then almost wringing her hands together and finally making a series of strange, erratic, splayed- finger motions as if she's casting a spell or pantomiming or maybe even gesturing in sign language to someone out of the frame. She finally exits to the left, but

the elevator doesn't move for another thirty seconds. And then suddenly the elevator door pistons closed. I'll admit, this entire sequence of events is spooky.

And with that, Elisa Lam disappeared. she would never be seen alive again. Any thoughts?

OK so let's give the full context here. The Hotel Cecil had been a swank 700-room facility in the roaring 20s; established in 1924 it was never exactly lavish but it was trendy, reasonably upscale and profitable. However, less than a decade after it opened, the depression of the 1930s hit Los Angeles hard and the neighborhood around it began to degrade, eventually morphing into the infamous Skid Row, an area of fifty sprawling city blocks home to one the most stable populations of homeless people in the United States. Like, neighborhoods often decline or gentrify overtime, but Skid Row has been assessed pool longer than any other American cesspool. And all I can think of when I hear the words of Skid Row is little shop of horrors. I love that song. Unable to attract an upscale clientele, the hotel Cecil became an alternative to Apartment living for poor people, anyone who couldn't qualify for a lease and didn't have credit or a work history. It was a drug den and flop house, basically. Let'sHookers and pimps and drug addicts. A great place to party and have sex and probably get murdered.

A search of historical records reveals

at least 17 reported deaths, but the former manager of the hotel claims that in the decade she worked there at least 80 people passed away in various rooms, mostly drug related, but homicide wasn't rare. "Cecil became a notorious rendezvous spot for adulterous couples, drug activity, and a common ground for prostitutes.

In 1964, a retired telephone operator named "Pigeon Goldie" Osgood, who had been a well-known and well-liked long-term resident at the hotel was found dead in her room. She had been raped, stabbed, beaten and her room ransacked. Jacques B. Ehlinger was charged with Osgood's murder because he was seen covered in blood roaming the streets close to the hotel, but was later cleared as a suspect." So wait. Are investigators just going to gloss over the fact that this guy was wandering around covered in blood... it wasn't pigeon Goldie blood so what can you do. Apologies for the inconvenience sir, carry-on with your murderous rampage, at least until we figure out who you've slaughtered. Famously the night stalker, Richard Ramirez, stayed at the Cecil hotel during his crime spree in the 1980s. The owners of the Cecil, seeing the writing on the wall, so to speak—in this case definitely written in blood and/or feces—eventually resorted to a unique tactic: they split the Cecil in two, creating a new branded hotel within the hotel called the "stay on Main." The idea was to divide the building into separate entities and market to two different demographics, stay on Main

wouldn't have the same baggage and seedy reputation as the hotel Cecil. For this to work the owners had to ensure that the occupants of the two separate hotels would have minimal interaction with each other. So they actually built separate lobbies, separate front doors, and specific floors were designated for the new hotel. The tenants stayed on the lower floors, while the stay on Main took the middle floors, and the Cecil was the top.

The only place where the two hotels intersected were the elevators. So if you were registered at the stay on Main you were sheltered from all of the crackheads and sociopaths and sex workers of the Cecil hotel until you needed to get to your room, or exit the hotel, or go to dinner, this seems like a foolproof plan.

So back to our story. it's important to note that Elisa Lam was not technically staying at the hotel Cecil, as is commonly reported, but rather was a guest of the comparatively swanky stay on Main. But in the elevator she would have encountered the creepy locals, and thus the footage I previously described fueled rampant Internet conspiracy theories. Online sleuths assumed that her strange and erratic behavior must've meant that she was being pursued by one of the low class hotel Cecilians...that doesn't really work. Basically they assumed she had been accosted or was afraid of being accosted by someone from Hotel Cecil, maybe the same someone who

was eventually responsible for her disappearance.

Now Elisa disappeared January 31, on the day she was scheduled to check out of the hotel and head right here to Santa Cruz California for the final leg of her trip. Over the following days word of her disappearance spread and her parents pled publicly for help. In an effort to drum up some tips, police released the elevator footage. This was a miscalculation. The creepy inexplicable video went viral, and the Internet did with the Internet does: turn everything into a travesty. Dammit Walter, why does everything have to be a travesty with you?

Citizens of the Internet quickly learned that a musician who went by the name of morbid had stayed at the hotel a full year before Elisa lam was a visitor, he was a Goth metal kid kind of in the vein of Marilyn Manson. Morbid had posted some YouTube videos during his stay at the hotel, and he wore make up and had long hair, so even though this guy was out of the country during Elisa's disappearance, according to the Facebook he was suspect number one. But all of the Internet sleuthing and the flood of erroneous useless tips jamming police hotlines went nowhere, shockingly. Days went by with no progress.

Elisa had been missing for a couple of weeks when other residents and guests of the Cecil noticed that their water pressure was fluctuating, and the water itself seemed discolored "tasted funny." 29 days after her

disappearance hotel maintenance finally decided to address the problem, and they trudged their way up to the water tank on the roof of the hotel to investigate. Elisa's naked, decomposed body was found bobbing in the tank. Her clothing was at the bottom.

Once again the Internet went to work. Clearly Alyssa had been murdered by some night-stalkerish resident of the hotel Cecil, the same psychopath who was stalking her by the elevator, then murdered her and disposed of her body in the water tank.

And many people are STILL convinced of this theory, despite the fact that it's completely bonkers. So this person murdered the girl, picked up her body, carried her to the roof, somehow dragged her up a steep ladder that led to the roof of the stairwell, then hauled her across some pipes to the hatch of the water tank... it's a thin theory. A bit Soggy, you might say.

Occam's razor provides the answer to this one, this story has all of the perfect elements needed to go viral but in retrospect is not nearly as much of a mystery as it seems.

As you probably guessed, Alyssa suffered from mental illness. She was diagnosed bipolar, and had a history of posting mildly disturbing blogs on Tumblr. She'd been open about what she called her "chemical imbalance" and lamented the fact that she couldn't be normal and complained about having to take pills. She even posted pictures of her cocktail of pills...it

becomes clear through reading her journal entries that she doesn't like taking medication and frequently stops, against the advice of her parents and medical practitioners. Despite dealing with frequent manic and depressive episodes, Elisa had decided that a solo trip to the West Coast would be the key to finding her self-confidence and independence. But her behavior in Los Angeles became increasingly erratic. She was removed from a taping of the Conan O'Brien tv show in Burbank for being somehow disruptive, details are sketchy, we do know that Elisa's roommates at the hotel had complained frequently that she was acting strangely and writing leaving passive aggressive Post-it notes scrawled with cheerful messages such as "leave" or "get out" on their belongings. On the last day of her stay, hotel management even moved her to a solo room to try to keep the peace. Later that day She reportedly had an outburst in the hotel lobby yelling, " i'm crazy, but so is LA."

Judging from the video, she was not in a healthy frame of mind. She was 100% manic, and based on her actions also most likely suffering from paranoia. She probably felt that she was being pursued, and was looking for places to hide. If the water level in the tank had been high she would have been able to reach the hatch to climb back out, but when the water level was low there would have been no escape. She most likely removed her clothes because it was weighing her down. Remember

when I said this was sad? The creepy part is the elevator video and the fact that people were drinking Deadgirl water, but as I mentioned, ultimately this is just a sad reminder of the toll of mental illness. take care of each other, guys. And also take care of yourself. Take your meds. Please.

Somerton Man

Final mystery.

Southern Australia, December 1st 1948. A dead body was discovered at Somerton Park beach. It was a middle-aged man who was wearing a suit and appeared to have been resting, lying prone with his head against the seawall, his legs extended and his feet crossed, an unlit cigarette on the collar of his coat. The body was located directly across from the "crippled children's home," which—spoiler—has zero relevance but struck me as simultaneously tragic and bizarrely offensive in the way that only well-meaning mid-20th-century charities could be, so I'm throwing it in there.

No cause of death could be immediately determined, and the man seemed outwardly to be in perfect health. "According to... pathologist, [John Burton Cleland](#), the man was of "Britisher" appearance [I don't know what that means. My first thought was bad teeth and then I felt guilty] and thought to be aged about 40–45; he was in "top physical condition"...180 centimetres (5 ft 11 in) tall, with grey eyes, fair to ginger-coloured hair,

[slightly grey around the temples, with broad shoulders and a narrow waist, hands and nails that showed no signs of manual labour, big and little toes that met in a wedge shape, like those of a dancer or someone who wore boots with pointed toes; and pronounced high calf muscles consistent with people who regularly wore boots or shoes with high heels or performed ballet." I have so many questions already and none of them are related to his cause of death. I want to know about this guy's life. a ballet-dancing ginger businessman who looks British...this is already the best mystery we've covered. I'm captivated.

unfortunately it can only go downhill from here. there are no possible scenarios better than the ones that I'm already making up in my head.

All of the labels on the man's fashionable clothes—a pull-over and double breasted jacket in an American style—had been removed and his head was bare. This might've been the most bizarre detail honestly, as I understand it hats were pretty much mandatory in 1948. I believe that showing the top of your head in the 1940s was like walking around in 2023 with your penis hanging out. I'm not an expert, so take that with a small grain of salt but it sounds correct.

No wallet nor form of identification was found on his body, and even after police published his photo no one came forward to identify him. In his pocket were the following items: a bus ticket from the nearby city of Adelaide, a rail ticket from Adelaide to the beach,

notably unused, a metal comb and a pack of juicy fruit gum, some cigarettes and matches. A few beachgoers from the day before claimed to have seen the man in the same position while he was alive and moving, with one couple claiming that they witnessed the man raise his arm and then watched it drop limply to his side.

Contradicting the man's healthy outward appearance, an autopsy revealed various internal obstructions and maladies, his insides were basically a hot mess. Not literally because he'd been dead for a while. Cold guts. Sounds like cold cuts, and now i'm not hungry anymore.

"There was blood mixed with the food in the stomach. Both kidneys were congested, and the liver contained a great excess of blood in its vessels. ...The spleen was strikingly large ... about 3 times normal size ... there was destruction of the centre of the liver lobules revealed under the microscope. ... acute gastritis hemorrhage, extensive congestion of the liver and spleen, and the congestion to the brain."

Poisoning seemed to be the most likely cause of death.

A month and a half later, a briefcase was found at the Adelaide railway station. Consistent with the man's clothing, all tags and labels had been removed. The briefcase had been checked into the cloakroom of the station at 11 AM on November 30, the

morning before the body was discovered. It contained slippers, a change of clothing and some tools, scissors, screwdriver, knife, a small sewing kit, and a stenciling brush (which is a brush used for marking cargo with stencils, midnight fact). On a tie the name T. Keane could be deciphered... that name was also found on a laundry bag and a singlet. Since all of the other tags and any identifying information had been removed, police assumed that the name might've been intended to throw them off, but couldn't be sure. there were some marks indicating dry cleaning had been performed recently but publicizing those marks in the hopes of matching them to any dry cleaner's records proved fruitless, and no foreign country reported anyone missing with the name T Keane.

A few days after the discovery of the body, an inquiry revealed another puzzling clue: a tiny piece of rolled up paper imprinted with the words *Tamám Shud* was located stitched into one of the man's trouser pockets. It was determined to be the final phrase printed in the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*. *Omar Khayyam* was a poet, known as the "astronomer poet of Persia," and his rubaiyat—or book of quatrains—had been translated 100 years earlier in 1859 by English author Edward Fitzgerald. The phrase can be roughly translated to "ended" or "finished."

Because the scrap of paper had been torn from a specific book, the police

appealed to the public to locate the source. It seemed like a longshot, but somehow this actually worked, though the details of the person who discovered the book and the exact circumstances of the discovery are sketchy at best. The generally accepted version of events is that the book was found in the backseat of a parked car in the nearby town of Glenelg Southern Australia. The man who found the book in his car is also a mystery; he was identified only by the pseudonym Ronald Francis, and his actual identity has never been released.

After the scrap of paper was successfully matched to the book, further investigation revealed a scrawled cypher, all in caps, faintly imprinted toward the back. The meaning has never been determined.

The second line of the code or cypher was crossed out as if it had been an error, and it is identical to the beginning of the second-to-last line except for the final letter, an I in the crossed out version instead of an A. As we learned in previous episode, short cyphers utilizing a one-time pad would be practically unbreakable, so if that were the case it will never be cracked.

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There was also a phone number in the

back of the book, and this is REALLY weird...the number belonged to a nurse named Jessica Ellen "Jo" Thomson who lived only 400 meters from where the body was discovered. But when questioned, she claimed to have no knowledge of who he was or how he might have obtained her phone number. She said that a man had shown up earlier that year and asked a neighbor about her...though why the neighbor would be giving out her phone number to strangers I have no idea. The whole thing was very sketchy, and her daughter would later claim that Jo Thomson definitely knew the identity of the Somerset man.

There have been a ton of supposed identifications over the years, but the most promising potential break in the case came just last year, in 2022. The body had been exhumed in 2021 as a result of two Australian governmental operations called persist and persevere, which were intended to help identify the remains of unidentified bodies in southern Australia. kind of a weird name for programs Identifying people who did not persist nor persevere, but ok. I guess none of us ever do. You can only persist in persevere for so long. According to professor Derek Abbott, who examined the body and worked with renowned American genealogist Colleen Fitzpatrick on the identification, DNA evidence indicated the Somerton Man's likely identity as that of one Carl "Charles" Webb, who was not a spy or soon nor even a particularly mysterious

individual but rather was a very non-mysterious electrical engineer who had been born in 1905, making him 43 at the time of death. He was the son of a baker and by all accounts a solitary, suicidal, friendless domestic abuser who was violent toward his wife and wrote poems about death. This tracks. His wife fled in 1946 and never saw her husband again, she eventually filed for divorce solo, on the grounds that her husband had disappeared. Also lending credence to the Charles Webb theory, there are no photos or documents or reported sightings of Carl beyond 1947. So the current leading theory is that the Somerset man was a sad, lonely, angry, domestic abuser who was pushed over the edge by the loss of his wife and committed suicide by poison. So, mystery solved...probably? The DNA evidence doesn't seem to have been airtight, this wasn't fresh blood at the scene but instead the source was strands of hair taken from a plaster "death mask" that had been made by the police during the original investigation, and then the DNA was matched to a distant relative. "By filling out this tree, we managed to find a first cousin three times removed on his mother's side," said Abbott. And on July 23, they matched DNA obtained from the hair to DNA tests taken by Webb's distant relatives." The fact that Carl disappeared right around that time does seem compelling, but doesn't explain the missing clothing-tags and lack of identification, as if he wanted to be discovered but didn't want to be identified. It doesn't explain the

woman's phone number, and the sketchy circumstances around her denials. Or the cypher...Carl liked to gamble on horse races and so there's been speculation that the code could have been the names of particular horses, although I don't understand how that makes sense. Why would he encrypt horse names... so that other people wouldn't find out what his bet was going to be? Like he had some hot tips so he encoded them? Was he worried people were going to search his pockets before he could place his bets? I don't know. How did his book show up in some random dudes car? And why did he have ballerina toes? If you're left with one enduring mystery from this episode, it must be that. We must solve the mystery of the Somerton man's pointy feet. So I think we ended on a good one because this is a real mystery and even the answers just lead to more questions.

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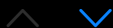
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I found out about MFFI off AHC Podcast about 6 month ago and have become a huge fan. My job as a truck driver has become so fun now by listening to both Shane and Duncan's antics and facts and fantastic humour. I know not o it will I learn something new I will get a laugh every time I listen to a new episode. I have told so many people to give you guys a listen and I wish you all the success you both deserve. 5 stars definitely Allyn78

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·09/18/2023

2:40



Shane



htxjperk • 3 days ago

This episode was great! I will have to add this to my group of episodes that I listen to consistently. Keep up the good work! As per usual, and forever after... knowledge is power, sleep is overrated!



Blizzard the Fem x3 • 7 days ago

Awesome episode, as always guys! Love the show, can't wait for the next one



ninja • 7 days ago

Good, this was a good episode



Ampary • 7 days ago

I like the audio. It's less hollow. I don't have discord because my mom sucks. But this episode was awesome. I like the throw back.



2:40



Shane



Immastrawberry • 8 days ago

Dude that drone is basically the worse version of the umbrella hat



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