

Killer Beasts: Notorious Cases of Animal Attacks

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Entertainment

Midnight Facts for Insomniacs

Podcast Transcript

(Note: transcript consists of episode outline)

I usually jump right into the episodes but there is an extremely important order of business, one of our insomniacs in the discord community transcribed all of our episodes and then did a word search and calculated the expletives. This is glorious. And also, now I feel like we need to dial back on the profanity a bit. His chart is a little sobering. Our favorite curse-word by far is the F word, 1,961 instances and that's not including last week or any of the After Midnight episodes. Notice I'm saying F word because I don't want to contribute to the total, it already feels excessive.

We've said "bitch" the least, only 162 times, that seems low. We need to step it up for equality. I guess the B word can apply to anyone, it's not gender specific unless you're talking about a dog.

So anyway, thanks neo from the discord for calling us out or whatever the point of this was, I enjoyed it

regardless.

Also for anyone who doesn't know I'm back to performing standup shows regularly, I will be at Rooster T Feathers on February 1 hosting their new talent night, and then I'll be doing a weekend there shortly after, I'm opening for Laurie Kilmartin the weekend of March 1, I'm also at the crows nest on January 15, Comedy Oakland on January 20, and greater purpose comedy night in Santa Cruz on January 13, I think some of those will have already passed by the time we release this episode. But check Shanerogers.net for details.

Now on to the episode!

We've talked about this before, Duncan, so here's a quick pop quiz, and I'm expecting you to know this answer. (I feel like I need to do more pop quizzes, this podcast is basically like homeschooling for you and some of the insomniacs, so there needs to be some accountability. I've gotta make sure all of this information about clowns and pony massacres is being retained. It's very important. Maybe homeschooling isn't the best description...that has a mixed track record. Typically the professor aka dad is more concerned with making sure the kids *don't* learn things, you don't want them exposed to dangerous lies like the world is round and cousins shouldn't marry. Anyway, from a previous episode, pop quiz: what is the most dangerous animal on earth? Correct! Today we are talking about

famous or notorious animal attacks, and technically a mosquito bite is an animal attack—the most destructive animal attack on earth, though not a very dramatic one and none will be featured in this episode. Any animal attack that you can sleep through is probably not going to make for an exciting podcast. But luckily, a mosquito bite is the only form of violent animal attack most of us will experience. Wildlife, especially in America, is not particularly wild when it comes to interacting with humans; we live in a world that has largely been purged of man-eating beasts. Hunting is part of the reason, but mostly we just got lucky. The reason that we are the dominant species on earth is because ice ages and asteroids and viruses and famines killed off our competition, allowing us and our oversized brains to flourish. Never would have happened if nature hadn't cleared the way. Back when T-Rex was patrolling the jungles, our tiny mammalian ancestors weren't going to be climbing any evolutionary tree-rungs. We spent thousands of years playing the role of fuzzy popcorn for the terrible lizards. But the result of our recent run of amazing human luck—which will eventually run out, as we explained in the doomsday episode—is that as a human you have very little to fear from any of the killer beasts we'll be discussing today. And I think that's important to keep in mind as we delve into the horrifying details. These stories are fascinating precisely because of their sensational and

improbable circumstances...it's a lot more likely that a Honda is going to send you to the hospital than a bear. So check those recall notices.

Let's start with some quick animal attack facts from my research minion llama trauma:

The most common animal attack takes the form of a bite, that seems pretty obvious. Kids make up 2/3 of the victims. Because kids are dumb, and kids pull tails. The only time I was legit attacked by an animal was a pet cat when I was like ten, and I fully deserved it. Dog bites are the most common animal-related injury; in the US alone there are around 4.5 million reported dog bites each year. From dogbites.org, "Each day nearly 1,000 U.S. citizens require emergency care treatment for serious dog bite injuries." I'm not questioning this data, it seems logical, but also I feel like they're a little bit biased over at dogbites.org. They're probably not going to tell you that concerns about dog bites are overblown and you should stop stressing. Wouldn't be a good business model.

So 4.5 million annual dog bites, and compare that to only 400,000 cat bites, dogs are actually bigger assholes than cats! Another curse word for our tally. We're contributing to our stats. Gotta keep Neo busy. So yeah, more than 10 times as many dog bites reported per year compared to cat bites. I wouldn't have guessed that. Of course these

are *reported* bites, and so we might not be getting the full story... cat owners tend to suffer in silence. the relationship between cats and humans can be abusive in either direction. Cats will gaslight the hell out of you, I don't know how many times I blamed myself for getting bit by my cat. "Obviously I should have known that even though she was purring and nuzzling my hand she only wanted to be petted for no more than 3.8 seconds." Or maybe the reason dog bites are so much more prevalent is because dogs come into contact with humans in public a lot more often. However, even though dog bites are significantly more common, cat bites are more dangerous. A dog's teeth are relatively blunt and typically result in bruising and shallow breaks in the skin, while cats have sharp needle-like teeth that easily puncture flesh, delivering bacteria from the cat's mouth into the bloodstream, and the wounds can close very quickly because of how fine the incision is. "In a [recent Mayo Clinic study](#), one third of patients bitten on the hand by a cat were hospitalized and two thirds of those patients needed surgery to treat the bite injury. Middle-aged women were the most common victims of cat bites to the hand." It's hard out there for a cat lady. Obviously, the more cats you have, the more potential for bites. It's a similar story with the claws, you may have heard of cat scratch fever, which is a real thing and is actually known as cat scratch *disease*—fever can be a symptom but is optional. There is a cornucopia of

diverse symptoms to choose from. Something for everyone. The disease is caused by the bacteria *Bartonella henselae*. In rare cases it can be fatal, and can lead to the development of serious neurologic or cardiac conditions like [meningoencephalitis](#), [encephalopathy](#), [seizures](#), or [endocarditis](#). And of course exposure to cat feces can result in toxoplasmosis, so in conclusion, cats are filthy little sacks of disease but they keep life interesting. Every interaction with a cat is an adventure; is it going to snuggle you or shred your hand and give you a terrible illness?

Moving down the rungs of the ladder of animal dickheads, there are only about 45,000 reported snakebites a year. Now compare that to 250,000 human bites. You're way more likely to get chomped on by some local weirdo or your FWB than a rattlesnake. Also, I recommend against getting experimental with the type of animal companion you choose. Foxes and raccoons are cute but there's a good chance that if you piss them off they will suddenly remember that they are not domesticated and go full feral on your ass. Plus they smell weird. Just saying. I really recommend sticking to cats, dogs, and fish. Here's a quote from llama trauma's research, and this is why I appreciate her: "unprovoked ferret attacks have caused serious facial injuries." I'm not sure how we determine conclusively if a ferret attack is unprovoked. We're only getting one side of the story here. It's

a person's word against some squeaks and chittering noises. The ferret probably has a different perspective. Now keep in mind that almost all animal bites come from pets. Non-domesticated animal bites make up less than 1% of the total. So a wild critter is generally not going to bite you unless it has rabies or you are messing with its offspring.

As you can probably guess, most of the damage from animal attacks is absorbed by the victim's right arm, because the majority of people are right handed and will attempt to fend a creature off. If you have the presence of mind while being mauled by a bear, you might want to use your left hand to absorb the abuse, because it really sucks trying to make dinner and put on your shoes and wipe your butt with your nondominant hand. During a violent bear-attack I'm sure the first thing on your mind will be tips and tricks from that podcast you listened to one time. Most animal bites—about 2/3—are to the arms and legs, while less than 10% are to the face, but those 10% are the worst of the worst, as we'll see.

So now some strategies in case you ever find yourself facing an aggressive animal.

To begin with, don't attack first. Do not be the aggressor in any encounter with a wild critter or a domesticated one...that seems like a pretty obvious strategy, but you might be surprised at how often this advice is not heeded,

and a couple of the stories I'll be relating to you today involve equal parts fucking around and finding out. So for instance, hypothetically, if a passing stingray catches your eye, admire it from a distance.

Foreshadowing.

Now let's assume you've already taken that first bit of advice to heart, and you are not actively grabbing or accosting or biting or kicking an animal, but you're concerned that you might still be in danger. During any animal encounter it's always a good idea to assess the threat level. Do you find yourself confronted by a tiny, fuzzy and adorable lop-eared bunny rabbit? Nominal threat level. Did you try to pet a bear cub and now find yourself cowering under a 9-foot-tall snarling grizzly? This is cause for alarm. (These scenarios will be escalating, you'll notice.) Are you currently in the digestive track of a Siberian tiger? You should have listened to this episode faster. There will be a part in here where I advise against being eaten by tigers, but I guess maybe I should say that right up front.

I've told my story about the animal trainer that I met while I was in the circus, the guy who was not super friendly to his tigers and ended up losing a paw of his own. I'm not sure what episode that was in, someone from the discord will tell us.

In all seriousness there are different tactics you should employ based on

the species of animal, and even the subspecies. For instance if you encounter a bear you will want to first determine whether it is a black bear or brown bear or grizzly bear. Here's some info from a Guardian article: First tip: **The best way to handle a bear encounter is never to have one.**"

Thanks, Guardian! Snarky jerks.

"Scared of getting in a plane crash? Don't fly. Drive to France, bitches!"

They continue: Do not try to get close to take a picture! That's solid advice.

Try to be as much of a non-idiot as you can muster is good life-advice regardless of bear involvement.

Though I feel like if you are inclined to approach a bear for clout, please, by all means, follow your instincts. One less influencer. See how much influence you have over a charging grizzly. Bears are not impressed by round butts.

1. Regardless of type of bear you're facing, do not run. You're acting just like prey.
2. If it is a black or brown bear, stand tall and make lots of noise. [Basically act like a belligerent jerk, brown bears fear rudeness apparently]
3. If it's a grizzly, remain still and calm. Speak in an appeasing voice and very slowly back away. [If you must pee your pants, urinate as quietly and discreetly as possible.]

So how about a tiger, lion, or mountain lion? Basically the same as a grizzly. Don't run or panic, and stand as tall as

you can, all of my sources indicated that you want to look as formidable as possible. I love when the advice is "try not to be short." I guess I'm screwed. I am snack-sized. Just call me single-serving Shane.

The most dangerous land animal to confront is not a bear or a lion or a tiger but rather a hippopotamus. Hippos kill between 500 and a few thousand people per year in Africa, easily more than 100 times the number of shark deaths and over 20 times as many as are killed by lions. People assume they're related to cows, probably because they are referred to as cows and their offspring referred to as calves, but they're a more close relative of cetaceans...in fact, whales and dolphins and hippos are all included in an overarching suborder called "**Whippomorpha.**" So a hippopotamus is like a killer whale that lives in rivers and lakes but can chase you on to land, and regardless of where you encounter one there faster than you. On land they can reach 20 mph. They can weigh over up to 9000 pounds — that's 4000 kg—and have no natural predators; nothing other than a hand cannon can take down a hippo. They are omnivores and they can and will eat meat; in fact they have teeth like a sabertooth cat, with incisors that can reach over a foot and a half long. **"Hippo's bite is strong enough to snap a crocodile in half.** (NCBI, 2020, AZ Animals, 2021)
A hippopotamus's bite force is 12,600 kPA — or slightly above 1,800 psi. For

comparison, a lion's bite is only 4,500 kPa. This makes the hippo's bite one of the strongest in the animal world, just behind crocodiles. However, it should also be mentioned that the number comes from female hippos, as the males are too aggressive to be tested safely. So, it's very likely that their bite force is even stronger." Their skin is 2 inches thick, so a couple of bullets are not going to take down a hippo.

In 2014 hippopotamus in Niger flipped a boat on the Niger River and killed 12 schoolchildren, plus their teacher and a random villager. If confronted by a hippo, the best advice is to immediately roll into a ball so that you can kiss your ass goodbye. The advice for confronting a hippopotamus is frankly comical. "If you're in the water, **move in the opposite direction of where you saw the hippos.** If you're on land, find cover. You can't outrun a hippo in a straight line, so find a tree, rock or vehicle to get between you and the hippo. This will help slow their attack and perhaps help you get safely to shelter."

In conclusion, hippos are terrifying vicious man eating tanks, and Africa is kind of a terrifying place, I fully intend to go visit the cradle of humanity, it's high on my list, but just be aware that the vast majority of animals who could kill your ass reside there.

Everyone worries about shark attacks but as mentioned they are exceedingly rare, you're more likely to drown in the ocean than be attacked by a shark.

But if you do spot that telltale sharkfin cleaving the water towards you, your best strategy is to displace as little water as possible, do not thrash or panic, swim slowly backward while keeping an eye on the shark. I feel like everyone who was the victim of a fatal shark encounter since the 1970s died with the Jaws theme running through their head. Can you see a shark fin and not think: dah-dum dah-dum dah-dum

So let's wrap up the advice portion of the episode: obviously it's never a good idea to try to pet a strange animal...unless that animal is cute. In which case it's still not a good idea but I'm going to do it anyway. It's definitely never a good idea to *abuse* an animal, because then you deserve whatever awfulness the world throws at you, whether it's in the form of random bad karma or getting dismembered by the animal you abused. Which I guess is just another form of karma. Speaking of which, let's begin the storytelling portion of the episode with maybe the most famous example of animal retaliation. I like this one because it feels like justice, as opposed to some of the other instances on this list which just reveal the tragic pointlessness of life. I'm not getting much sleep lately. Insomnia makes me nihilistic.

Siegfried and Roy

Back before the tiger king, there were two famous tiger *queens* named Siegfried and Roy. I feel like that's an ok joke, I think Siegfried would have

endorsed it.

The motto-slash-catchphrase of famous Vegas magicians Sigfried and Roy was SARMOTI, which was an acronym for Sigfried and Roy Masters of the Impossible. Kind of an ironic catchphrase in retrospect. What happened to them was not only possible but pretty much inevitable, and exposes the ridiculousness of trying to master any facet of life, but particularly any facet of life that weighs 400 pounds and has 3 inch incisors.

Siegfried Fischbacher met Uwe Ludwig Horn—who would become known simply as “Roy”—in 1959 on a German cruise ship named the TS Bremen. Siegfried was a handsome, blonde, 20 year old steward on the ship, and as many cruise ship employees do, he had multiple roles, moonlighting as Delmare the magician and performing rabbit-in-the-hat-caliber magic tricks. It probably kind of undermined his magical credentials when people saw him the next day cleaning the dining rooms and hauling luggage. Seems like if you had any authentic magical abilities whatsoever the first thing you would conjure would be a better job.

Meanwhile Roy was only 15, working as a bell boy on the same ship, and one night he asked Siegfried, “if you can make a rabbit disappear, can you do the same with a cheetah?” He then disclosed three facts: 1, that he had smuggled a cheetah on board, 2, its

name was Chico and 3, it was in his cabin. It is mind-boggling that these two idiots survived as long as they did. Roy had grown up around wild animals because of his family's friendship with the founder of the Bremen zoo, which is presumably where Chico originated. But I'm sure the cheetah was thrilled to be liberated from that zoo and instead locked in a tiny bellboy cabin on a constantly rocking and swaying cruise ship. I have so many questions. I feel like cruise ships take inventory of the giant slabs of meat in the kitchen, did they not notice a couple hundred pounds of beef vanishing every few days? Did Roy bring a big ass litter box on the ship, none of this makes sense but this is a consistent story from all of my sources and they're sticking to it. I feel like the source for my sources was Roy horn, but whatever.

There seems to be some controversy over whether Roy got away with the smuggling of the cheetah on the ship; an Atlantic article claims that Sigfried and Roy soon began performing on the ship with Chico, and the act was a hit. Wikipedia says that they were promptly fired, which seems a little more plausible, but either way they would eventually begin touring on a *different* cruise ship, performing a magical act that incorporated Chico, and the act migrated to nightclubs in Europe, apparently this was back before wildlife-and-workplace-safety laws existed and the world was just a giant circus of wildcat anarchy. Eventually a talent scout offered to bring the Chico act to Las Vegas, and

Vegas was where Sigfried and Roy would become a sensation. It was also around this time in the 1970s when Sigfried and Roy met and befriended a young pre-movie star Arnold Schwarzenegger on muscle beach, and the three would remain friends throughout their lives. It's a crazy world. Might've had something to do with their shared Austrian/German heritage and their shared enjoyment of male musculature. For Arnold the musculature he appreciated was his own, and I'm guessing for Sigfried and Roy...they also appreciated Arnold's musculature. It's hard to find anyone who is willing to go on record saying that Siegfried and Roy were gay, but they lived together like Bert and Ernie all their lives and they were fabulously flamboyant. Have you ever seen the inside of their crazy ass palace? From a linked Atlantic article, "The library has a button that opens a secret door as a hidden speaker announces "SARMOTI!" A massive mural over Siegfried's bed features a young, nude version of him holding two cheetahs on chains, staring down an evil sorcerer." They probably weren't gay though. I wouldn't want to assume. It's almost difficult to convey just how famous Siegfried and Roy became in the 80s. Michael Jackson recorded a theme song specifically for them called "Mind is the magic"; they met with presidents Carter and Reagan and Bush and also hung out with pope John Paul the second. Eventually their act migrated to a massive custom built \$30 million auditorium with 1500 seats

in the appropriately named mirage casino. It was built to their specifications with trap doors and a giant hole in the ceiling to accommodate all kinds of illusions, including a giant mechanical dragon. So I watched an entire performance, you can see it on YouTube: Siegfried and Roy: the magic and the mystery. It's delightfully bonkers. Both of them look like miniature versions of Gaston from beauty and the beast, they have these incredibly square jaws and epic mullets and they wear wizard robes and carry giant magical staffs. There is a sort of nebulous narrative arc that has something to do with a witch who hates tigers. And the tigers btw are involved from minute one. The first illusion is turning the witch into a tiger and then leading the roaring and growling tiger around the stage mere inches from the front row of the audience, there are no barriers. It's insane. Let me just say right off the bat that this tragic event we're going to describe was 100% a best case scenario. It could've gone so much worse in so many ways. And also let me just say, this show I watch involved some basic-bitch magic. It's not far from rabbit-in-a-top hat. They levitate a lady, they saw a lady in half. A lady goes into a box, they open the box and now the lady is not visible because he she is clearly in a compartment at the back of the box, they close the box, a tiger jumps out. If you've ever seen a magic show or a rich kid's birthday party you've seen all of this, minus tigers. Or maybe with the tigers

depending on how rich the kid is. The show I watched involved a ton of silly choreography and strutting around and melodramatic striking of poses and flourishes. Siegfried and Roy even do a little bit of a comedy routine, they both sound like Dracula, it's like two cheesy vampires from the 1800s doing a standup skit. Play clip. In Dracula voice: "I just flew in from Transylvania and boy are my bat wings tired"

There are a bunch of different tricks, I guess, but they all follow the same pattern and they all have the same grand finale: surprise, here's a tiger! Check out this lady caught in a spiderweb. Surprise, here's a tiger! Take a look at this weird contortionist guy kind of dressed like a robot. Surprise, here's a tiger!

My favorite part from Sigfried and Roy: the magic and the mystery at the mirage Las Vegas, is definitely the Tiger's fucking. I'm not kidding. There is a section during which the camera cuts away to a prerecorded bit and we get to witness a very rapey segment of tiger mating. I wish I were making this up. If you're following along and watching at home, it's directly after the super racist segment with the white girl dressed as a geisha and a bunch of samurai swords and the song "Japanese world." Here, you can provide commentary.

Sigfried and Roy were famously workaholics, performing two shows a night six days a week. And of course the problem with them being

workaholics is that it means their animals were also workaholics, even if they weren't capable of understanding the concept of work. Animals can't consent to taking part in an act...this may sound dramatic but I'll say it: animal acts are slave labor. It's like kidnapping a bunch of kids and forcing them to work for you, they don't have any choice and you are 100% exploiting them. The entire operation was high intensity and high stress. Siegfried and Roy were volatile personalities and they had frequent confrontations and threw temper tantrums, both aimed at each other and at their staff. "Roy's principal method of communication was shouting, regardless of his mood. But when someone screwed up around one of his animals, his voice would get lower. [He would say] *I wish to bring to your attention that you're upsetting a goddamn tiger.*" He's like "these animals should be taken seriously, dammit! This is a serious workplace. Now bring me my cape and staff." Maybe listen to your own advice, dude. Both Siegfried and Roy were perfectionists with narcissistic tendencies, Siegfried used to wear a mask and wander through the lobby before shows to revel in the size of the crowd and witness the excitement of the fans. I'm not sure what kind of mask he was wearing in the early 2000s that would've achieved any kind of anonymity. This was pre-Covid, you couldn't just cruise around with a surgical mask because you'd look like a psychopath, so what was he

wearing? He was walking around the lobby with a phantom of the opera mask thinking everyone would just be like, that's totally normal and not terrifying. "Even in the chaos of a packed house, he noticed if a single light bulb was out, his eye wandering to the missing light for the rest of the night. A postshow summons to Siegfried's chambers was the worst possible way for an employee to end the evening. He would sit in his chair, dripping with sweat, pulling on a cigarette. "Tell me why this happened," he would say. "And then tell me why it will never happen again." I'd be like "Tell me why you don't shower before meetings. It will never happen again because I quit, weirdo."

I don't know if you are familiar with this story, but one of Houdini's most famous tricks, beyond taking ill-advised shots to the solar plexus, was making an elephant disappear. Siegfried and Roy resurrected the trick, and began expanding their menagerie to include alpacas, goats, horses, swans, a bunch of big cats, and pythons, and one of my sources was very specific about this: a turkey named Merlin. It seems that their biggest weakness as performers was the actual magic... I'm not an expert but according to people who *are*—and it seemed obvious when watching the show—the actual illusions were unimpressive and boilerplate, which is why Siegfried and Roy insisted on continually bringing in more wildlife and putting the focus on

the animals rather than the magic. Which of course would lead to their downfall. Within the menagerie of animals the focus was always the tigers. And to be fair, Roy genuinely loved these tigers. He was convinced that they loved him back, which is a mistake that we will see a few times during this episode;

anthropomorphizing animals is a common mistake among animal enthusiasts. And I'm guilty of it too. I'm not saying a cat can't have bond with and have affection for a human, but they certainly can't experience and process the complicated stew of emotions that we refer to as love. Neither can dogs, incidentally, but dogs have evolved to strengthen the bond by showing their devotion, while housecats are not truly domesticated, they thrive on disdain and indifference because they don't actually need humans to survive. But either way, Roy was obsessive about his cats. Like the guy from Jurassic Park, he would be present at every Tiger birth, and he "had speakers installed in the kennels so that when he went on vacation, he could call and talk to his cats. He claimed that he spoke to them in huffs and purrs." So Roy spoke tiger, I would like to have seen that. He also rode the white tigers around like horses, and yeah...I think the most shocking element of these first few animal attack stories is how long these wackjobs got away with *not* getting murdered by animals. I could have titled this episode "miraculous stories of longevity against all odds."

About those tigers. "[tigers] can cover more than 20 feet in a single leap. In captivity, they consume seven to 12 pounds of raw flesh each day, and they can weigh as much as 660 pounds. They smell of urine and pheromones..." That's every men's bathroom, so whatever. I think if I were ever faced with a tiger I would also smell of urine and pheromones.

"Tigers are capable of exerting a bite force of more than 1,000 pounds per square inch, and their four canine teeth can be up to three inches long, the largest of any predator...tigers eat nothing but meat." Housecats also need to eat meat btw, they need vitamin A and an essential amino acid called taurine. Unlike dogs, cats are what's known as obligate carnivores... meat is not voluntary, for them.

Now these white-furred tigers favored by Roy are the result of a mutation in a single Bengal tiger named Mohan that was captured in India. One of his female offspring was white and he was bred with her to create the beginnings of a genealogical tree with very few branches, and this means that white tigers are incredibly inbred and prone to all kinds of problems. They were probably dumber than the average tiger which may help explain why it took them so long to realize that Roy was edible. Do you know the name for a group of tigers...like you can have a pride of lions, but there are a couple different names for a gang of tigers. One is an ambush. An appropriate

name.

On October 3, 2003, the show was proceeding according to plan. Despite the fact that Roy was 59 years old and Sigfried was in his 60s, the show itself was very physical for its two stars, They supposedly covered over 5 miles a night because the disappearing and reappearing illusions often in reality consisted of one of the guys dropping under the stage and then scrambling like hell all the way across to the other side of the auditorium. they also battled the fake mechanical dragon and dodged its fire breath, did I mention it was a spectacle? So periodically during the show there had to be some downtime, moments that allowed them to catch their breath. One of those moments was called "the rapport" and consisted of Sigfried walking out on stage under a spotlight with a tiger. On this particular night he claimed to be introducing a brand new tiger named Mantecore. It was spelled a little bit differently than the human-headed, lion bodied, man-eating mythological monster, but still, I feel like you don't want the name of your tiger to sound like foreshadowing. Now the new-tiger announcement was 100% for effect, and it was a blatant lie: Mantecore was seven years old and had apparently performed the same skit over 2000 times. Which probably explains why he snapped. The act consisted of Roy placing a microphone in Mantecore's mouth to elicit a roar, then the tiger would hoist its front paws up on Roy's shoulders

and the two with dance across the stage. I watched this and it is just as insane as it sounds. A couple stats on Manticore: he was 7 feet tall when reared up on his hind legs, he weighed 400 pounds. Roy was...smaller. There are wild discrepancies online when it comes to his height, but he was definitely a short man, I'm guessing based on averages of the estimates that he was around five foot five. If you're not American, that's like 162 centimeters. Smaller than a tiger.

The act went off the rails from the beginning. Manticore wasn't in the right position on stage, so Roy tried to body him over rather than leading him around in a circle which would've been the standard maneuver. The tiger nipped at his hand, and Roy popped him with the microphone, which echoed through the theater with a thudding plosive thwack, and the crowd immediately hushed. It might be a hindsight is 20/20 situation, but the consensus is that everyone immediately knew something was wrong. One of the assistants rushed on stage and tried to distract the tiger but it was too late. Manticore first knocked Roy to the ground with a powerful swipe and then leapt forward, sinking its teeth into his neck before dragging him off stage. It took multiple stage hands blasting Manticore with a fire extinguisher to get the animal to let go.

At the hospital Roy flatlined three times and sustained brain damage as a result. He spent literally months in the hospital and had to learn to eat,

walk, swallow and talk. The US Department of Agriculture investigated the attack—ok, good thing we have the best farmers on the case—and eventually released a 233 page report with conclusions that were all over the map, and spawned a ton of conspiracy theories. The report theorized that the tiger could have been distracted by a beehive hairdo in the front row, or perhaps someone had intentionally released pheromones into the building. Or maybe corn was involved, these were agricultural investigators they had no idea. Ultimately the USDA's recommendation was that maybe in the future it would be a good idea if there were some type of barrier between giant tigers and crowds of people. It wouldn't take me two hundred pages to figure that out. I could have written you a strongly worded paragraph. Mostly cursewords, we would have exceeded all of our totals. When he was eventually able to talk, Roy himself would offer a bewildering excuse for what happened, claiming that he had fainted on stage due to a stroke and the tiger had attempted to drag him to safety, saving his life in the process by piercing an artery and relieving the pressure to his brain. He said, "it was an absolute blessing." K. This is some crazy hardcore revisionist history. Sounds like a domestic violence victim: "The tiger was drunk and it promises it will never happen again." And no I'm not blaming the tiger, I'm blaming the guy, but I'm also not pretending the tiger didn't do this on

purpose. As Chris rock famously said, that tiger didn't go crazy, that tiger went tiger. However, to Roy's credit, he insisted that Mantecore not be euthanized, the tiger was not put down, it died on March 19, 2014 at 17 years old. For perspective, tigers in the wild live about 15 years, and in captivity typically over 20, so he was a little bit young for a captive tiger but still had a reasonably long life.

So this would've actually have made a perfect entry into our Lost And Found video footage, because all of the Siegfried and Roy performances were recorded, but the Mirage refused to release the footage for obvious reasons.

Roy Horn died of coronavirus at age 75 years old, this was in early 2020, he would've been among the first victims of the pandemic. Sigfried died a year later of pancreatic cancer.

Grizzly man

If you've seen the documentary called Grizzly Man by Werner Herzog, then you already know...it's kind of infuriating. And if you saw it the way I did, without knowing anything about the story and just finding it on television, it was infuriating and then confounding and then shocking. I could not understand why someone bothered to make a whole ass documentary about a delusional hippie wackjob out in the woods trying to

commune with bears, and I was not prepared for the big finale. I should have seen it coming, in retrospect. Spoiler alert, he gets ate. And not just him. I'll explain. But for some reason I assumed that no one would put this much time and effort into a documentary that had such a horrific ending. But never underestimate the bleakness of German cinema and German directors. I think it was the *eating* aspect that was most shocking. I wasn't as surprised that the bears killed the guy as I was that they *consumed* him. I guess I just don't think of grizzlies as being man *eaters*, they will kill people when they feel threatened or pissed off but I don't think of them as creatures who dine on humans. Now I know.

Timothy William Dexter, an American from New York state who for much of his life would claim to be Australian and go by the name Timothy Treadwell, was a crazy person who spent 13 summers in Alaska's Katmai national wilderness with the stated goal of saving grizzly bears from nonexistent threats via extremely vague tactics that consisted of screaming and ranting alone in the woods while filming over 100 hours of bonkers-crazy footage that he believed would somehow convince people to not do whatever awful things he imagined they were planning to do to a bunch of bears that they didn't know existed in a remote location that no one goes to. A remote location by the way that is already protected by

the government. In fact, Treadwell was breaking the law by camping for more than seven consecutive days in the nature preserve and hassling the wildlife; no one is legally allowed to bother or kill these bears, and sure, poachers are a thing, but there is not a big market these days for bear meat or bear hats. Grizzly bears are not designated as an endangered species in Alaska. Throughout the whole documentary I don't think we ever see a genuine instance of poaching. Timothy referred to himself as a "kind warrior," but he wasn't particularly kind, he was an angry weird dude with a troubled past littered with drug overdose and assault and firearms conviction, and it becomes clear pretty quickly that he had been shunned from polite society for perfectly valid reasons. I won't say that I was rooting for him to get eaten, that would not be true, but I will say that there are a lot of people I would have been sadder to see turned into grizzly chow. The guy was dangerously delusional; a ton of the footage consist of him scolding the bears after getting swiped or growled at, he will literally be like "bad bear, go back, go back. You don't swipe at me" (play don't you do that clip and then "I love you"). You might notice that Timothy had a very flamboyant and I would say almost effeminate demeanor; I realize that he had relationships with women—in fact, he talks about it on camera and tries very hard to convince the viewer that he is definitely 100% straight as a rail—but I

have to wonder if there was some element of gender or sexual confusion that fed into his sense of alienation from the world. He also goes on these long diatribes about how dangerous bears are and how if you disrespect them they will kill you, and that he has to be an alpha with them and earn their respect, but watching the footage it's very clear that the bears just sort of tolerate him because they're not hungry enough to do what one of the bears eventually got hungry enough to do. (Play danger clip). He's not wrong. There are so many moments where he is way up close to a bear and he's talking about how dangerous bears are and that they could kill and eat him at any minute and he even describes one of the Bears as being super extra aggressive and while he's doing this the bear is closing in on him from behind, and somehow I still didn't see it coming. I was like they wouldn't make me invest an hour and a half in this movie just to kill this guy off. That would make this a complete waste of time." Werner Herzog you demented scamp.

In the Sigfried and Roy's segment we talked about anthropomorphizing wild animals and falling into the trap of believing that animals think the way we do, that they are capable of forming deep emotional bonds, and Timothy took it way further than anyone else on this episode. He fetishized the animals, 100%. I remember when I was a kid I did that, and to some degree I still do it now with cats but at least I'm aware that I

do it, and I know it's silly; Timothy put the Bears on this crazy pedestal as if they were pure and perfect and symbolized everything that was good in the world and the evil humans were out to get them and ruin their lives, it was just this crazy narrative that he created in his head to make himself a hero and to make the bears his companions and almost his children, like he was their shepherd or protector. He often said that he hated the "human world." And when I say he fetishized the bears I'm not kidding. (Play poop video for Duncan)

Treadwell named the bears, for instance there was Ed, and Rowdy, and the Grinch who was kind of a bitchy female bear who did not like Treadwell's annoying ass one bit. I don't blame the grinch, he definitely gave off those delusional Who down in Whoville Pollyanna vibes and the grinch and I are on the same page with not having that shit.

Now for all of his talk about being a loner, and all my talk about him possibly being sexually conflicted, Treadwell did have a girlfriend, Amie Huguenard, and he convinced her to accompany him out to the scary ass middle of bum fuck nowhere and that's probably the most tragic aspect of this story because they both got ate together. I think that's why he lasted so long, the bears were just waiting for him to bring more snacks. He wasn't worth it alone, he was kind of scrawny, but the two of them together was

enough for a meal. There's some crazy and revealing behind the scenes footage when Timothy is talking to someone off camera and telling her that she needs to be quiet and not be in the shot because he needs to look like he's alone. And then he turns to the camera and gives a whole speech saying "I've just been dropped off in the middle of nowhere in the wilderness and I'll be here for the next two months completely *alone*," he says the word ALONE like five times to just really drill down on the lie.

But if he HAD been alone this segment would be 50% less tragic. Timothy and Amie's luck ran out during a particularly lean season, when the Bears were especially aggressive, and since it was autumn they were attempting to bulk up for the winter. Treadwell and Amie had camped near a salmon stream, here bears often went to hunt and fish. According to a memo from Alaska Department of Fish and Game biologist Larry Van Daele, Treadwell set up his bear-viewing camp "in such a way that bears wishing to traverse the area would have had to either wade in the lake or walk right next to the tent. A person could not have designed a more dangerous location to set up a camp."

Now, you have to fly into the Alaskan wilderness, it would be one hell of a hike, so there was a guy named Willie Fulton who used to fly in and pick up Treadwell and drop him off. On

October 6th, 2003, he landed near Treadwell's campsite but there was no sign of Timothy. There was however a big ass bear lumbering toward him and so he hopped in his plane and took off, and it was from the air that he spotted a human rib cage. That's grim. Willy called for help and some other pilots flew in and they killed the bear that was the perpetrator, a 1000 pound grizzly that had been nicknamed the machine. Here is audio from a member of the search and rescue party which turned into a search-and-retrieve-body-parts-party, that's a terrible party, btw, I would decline that invitation, "the bear was all cut open, it was full of people, it was full of clothing, we hauled away four garbage bags full of people out of that bear." Near the campsite the searchers recovered Timothy's decapitated head, plus his right forearm and hand on which his watch was still ticking, and part of his spine.

According to Kevin Sanders' *night of the grizzly, a true story of love and death in the wilderness*, Timothy and Amie had been setting up to record immediately preceding the attack; the lens cap hadn't been removed so the video is just black, and the camera ran out of tape after recording just six minutes of audio. "This, however, was enough time to record the bear's initial attack on Treadwell and his agonized screams, its retreat after Huguenard tells Treadwell to play dead, and when she attacked it, and its return to carry Treadwell off into the forest."

Audio of the attack has supposedly

never been released. The Grizzly Man the documentary includes footage of Werner Herzog listening to the audio, and then telling Jewel Palivak, Treadwell's ex gf and cofounder of his shady charity called Grizzly People, "you must never listen to this."

I however am not good at following instructions. To my constant detriment. I listened online to what is supposedly the audio, you can find this posted a few places and I'm guessing it's *not* real, but it still kind of messed me up. And I was already suffering from one of the worst bouts of insomnia I've dealt with in the last 10 years...this didn't help. Don't be like me, listen to Werner Herzog and not the supposed grizzly man audio because it's not a good time. Basically a lot of horrific screaming and Amie yelling to fight back and some wet eating sounds, and now I've added to my extensive PTSD. I do this to myself, I watched a Serbian film, I watched faces of death when I was younger, I don't know why, I always end up regretting it. I have never watched two girls one cup, that is the one hold out and I will never back down on that one. Not today, scatological Satan.

The crocodile hunter

It's not going to get less depressing from here, folks. Steve Irwin is probably the most beloved person on this list and also the one that I knew absolutely nothing about. I was aware

of his existence and the fact that his existence came to a tragic and sort of ironic end, I knew that he was one of those animal handler guys you see on late night television and I vaguely remembered videos and memes of him saying "Crikey" a lot and possibly "that's a not a knife, this is a knife" but I might be mixing my stereotypes. I definitely picture him drinking a Fosters and throwing a shrimp on the Barbie, he was 100% a caricature in my head, which does the man a disservice because I've learned a lot about him and wow, what a great and fascinating guy. And what a strangely tragic and weirdly fitting end to his story. He lived and died by his obsession with spreading awareness of wildlife conservation by exposing, rassing, and—let's be honest—kind of molesting animals. I'm not saying that he was intentionally violating these critters, but I'm saying that he was definitely unintentionally violating these critters and it was bound to backfire.

Steve was born in Ferngully. Fern *Tree* gully, to be more specific, and to be even more specific *Upper* ferntree gully. That's the good gully, not like that ghetto-ass lower fern tree gully. We don't talk about lower fern tree gully. A gully is a landform or geographical feature that was formed by running water, so it can be a deep ditch or a large valley. This particular gully is a suburb of Melbourne that houses thousands of people,. I saw an aerial view and it looks picturesque.

The area was originally home to the Wurundjeri Aborigines, but no one likes to talk about that, because they probably didn't just move out on a whim.

There IS in fact a lower Ferntree gully and I truly in my heart hope that there is a huge rivalry between them and that the residents of the two gully hemispheres conduct periodic raids into each other's territory to egg houses and toilet paper each other's cars. Incidentally I may have spent way too much time trying to figure out whether the author of Ferngully was from Ferntree gully and by *way too much time* I mean I googled it for like five minutes and got annoyed and moved on. But I really wanted to expand on this Ferngully connection. This is called stretching the bit. I've had to do this lately on stage, I'm still writing a bunch of material and I don't want to just do old stuff so I've done a couple shows that were longer than I'm comfortable with and I've had to ask a lot of people what they do for a living. I really just want to do short sets right now, but it doesn't always work out that way so I've been flexing those crowd work muscles. If you come to one of my shows I'll probably ask where you're from and possibly mock you a little bit for it. Please be from somewhere funny, that would really help my set. Nothing mean though. Hopefully you'll just see me do a shorter set and then I won't have to do crab work and we'll all be much happier. It will work out better for everyone.

Ok we did have a topic here.

Steve was born into a family of animal weirdos, he kind of didn't have a choice about his life direction. His dad—Bob Irwin—was a reptile expert, or herpetologist, and the founder of what would become the "Australia zoo" which at the time was called the Queensland reptile and fauna park. As for Steve's mother Lyn, all of the biographies say that she was involved in wildlife rehabilitation so weaning snakes off meth, I assume. No, she basically cared for a bunch of sickly animals. Tragically, Lyn died in a car accident in 2000. Bob would remarry in 2004. From his own account of his life after his first wife's passing, "When I first met Judy, I was a lonely guy with a bird-eating spider called Sandra and not much optimism." We've all been there, Bob. A tale as old as time. He continues, "Sandra [the spider] was special as she'd survived the car crash that killed Lyn when she fell asleep at the wheel." So here's the thing. His ex-wife had died in a car crash, this is tragic I don't wanna joke about it, but there was a bird eating spider in the car at the time. It seems that no one else was in the car during the crash so the idea that she fell asleep at the wheel is speculation, I'm not accusing this spider directly of murder, but the circumstances are highly sus.

According to Bob again, and honestly I just want to do this whole episode on Bob and his second wife Judy because

they are bizarre and amazing, "She's cared for so many animals over the years, but the one that sticks in my mind is seeing Judy raise a puggle, a fat blob of nothing. I saw the connection she had with that baby echidna, which would lick milk formula from the palm of her hand."

"The happiest I've seen Judy is raising a wombat. Wombats are like a disease, they grow on you, and she loved her wombat, Burrow. [Burrow] would come in bed when she was a bit bigger, between Judy and me, and halfway through the night I'd be on the floor. Every night." I have nothing to add. Cucked by a wombat. I guess I did have one thing to add.

Steve was born on February 22, 1962, on his mother's 20th birthday. What a rough date that must be for the family these days. Jesus. That's the Irwin family 9/11. I hate making light of this stuff, I'm genuinely trying to convey how serious it actually is. I feel like many of us have our own 9/11, September 11 was a terrible day for the country but some of us individually have dates that are much more traumatic and meaningful within our own families.

I mentioned Steve didn't have much of a choice in his life path, he began working as basically a farmhand as soon as he was old enough to shovel lizard crap. He was unpaid labor, but judging by his demeanor he seems to have enjoyed it and lived an idyllic life for a young reptile nerd. Steve supposedly wrestled his first crocodile

at age 9, and along with his dad Steve would catch many of the snakes that would later end up on display at the zoo, so that's normal. I feel like it *is* normal in Australia. American dads take their kids to Chuck E. Cheese, Australian dad's bond with their kids over snake snatching. As Steven got older, he and his father became well known for capturing and relocating crocodiles that had ended up in places they weren't supposed to be. So if you found a crocodile in your bathtub, you could call the Irwins, and those guys would bag it and tag it, and release it back into the swamp so that it could end up in someone else's bathtub. Or keep it and charge people to look at it. By all accounts Steve's charisma and enthusiasm even at a young age was infectious, and he became a popular fixture at the reptile park. Bob relinquished control of the park to Steve in 1991, and that was when Steve renamed it to the Australia zoo. And this was when Steve commenced with crocodile shows which quickly became all the rage. So let's talk about crocodiles. They are protected in Australia after being decimated by hunters in the 1970s, and they can be divided into two types: the Freshies and Salties, the freshwater and saltwater crocodiles. Salties as the name implies are the more bitchy and dangerous version. They're a little salty. From a Smithsonian article, "Salties are ruthlessly efficient killing machines. They come equipped with nearly 70 interlocking teeth, many as sharp as a steak knife. If one breaks

off, there's another underneath to replace it. Numerous muscles close the brute's jaws but only a few open them...This archosaurian behemoth can see well by day and by night and has three pairs of eyelids, one of which functions like swimming goggles to protect the croc's vision underwater. Another membrane holds the tongue in place, preventing water from filling the lungs, which is why, even in contempt, the crocodile can't stick it out." Midnight fact: a crocodile can't stick out its tongue. You're welcome. So if you mock them from a distance you're safe from attack and also raspberries. But probably don't. Don't mock a crock. Crocodiles can dive to 23 feet and hold their breath for approximately seven hours, and I'm sure you're familiar with the famous crocodile death roll; a crock will grab its prey and yank it underwater and then begin spinning while submerged to disorient and incapacitate the victim. It will then stuff whatever it doesn't eat right away under a stump or rock for later snacking. Crocodiles tend to kill at least one person per year in Australia. That's commonly known as winning the Australian lottery. No.

So back to Steve Irwin, and we've reached the part of his timeline that includes some romance; in 1992 Steve married Teresa Penelope Raynes who would become famous as television personality Terri Irwin. She was an American animal lover from Oregon who had founded a small animal rehabilitation facility called cougar

country, and during a visit to Australia in 1991 to tour similar facilities ended up meeting Steve, they were married a year later. Terri explained how In 1992 during the couple's honeymoon, Steve was informed that a crocodile was being menaced by a man with a gun, so they had to interrupt their vacation to save it. I guess there was a crocodile-shaped bat signal that people could throw up and Steve would come running. I imagine the situation was a little bit more calculated than she is letting on, mostly because the excursion was professionally filmed and became the first episode of the crocodile hunter. I think there was more to the story, maybe it wasn't a spontaneous vigilante rescue operation to save a crocodile hostage. We've been hoodwinked; Reality TV strikes again. The first episode of the Crocodile Hunter aired exclusively in Australia in 1996, and animal planet brought it to America the following year.

Prior to the crocodile Hunter most animal shows were of the PBS or David Attenborough variety, with a hushed narrator voicing all over the action, like "the tiny white gecko approaches a tasty leaf. Imagine his surprise as the leaf rears up onto spindly insect legs, revealing itself to be a shape shifting and ravenous leaf-bug. The gecko realizes his fatal error too late; his leaf eating days are over."

The crocodile hunter was more like "Crikey, this silly gecko is about to get chomped. He should've known better." And then he would wrestle the leaf

insect to the ground. It was a different vibe; David Attenborough wasn't clotheslining kangaroos and slide tackling alligators. Steve Irwin offered the world a more silly, irreverent, fun, and infectious take on the wildlife genre. Also very intrusive. It's a weird show. I've watched a few clips now and he's definitely a charismatic and likable dude who did not have respect for the personal space of animals. Steve and Terri had a couple kids, a boy and a girl, Robert and Bindi, and immediately began putting them in harm's way. The public was scandalized and outraged in 2004 when the crocodile Hunter had a full-on Michael Jackson moment. He was filmed entering the pen of a giant 13-foot saltie, carrying in one hand a dead chicken and in the other hand his one-month old son Robert. Said academic and writer Germaine Greer, "For a second you didn't know which one he meant to feed to the crocodile...If the crocodile had been less depressed it might have made the decision for him." Child endangerment, not a great look. The incident actually prompted a change to Australian law, which now prohibits "untrained" people from entering a crocodile cage. That's one of those laws that I'm kind of shocked to find out didn't exist. Or maybe I'm just shocked that we even have to make the law. Definitely one of those laws that was created because someone did something stupid. If you ever see a sign at the zoo that says don't poke the gorilla in the eye you know

someone made a terrible, terrible mistake. I feel like we should have laws like this for every animal, not just crocodiles. Although I'm not convinced that people who are supposedly trained to be around animals know any better than the average person, they're just braver and dumber. And by the way when I said he had a Michael Jackson moment with his son I'm obviously referring to Michael Jackson hanging his son over the balcony rather than any type of other Michael Jackson moment. Irwin's kids seem fine, despite the fact that they have grown up on camera. Bindi's birth was filmed, and she hasn't been out of the spotlight ever since. Both of the kids are photogenic as hell, his son actually looks eerily like him, and it's hard to know how much of their fame was their choice and whether they were thrust into the limelight, but they both claim to enjoy it.

Now there were a number of incidents over the years that sparked criticism, mostly involving Steve's treatment of animals and his methodology and slight fame-whorishness, but as far as I can tell he never seemed to be in it for the money, he always claimed that the money was a means to an end and that he would spend his last cent if necessary defending animals...and I don't know, I kind of believe it. At least I believe that he believed it. I like to think he was doing his best. The guy seems like a wild fun zealot who really loved animals and really loved his kids and I'm just going to believe what I

want to believe. interestingly from what I read it seems that he was more controversial in Australia, the whole crocodile-wrestling over-the-top caricature didn't sit well with his fellow countrymen; it's fun for us Americans but probably annoying and exhausting if you feel like the guy is contributing to a stereotype. I'd be interested to know what some of our Aussie listeners think, feel free to hit us up in the discord or on the Instagram. I will say that I'm conflicted about his treatment of animals. He got a lot of criticism from PETA, and while the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals has a tendency to be a little bit silly and reactionary, overall I do also feel that they had a point, he spent a lot of time fondling and harassing and fucking with animals who were just living their animal lives. And that includes one ornery ass stingray.

September 2006, the Great Barrier Reef. Steve was out filming on a small boat with just one lone cameraman, his friend Justin Lyons. They were looking for sharks and sea snakes and box jellyfish, all of the meanest oceanic bastards for an upcoming show called "oceans deadliest." But who came along instead? A stingray, and Irwin thought he could get some good footage for his daughter Bindi's show. Because stingrays in general tend to not be aggressive, they wouldn't have been included in the ocean's deadliest animals. Ironic in the non-ironic sense of the word that after

all his crazy antics the crocodile Hunter was taken out by a creature that is normally considered docile and mostly harmless. The water at that particular area of the reef was only chest deep, so both men hopped out of the boat. According to Justin, the ray, detecting danger, immediately began stabbing with its venomous tail. Justin quickly realized that there was a cloud of blood around Steve. The barb of this particular stingray was about a foot long and it pierced both Steve's thoracic wall and heart. Speculation is that Steve's shadow fell across the stingray and it reacted instinctively, assuming he was a predator. But honestly I don't know how we were expecting it to react, if I am a stingray swimming around the ocean and there's some dude looming over me I'm not going to assume that he just wants to pick me up and show me to a camera because he's a reality TV star filming for his daughter, I'm going to react on instinct. And this is another story that could've been included in our lost and found footage episode because the entire attack was caught on camera, but has never been shown publicly, again for obvious reasons. And I think all of these decisions are the right ones btw. RIP Steve Irwin, whatever you thought of him he had a family and seemed like he was trying his best, and he didn't deserve to go out like that.

Dingoes got my baby

Before we get into this next one, you know what a dingo looks like, right? A dingo is a wild Australian dog, they are cute as hell, they kind of look a little bit like Doge the grammatically challenged meme dog, except skinnier and shorter haired. There's some debate as to whether they even qualify as their own subspecies, they're basically like Australian coyotes. The outback is full of them, including the area around the giant red rock known as Uluru, which is a huge tourist destination in northern Australia. Now for a couple of years in the late 1970s the chief ranger in the area named Derek Roff had been petitioning the government to do something about the dingo problem because he kept warning that eventually a dingo was going to attack someone, probably a child because it was believed that they wouldn't risk battling an adult human. Dingoes at the time were considered pansies. They were known to take down kangaroos but only by hunting in packs, and usually not full-grown males. They had shown aggression to smaller animals however; when faced with a smaller animal, the size of a human child or smaller, they would typically go for the throat and drag their prey away from any potential assistance to be consumed in safety. So Roff wanted a dingo cull, basically he wanted permission to kill dingoes plus a bunch of ammunition to get the job done. Now in retrospect it seems like the government should have listened, but let's be honest, they were still reeling from the disastrous and

humiliating defeat in the emu war and probably weren't excited at the prospect of another embarrassing debacle at the hands (or wings or paws) of local wildlife.

So now that the stage is set, our story begins with an Australian couple, Lindy (whose full name was Alice Lynne Chamberlain-Creighton), and her husband Michael Chamberlain. They should have called him Mikey and then they'd be Mikey and Lindy. Both were Seventh-day Adventists, and Michael was in fact a pastor. They lived for a few years in Tasmania before relocating to Queensland in the early 1970s where Alice/Lindy gave birth to two boys and then on June 11, 1980 she finally got the daughter she had always wanted, Azaria Chantel Loren Chamberlain. I feel like these people had money. These are money names. Two months after the birth, the family went on a vacation to the famous big red rock Uluru. And that's fine, I'm not victim blaming here, but if you just gave birth to your third kid, you can chill for a while. If you want to go on vacation, go to the beach, go to a hotel, they clearly had the money with those boogie names. You don't need to go hardscrabble off-roading through the outback with a newborn just a few weeks after going through labor.

On August 17, 1980, the couple befriended another family in the camping area and they had a bbq together. This was the Lowe family, Greg and Sally and children, and at one point Sally left the barbecue area

to change her baby's diaper and that's when she realized she was being followed by a dingo who was lurking nearby. Back at the barbecue, the dingo showed up again, or maybe a different dingo who looked similar, and this time Michael actually tossed it a scrap of bread, and Lindy admonished him for feeding a wild animal and making it more bold. Eventually Lindy put Azaria to bed, and it was a warm night so she didn't zip the tent. And the dingo was like wow, these people are super generous, this is way better than bread. A few minutes later, Sally heard a commotion and a baby crying. Lindy went to check on the baby and screamed the famous line that has been repeated ad nauseam—it basically became a meme before Internet memes existed, "my god, my god, the dingoes got my baby." The Rangers are called, including Derek Roff, and they discovered bloody dingo footprints; they found shreds of baby Azaria's onesie. Now it's important at this point to reiterate that up until this time it was commonly believed that there had been no documented instance of a dingo killing a human. Which is not true, but it was believed. Like many things. There were in fact quite a few documented cases of babies and small children going missing and being found dismembered—and partially, mostly, or fully consumed—in dingo dens. So at first no one was questioning the official story as reported by the parents and rangers, mostly because the official story was supported by

evidence and logic and common sense, but then the public got involved, and the public tends to be less concerned with those things. People did what we always do, which is put on their true-crime detective hats and start overanalyzing every shred of evidence and making wild inferences. The public felt that Lindy didn't look sad enough, she wasn't crying enough, she was too clinical. Obviously she was in shock. And also I think there may have been some class warfare involved; the idea seemed to be that a wealthy spoiled woman probably just got bored of having a baby and decided to discard it or something, it was crazytown. And then a bunch of so-called experts jumped in with hairbrained theories, like sergeant John Lincoln who claimed that there was no way a dingo could carry a 10 pound baby in its jaws, and as proof he conducted an experiment in which he filled a bucket with ten pounds of dirt and tried to carry it with his teeth and failed. He said, "Not a chance. Never happened before. There's a fact you can't beat. Never ever happened." He did this in court, btw. "...he leaves the room and returns with a pail filled with ten pounds of sand, which he succeeds in supporting by his mouth for less than a minute. He challenges the other officers to see if they can do better." Nope, case closed, a human man definitely did not carry away this baby in its jaws. Also, you're fired. From earth. You don't get to live here anymore. Turn in your human card.

Meanwhile the coroner who had been charged with coming up with an explanation said that it was definitely a goddam dingo, you're all crazy, and he censured the police department for being awful at their jobs. Which of course only made the police push back harder. When asked what the motive would for a mother to randomly kill her baby on a camping trip, police said "we don't need a motive if we have evidence." Of course they didn't have that either, but this was the gut-feelings era of criminology. As John Melaney says when he quotes a 19th century police officer upon finding a puddle of blood, "gross...now back to my hunch." Police killed six dingoes and checked the contents of their bellies. They found nothing, so...case closed. *We killed all of the six wild dingoes that could possibly exist and there could never be a seventh dingo. Seven dingoes?? That's crazytown.* And what was their alternate theory? Well, they had come up with a very plausible, very likely scenario. See, after the barbecue, Lindy took her baby to the car and decapitated it with a pair of nail scissors, basically nail clippers, then cleaned up the car and hid both the body and head in a camera case, then grabbed some baked beans from the vehicle—this was obviously her excuse for going to the car—then went back to the tent and planted dingo tracks and shreds of clothing, and then screamed "Dingoes got my baby," in a time window of approximately 10 minutes.

Lindy was convicted of murdering her baby and sentenced to life. Years later the baby's jacket was discovered far from the camp among a bunch of dingo lairs, and some of the evidence that had been used to convict Lindy, including supposed baby blood that had been found in the car, was determined to not have been baby blood and rather to have been the result of flawed test results that were fabricated by one of the investigators. Lindy was pardoned and released on September 15, 1988. Thirteen years later, on April 30, 2001 a dingo killed a 9-year-old boy named Clinton, the first modern documented dingo killing on record. So much for the idea that dingoes aren't capable of killing a baby.

Monkey face eating

There have been a couple of very well publicized instances of pet chimpanzee attacks. And if you take one piece of information from this episode, monkeys are not pets. I know they can be charming, and lull us into a false sense of security because they have very human characteristics, but that's part of the problem...humans characteristics are often the worst, and monkeys have the bad parts along with the good; they are basically humans without logic and self control. They aren't capable of complex thought...a chimp is like a tiny jacked up infant on steroids. Just imagine a baby who could throw a temper tantrum and rip out your spine like

subzero from Mortal Kombat. Did you see Nope? I don't get scared by movies very often, and overall the movie was more cool than scary, but the monkey attack genuinely creeped me out. And if you've seen Nope, the chimp was partially based on our next subject, Travis, a former TV animal actor who had appeared on various TV shows and Coca-Cola commercials. Travis had been born in 1995 at a Missouri chimpanzee sanctuary, and when he was six years old his mother escaped the sanctuary and was shot to death, but I'm sure that didn't factor at all in this monkey's horrific psychological trauma. He was purchased for \$50,000 by a couple, Sandra and Jerome Herold, and relocated to Connecticut. They named him Travis after the country singer Travis Tritt. "Travis could open doors using keys, dress himself, water plants, feed hay to his owners' horses, eat at a table with the rest of the family, and drink wine from a [stemmed glass](#); he was so fond of [ice cream](#) that he learned the schedules of passing ice cream trucks. He logged onto the computer to look at pictures, watched television using a remote control, and brushed his teeth using a [Water Pik](#). He enjoyed watching [baseball](#) on television. Travis had also driven a car on several occasions." I see no problem here; pet monkeys should be both drinking and driving, preferably simultaneously. It seems that Travis's owners were responsible people and good at setting boundaries. They definitely

didn't treat a monkey as if he were a tiny human and force him to adapt to a lifestyle that is completely alien to a wild animal. "Sandra slept and bathed with Travis, saying after his death...He slept with me every night. Until you've eaten with a chimp and bathed with a chimp, you don't know a chimp." I think you know too much about that chimp. And he knows too much about you. He probably shouldn't have seen your genitals up close. You shouldn't be rub a dub dubbing with your chimpanzee. You can know your chimp, just don't KNOW your chimp, shoutout to The Truth About Cats and Dogs. Don't know your chimp biblically.

In 2003, Travis was involved in a highly publicized incident in which he jumped out of a car and chased some idiot who had thrown a soda can at him. Which seems fair, that guy deserved what someone else ended up getting. The cops showed up and Travis chased them around for a while too, it sounds like it was a pretty comical keystone coops type scene, as opposed to the scene that we will describe later. The incident actually led to a change in the law in Connecticut, barring chimps over 50 pounds from being owned as pets. Travis was 200 pounds, btw. But Travis was exempted from the law because he had already been owned prior to the law's passage, and Travis was not considered a public risk. Apparently no one had seen him swerving a chevy through the

neighborhood with a can of Budweiser. It's so crazy that Travis was exempted even though he was the reason for the goddamn law. the animal that caused the problem that led to the law was exempted from the law because he existed before it was passed. It's mystifying.

On February 16, 2009, Travis's owner Sandra invited over a friend, 55-year-old Charla Nash. At some point during the visit, Travis absconded with Sandra's car keys, which was an adorable thing he used to do and wasn't spoiled or obnoxious at all. Adorable unless you need to get somewhere.

So Charla and Sandra went to track him down, and Charla, trying to be helpful, brought Travis his favorite toy, a Tickle Me Elmo. When Travis saw Charla carrying his beloved Elmo, he snapped and began savagely beating Charla. Savage doesn't even adequately describe it. Sandra Harold, in her 70s by this time, attempted to save her friend, hitting Travis in the head with a shovel and stabbing him in the back with a butcher knife. There's a 911 tape, and this one is verified. And of course I listen to it because I'm an idiot. This one fucked me up even worse than the other one I don't know what's wrong with me. In the tape you in which you can hear the chimp screaming and Sandra yelling, "he's tearing her part." He ripped her face off." "he's eating her....he's eating her." She is absolutely blubbering and screaming and Horsley yelling that the

cops need to come and they need to bring guns, the way she rasps " they need to have their guns out. I'm in my car. He's going to kill me. He'll rip the doors off . And the 911 operator tells her, they're shooting at him now, and she keeps saying yeah but he's not dead. He's not dead." It might be the most fucked up thing I've ever heard. It is absolute fucking chilling. I am never gonna recover from this episode so thanks insomniacs. the police finally showed up and shot Travis dead. And it's hard to convey how brutal the attack was...Travis tore off Charla's nose, both of her hands, and her lips, she lost her eyes and chunks of her mid face bone structure. She had brain tissue injuries, that's how deep the bites went. the orderlies who treated Nash were themselves treated for psychological damage based on the viciousness of what they had witnessed. This story sucks. All of these are pretty terrible actually, I don't know why this one in particular just strikes me as senseless and tragic. There are pictures online, and again, I probably should not have looked these up. Charla is not recognizable as a human, it is brutal. Surgeons were able to reattach her jaw, so that's good. I like to end on a positive note. I'm kidding it gets even worse. Nash underwent both hand and face transplant surgery, but there were complications due to pneumonia and infection and after five days surgeons had to remove her hands again. Meanwhile, the toxicology report on Travis's body found traces of

Xanax. Charla later admitted that she had given Travis Xanax in his tea, which most likely made him more aggressive. Nash sued her former friend and won a judgment of \$4 million, she also sued the doctor who had prescribed Xanax to a goddamn chimp. The police officer who responded to the call and killed Travis spent years trying to get treatment for PTSD covered, and his experience led to proposed changes to federal law which were of course never enacted. Currently 20 states and the District of Columbia have laws banning the ownership of a primate as a pet.

Wow. So we're going to have to do a part two eventually because we didn't get to some of the best and most interesting possible topics in this category: for instance, I didn't have time to research the Kali River goonch attacks. Huge shoutout to my research minion llama trauma for this episode, I've been just spread really thin with comedy and work and the podcast and personal life stuff so it was really helpful to have her sending me links and ideas and rabbit holes to go down. She's the best.

We have new maniacs!

Make Duncan try to pronounce Tomislav's name. He's from Croatia, and he did say we could call him Tommy, but we have to give it a try.

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