

UNSOLVED MYSTERIES PODCAST | THE SHADOW MAN

S1E14 Transcript

DANIELLE PRACT: One night, Randy and I were sleeping, and we were both woken up. Rhiannon ran into the room screaming saying, "It hurts. It hurts. There's something on it. It hurts," and she was pulling her shirt up from her back. As we were looking at her back, and she was saying, "It's hurting, it's hurting," we saw three scratches go up her back, and they just... they appeared right before our eyes. Just to think about it sends chills up my spine.

NARRATION: NOVEMBER 3RD, 1878. WIELDING AN AXE, 22-YEAR-OLD STEPHEN DEE RICHARDS ENTERS THE HOME OF MARY HALSON AND SLAUGHTERS THE YOUNG MOTHER, ALONG WITH HER THREE CHILDREN. HE THEN MAKES HIMSELF BREAKFAST BEFORE BURYING THE BODIES IN THE BACKYARD. FOR THIS, AND OTHER MURDERS, RICHARDS IS EXECUTED BY HANGING AND BURIED IN MINDEN, NEBRASKA. OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS LATER, A YOUNG FAMILY MOVES INTO A BEAUTIFUL NEW HOME IN NEARBY NORMAN, NEBRASKA, AND IT'S HERE THAT SERIAL KILLER STEPHEN DEE RICHARDS MAKES A VERY UNWELCOME RETURN.

I'M STEVE FRENCH. THIS IS UNSOLVED MYSTERIES: "THE SHADOW MAN."

IT'S OCTOBER 2012, AND LIFE AS THEY KNOW IT IS ABOUT TO CHANGE FOR DANIELLE AND RANDY PRACT AND THEIR GROWING FAMILY.

DANIELLE PRACT: My husband and I had decided that we wanted to become foster parents, and we needed a bigger house. So, when we were looking around, we found this place here and it was perfect. Five bedrooms, three bathrooms. It had a large yard, which was something else that we required, because we do have dogs. We have animals and, with that many children, we wanted a yard for them to play in.

NARRATION: THEIR DREAM HOUSE IS IN TINY NORMAN, NEBRASKA. TO 34-YEAR-OLD DANIELLE, IT SEEMS ABSOLUTELY PERFECT. WHAT THE FAMILY DOESN'T KNOW IS THAT IT COMES WITH A VIOLENT HISTORY.

DANIELLE PRACT: There was a one-bedroom house that they used for taxidermy on the property. It was over 100 years old, and it was reported that a man lived there with his family, and it was just a very violent location. But that was the only report that we had of anything negative happening in and around this area at all. So, Randy and I came out and looked at it, and we loved it. Everything just seemed to fall right into place.

NARRATION: IN 2012, RANDY PRACT WORKS AT AN AUTO BODY SHOP AND DANIELLE IS A SURGICAL NURSE. A CALIFORNIA NATIVE AND A SELF-PROFESSED CITY GIRL, DANIELLE FINDS LIFE IN NEBRASKA MUCH DIFFERENT THAN WHAT SHE'S USED TO.

DANIELLE PRACT: We live in a very rural area. The population is 48 on the census sign. The occasional farmhouse is around, but as for an actual town or community, we are in the middle of nowhere. I have a lot of fears from childhood and watching scary movies. One of them is cornfields. So, for me, it was kind of a scary move, because you step off of our property line and you're in a cornfield.

NARRATION: DANIELLE, RANDY, THEIR THREE BIOLOGICAL CHILDREN, AND NEW FOSTER KIDS DO THEIR BEST TO SETTLE INTO THE NEW HOME. BUT FOR DANIELLE'S OLDEST DAUGHTER, RHIANNON, THE ADJUSTMENT IS UNSETTLING.

RHIANNON PRACT: I moved into this house when I was 13 years old, and I was honestly terrified because I was not ready to live so far from the town I grew up in. There was a certain uneasiness about the house once I got settled into the house. I always felt like I was being watched. Even to this day, I still feel like I'm being watched, with everything that I do.

NARRATION: RHIANNON SENSES AN EERINESS THROUGHOUT HER NEW HOME, BUT NOWHERE IS IT STRONGER THAN THE OLD ONE-BEDROOM STORAGE HOUSE AT THE EDGE OF THE PROPERTY.

RHIANNON PRACT: I definitely knew the house was haunted before I had heard everything else that had happened. The first time that I had walked into the house, I was actually with my father. We stepped foot into the house and we closed the door. Instantly, he and I were covered with goosebumps and we got chills. I remember looking at my dad and said, "Dad, this does not feel right. I do not like this house at all." And from that moment on, I actually never went into that house without somebody else with me.

NARRATION: RHIANNON'S SENSITIVITY TO THE PROPERTY'S STRANGE ENERGY IS NOT SURPRISING TO THOSE WHO KNOW HER. AT A YOUNG AGE, HER MOTHER PERSONALLY WITNESSED HER DAUGHTER'S UNIQUE ABILITY TO PERCEIVE AND COMMUNICATE WITH THE SPIRITUAL REALM.

DANIELLE PRACT: There was a time when Rhiannon was about three years old, and I was in my bedroom, and I heard her talking from her bedroom. So, I peeked my head out and looked at her and she was standing in her doorway, looking at a chair across from her door, just talking like she was having a conversation. And at three years old, she was very verbal. She talked just like a teenager. I left her talking for a few minutes, and then when I came out and I came around to her door, I said, "Who are you talking to?" She said, "The Big Man." I said, "What big man?" And she pointed to a picture of my dad. My dad died three years prior to that. He was 6'6", so he was very tall, and the picture that she pointed to is his Marine Corps picture. And she was two months old when he died. She would have never known him. So that was the first time that we ever knew that Rhiannon had a connection to the spiritual realm.

NARRATION: RHIANNON TRIES HER BEST TO ADJUST TO THE NEW FAMILY HOME, BUT HER PARANORMAL ENCOUNTERS BECOME MORE FREQUENT AND DISTURBING.

RHIANNON PRACHT: I remember being tapped on the shoulder. My hair would be pulled, not in an aggressive way, just a very playful way, like, "Hey, look at me. I'm here." I had had instances of hearing voices in my ear. I would always hear my name being called. So, I would just go around asking, "Hey, did you say my name? Hey, did you say my name?" and everybody would be like, "No, you're going crazy. You're just hearing voices." And that's the thing, every time that I tried to just kind of drop a hint to people, everybody would just say I was crazy. So, I kind of stopped talking about it to people just because I thought I was crazy.

NARRATION: SOON, IT'S NOT JUST RHIANNON WHO'S EXPERIENCING PARANORMAL ACTIVITY IN THE NEW HOME.

DANIELLE PRACHT: We would wake up and the cupboards would be open. The fridge would be left standing open. But we have children, so we weren't sure if one of them was sleepwalking, or what was going on. It started to kind of get a little more weird for us when we would be sitting in the kitchen, or the dining room, and the TV would just turn on at the absolute top volume. At that point, it was more just, wow, something is happening, but we're not really sure what. We did not really talk about it in front of the kids because we didn't want to scare them. They were already nervous being in a new home, especially the older girls. And so, we didn't want them to become scared or, you know, afraid or anything like that.

NARRATION: DANIELLE'S DREAM HOME IS SLOWLY TRANSFORMING INTO A LIVING NIGHTMARE. THERE ARE KNOCKS ON THE WALLS, AND UNEXPLAINED FOOTSTEPS ON THE STAIRS. THE SOUND OF GIGGLING CHILDREN AND DISTANT MUSIC ECHOS THROUGH THE HALLWAYS. BUT MOST FRIGHTENING IS THE RECURRING PRESENCE OF A DARK SPIRIT THAT BEGINS TO TERRORIZE THE CHILDREN. RHIANNON RECALLS FIRST SEEING HIM IN THE OLD STORAGE HOUSE.

RHIANNON PRACHT: The first time that I had seen him, he was standing in one of the doorways to that single bedroom when I was in the living room by the wood burning stove. And I remember the shadow coming at me, and I froze. And then after, I closed my eyes because I was scared, and after I had opened my eyes again, my flashlight was already on. I grabbed everything and I left. I would assume what I saw at that point in time now was the Shadow Man.

RYLEE PRACHT: We called him the Shadow Man because his figure was a shadow. He had no distinct facial features, like he didn't have eyes, nothing. It was just a shadow, a silhouette, per se, of a tall, lean man.

NARRATION: RHIANNON'S YOUNGER SISTER, RYLEE, RECALLS HER OWN ENCOUNTER WITH THE SHADOW MAN.

RYLEE PRACHT: One night, I was laying in bed, falling asleep, and I woke up for some odd reason. And then, there was just a man standing in that corner by my open closet door. Not even a man, a shadow. He was standing there just staring at me. I was terrified. I hid. I pulled my blankets up over my head and

I closed my eyes and I just said, "This is not real. This is a dream." I refused to go back into my bedroom that night, and I went to go sleep with Rhiannon, and I ended up sleeping with Rhiannon for about the next two months. I did not go into my bedroom. If I had to go into my bedroom to get clothes, I would put my arm in first, reach around the corner, and turn on the light before I even opened the door to step into my bedroom.

RYLEE PRACT: A couple weeks after that incident had occurred, after a long day of school and doing all of my homework, I passed out on my bed, and once again, I forgot to lock the closet door. And while I was sleeping, I was awoken by my bed getting shaken and punched up from underneath of it. There was no way anybody could've fit under my bed. It was none of my siblings, because I could feel the punching through my box spring. I sat there in terror for a good thirty seconds before I could finally get up and move. I tried to scream but no sound came out.

NARRATION: AT FIRST, THE GIRLS KEEP THEIR EXPERIENCES TO THEMSELVES, BUT THE VISITS BY THE FACELESS, SHADOWY FIGURE GROW MORE FREQUENT.

RYLEE PRACT: I would describe it as an entity in the house, because it didn't quite feel human. It had a lot of anger, and you could feel that anger in the house, when none of the family was angry, but you could still feel the anger in the house.

RHIANNON PRACT: I would see the Shadow Man multiple times a day throughout the entire house. I actually started suffering from insomnia, and I still suffer from it to this day just because of the activity in the house. I was actually not able to focus on my schoolwork very well, because I was so exhausted throughout the day. And then, when I got home, I was in a constant state of anxiety and I was kind of in survival mode when I got home.

DANIELLE PRACT: So, we did notice that Rhiannon started to seem like she was a lot more tired, and moody, and her grades were starting to slip a little bit in school. We didn't know exactly what was going on. So, we tried to start talking to her about it some more, but she would always just kind of brush us off and say, "I'm just not sleeping good."

DANIELLE PRACT: One night, Randy and I were sleeping, and we were both woken up. Rhiannon ran into the room, screaming, saying, "It hurts. It hurts. There's something on it. It hurts," and she was pulling her shirt up from her back. As we were looking at her back, we saw three scratches go up her back, and they appeared right before our eyes. And she was screaming and crying and that, I think, was kind of the turning point for us to know that this isn't something that is just a, "Oh my gosh, ha-ha. This is kind of cutesy, funny, little things that are happening in our home." This is starting to be scary. At that point, I felt absolutely helpless because here Randy and I are, supposed to protect these children, and our own daughter is getting scratched right in front of us and it's not by something that we can fight. It's not by something that we can battle. It's nothing we can protect her from. It's like you're being brutalized by something that you can't fight.

NARRATION: AFTER THE ATTACK ON RHIANNON, DANIELLE AND RANDY PRACT KNOW THAT WHAT THEIR FAMILY IS EXPERIENCING IS A MENACING, PSYCHOLOGICAL, GHOSTLY ASSAULT.

DANIELLE PRACT: Randy and I talked endlessly about what we could possibly do to get help, because we didn't know what we were dealing with. We knew that something bad was in our home. We felt trapped because we couldn't afford to sell the house. We talked to the people that owned the house before us. We talked to friends. We've talked to other family members. We felt like nobody believed us.

NARRATION: DANIELLE REACHES OUT TO PARANORMAL INVESTIGATORS, HOPING THEY CAN IDENTIFY WHAT, OR WHO, COULD BE HAUNTING THEIR HOUSE. DANIELLE IS REFERRED TO KRIS SEDERSTEN, WHO IS PART OF A GROUP OF PARANORMAL INVESTIGATORS KNOWN AS SYNERGY.

DANIELLE PRACT: When I first called Kris, the voice on the other side of the phone was very gentle, very soft. And I said, "I'm having some problems and I don't know how to explain them." And she said, "First, I want to let you know that I'm going to believe you. We will help you." And right when she said that, I just burst out bawling. It was just such a relief, and I was able to talk to her, and I was able to tell her everything that had happened. Over the phone, she walked me through all of the steps that the investigation would entail. We had to make arrangements for the kids to stay somewhere else overnight because it was going to be a rather late night. So, we made arrangements, and I think it was in within a week or two that they were able to come out.

NARRATION: WITHIN A WEEK OR TWO, THREE CARS FILLED WITH EQUIPMENT AND INVESTIGATORS PULL INTO THE PRACT FAMILY DRIVEWAY.

DANIELLE PRACT: Randy and I went out to meet them, and Kris immediately wrapped her arms around me and gave me a hug. And I started to cry, again, because it was just... her heart is so amazing, to be so accepting, and to be so helpful to people that need it. And then the whole crew comes in and they set up video recorders. They set up microphones, and they kind of laid out a plan of attack for the house.

NARRATION: THE TEAM OF PARANORMAL INVESTIGATORS RECORD VIDEO, SOUND AND ELECTRICAL ACTIVITY THROUGHOUT THE MAIN HOUSE, BUT IT'S WHEN THEY TRAIN THEIR EQUIPMENT ON THE STORAGE HOUSE AT THE EDGE OF THE PROPERTY, THAT THEY DISCOVER SOME UNUSUAL ACTIVITY.

DANIELLE PRACT: One of the main things that they were surprised at was, in that storage house, the EMF detectors, which measures the electromagnetic field of an area, usually atmospheric readings would read out at approximately 0.4 on your EMF detectors. Out in that storage house, there were spikes upwards to 80. And it would come and go, and it was just astonishing. They said that they had never gotten readings that high before. There was absolutely no electricity even running to that house at the time, because we had made sure that it was shut off out at the electricity pole. So, there was not even any electricity to interfere with the EMF in that house, whatsoever. They all felt like there was something about that house. So, they left, and a couple days later, I got a phone call, because their

entire DVR system was fried when they got to review it. There was nothing for them, video-wise, that they could review. All that they had were the EVPs and the recorded sessions.

NARRATION: KRIS AND THE TEAM REVIEW THE E.V.P.'S, SHORT FOR ELECTRONIC VOICE PHENOMENON, FOR ANY AUDIO EVIDENCE OF SPIRITS IN THE HOUSE. ON THE RECORDINGS, THEY HEAR THE NAMES "STEPHEN" AND "RICHARDS." KRIS ASKS DANIELLE AND THE FAMILY IF THEY RECOGNIZE THOSE NAMES.

RHIANNON PRACHT: Listening back to that, I'm, I'm getting goosebumps now thinking about it, just because of the feeling I got then. But I remember listening back to that EVP and hearing his voice. This voice. It's a voice that you hear, and it just chills you to the bone. It makes your hair stand up. It gives you goosebumps. It terrifies you.

NARRATION: WHEN THE NAMES CAN'T BE CONNECTED TO THE PRACHT FAMILY, THE TEAM EXPANDS ITS RESEARCH EFFORTS. THEY DISCOVER THAT A MAN NAMED STEPHEN DEE RICHARDS WAS A NINETEENTH CENTURY SERIAL KILLER WHO MURDERED AT LEAST NINE PEOPLE FROM 1876 THROUGH 1878. HIS FIRST MURDERS WERE NEAR THE TOWN OF KEARNEY, NEBRASKA, JUST A SHORT DRIVE FROM THE PRACHT'S HOUSE IN NORMAN.

RHIANNON PRACHT: Stephen Richards. He is a very evil man. He had a lot of mental issues. He had a lot of psychological issues. He had actually fallen in love with this woman, and then one night, he just snapped. He went off the walls. He went crazy. He had killed the wife, and all of the kids. I think there were two daughters and then an infant. He had killed all of them.

NARRATION: STEPHEN DEE RICHARDS KILLED OTHERS ACROSS THE MIDWEST BEFORE HIS EVENTUAL CAPTURE. HE WAS BROUGHT BACK TO NEBRASKA, SENTENCED TO DEATH, AND PUBLICLY EXECUTED IN 1879. HIS BODY WAS BURIED IN MINDEN, THE TOWN NEXT TO NORMAN. SHORTLY AFTER HIS EXECUTION, HIS GRAVE WAS DESECRATED, AND HIS BODY WAS STOLEN BY DOCTORS WHO WANTED TO PERFORM AN AUTOPSY FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. THEY RETURNED RICHARDS' BODY TO ITS GRAVE, BUT SOMETIME LATER, IT WAS AGAIN REMOVED AND HIS BONES WERE SCATTERED ACROSS THE TOWN.

RHIANNON PRACHT: I know Stephen Richards was connected to everything that was happening. In my opinion, the Shadow Man in our house was Stephen Richards. It would explain the feeling of just pure evil and the darkness that we felt. It would explain why we would hear the children's voices. It would explain why I could hear an infant crying. It would explain everything.

NARRATION: CONVINCED HER HOME IS HAUNTED BY A NINETEENTH CENTURY SERIAL KILLER, DANIELLE PRACHT TURNS TO THE CHURCH, HOPING FOR HELP TO RID HER FAMILY OF THE EVIL PRESENCE OF STEPHEN DEE RICHARDS.

DANIELLE PRACT: So, we had our priest come from our local parish, so that we could talk to him and let him know, basically, what had been going on in the home. And we walked around as he blessed the house using holy water, and we were praying throughout the house.

RHIANNON PRACT: He got to the bedroom downstairs, where I was staying, and I remember him saying that there was evil in this room and that kind of freaked me out because that was my bedroom. And it's almost as if the epicenter of whatever this thing was, was in my room in the basement.

NARRATION: AS THE PRIEST LEADS THE GROUP IN PRAYER THROUGHOUT EVERY ROOM, DANIELLE, RHIANNON, AND THE FAMILY LOOK FOR SIGNS THAT NEGATIVE ENERGY IS LEAVING THE HOUSE. BUT THE SPIRITS APPEAR UNDAUNTED.

DANIELLE PRACT: Even while we were saying that final cleansing prayer in the living room, Randy's shirt got tugged on, while we were standing in the living room saying it. So, we knew that it wasn't going to stop, at that point. And it wasn't comical, so much as it was just, "Well, that didn't work either." So, we called Synergy again and said, "We... we need more help."

NARRATION: PARANORMAL INVESTIGATOR, KRIS SEDERSTEN, AND HER TEAM AGREE TO RETURN, THIS TIME TO PERFORM A POWERFUL CLEANSING RITUAL TO DRIVE OUT THE STUBBORN FORCES THAT HAVE INVADED THE HOUSE.

DANIELLE PRACT: Her exact words were pretty much, "Well, we're gonna start blowing some smoke up its ass." Because when you do a sage cleansing, you blow sage smoke. When they came, they brought their cleansing materials. We opened windows and we opened every single door and closet in the house, and all of us walked through, and we had smudge sticks. We had sage. They had feathers and shells, and holy water, and we walked through the entire house, praying the Lord's Prayer, saying repeatedly, "You are not welcome here. You need to leave our home. You need to go towards the light and find your resting place." We did that, and we finished at the door, and we opened the door, and it was just like, okay. That feels a little bit better. It felt lighter, like somebody just lifted a lid off of a pan, or like they opened the door to a cellar. It was like there was finally light shining in.

NARRATION: AFTER SYNERGY'S CLEANSING, THE PARANORMAL ACTIVITY IN THE MAIN HOUSE IS LESS INTENSE, BUT THE NEGATIVE ENERGY ASSOCIATED WITH KILLER STEPHEN DEE RICHARDS SEEMS TO LINGER IN THE OLD STORAGE HOUSE.

RHIANNON PRACT: We were talking about tearing down the storage house to put up my dad's shop. And he and I were both really excited about that because he and I both hated that house so much. I remember he and I had walked out of the door for the last time that night, and both he and I got hit with this feeling. I can't describe it in any other way except anger, and just pure evil. He told me he felt something was completely off about the entire situation. And I remember looking back at the house before I walked into our house and thinking God, what was that? What was that feeling?

DANIELLE PRACHT: The night of November 21st, we went to bed, because November 22nd would have been a Saturday, and we were adopting our children on November 22nd. And we had court to go adopt the kids, and it was a big family event, and everybody was going to be there. At about midnight or so, I wake up to Randy saying, "Oh, this is not good. Danielle, wake up." And I sat straight up in bed because his voice was full of panic, and our bedroom was lit up like it was noon. And I thought, "Oh my gosh, we slept in. We missed court. We missed adopting the children." And he said, "No, Danielle. Call 911. Something's on fire." And we looked out our bedroom window, and we could see the shadows of the flames on the tree line that is on the north side of our house. I grabbed the phone, and we were running across the house to find that the entire storage house was completely engulfed in flames.

RHIANNON PRACHT: I woke up in the middle of the night, and I look out our front door, and that house is engulfed in flames. The fire trucks were already there. My mom was already awake, but my dad was out there with them. And when I looked outside and I saw the house on fire, my first reaction was, oh my God, did I cause this? Because I thought me saying and praising that we were tearing down the house caused this.

DANIELLE PRACHT: So, nobody got any sleep that night, and when we finally were able to tuck back into bed at five o'clock, and we were up by seven to get ready to go to court that day and adopt the kids. So, when you look at our adoption day pictures, everybody looks like they're just deer in the headlights and not happy whatsoever.

NARRATION: BY THE TIME THE BLAZE IS BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL, THE STORAGE HOUSE HAS COMPLETELY BURNED TO THE GROUND, MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE THE EXACT CAUSE OF THE MYSTERIOUS FIRE.

DANIELLE PRACHT: The only thing that they could find that could possibly have started the fire was, in one of the electrical boxes, there was a kinked wire. They determined that that was what had actually been the heart of the fire, but what they couldn't determine is why it, just all of a sudden, did that when it had sat that way for a hundred plus years. But I know in my heart that that was some way of Stephen Richards trying to stop us from adopting those kids, and trying to stop us from completing our family. And I feel like that was us, as a family, gaining that strength, and gaining that connection to stand up and say, "You're done, and you cannot have this family and you cannot have our home." Because after that fire, we never felt Stephen Richards here again. We never saw The Shadow Man again. It was Stephen Richards' last attempt at trying to control us, and he lost.

NARRATION: EVER SINCE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE STORAGE HOUSE, SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY WITHIN THE PRACHT HOME HAS DIMINISHED. NOW, THE FAMILY ACCEPTS ANY LINGERING ENCOUNTERS AS JUST A NORMAL PART OF THEIR LIVES.

RHIANNON PRACHT: The experiences that we still have here, I feel like they are more playful than anything. There's no aggression. There's no evil. There's no hatred with what happens anymore. It's just how it was in the very, very beginning. Lights turning on and off, footsteps, knocking on random things.

We hear things; our names are being called. There's nothing hostile about it, but I'm always worried that it's going to pick back up and get as bad as it was, just because when all of this first started happening, it was playful, and then it got bad. So, I'm... I'm always on edge, just waiting for the pin to drop.

NARRATION: ONE OF THE LASTING IMPACTS OF THEIR PARANORMAL EXPERIENCE IS THAT BOTH DANIELLE AND RHIANNON HAVE EMBRACED THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SPIRITUAL REALM. DANIELLE HAS JOINED SYNERGY TO HELP OTHERS WITH THEIR PARANORMAL ISSUES, AND HER DAUGHTER HAS CONNECTED WITH THOSE WHO HAVE A HEIGHTENED SENSITIVITY TO SPIRITUAL ENERGIES.

RHIANNON PRACT: Now that I have worked on it myself, and I've talked to a lot of other people with this ability, I'm finally at peace with the ability that I do have. Sometimes it gets a little overwhelming, but I have to create this bubble. It's kind of like a personal space bubble. But you have to tell these spirits, or these entities, that you need to stay out right now. I pretty much have to build up these walls as a barricade to block them out.

DANIELLE PRACT: We will ask Rhiannon, and even Randy, "how's the house feeling? How's the house doing?" And they'll tell us whether it's pretty calm or pretty active. We'll be sitting playing cards one night and a huge, cold front will move through our dining room, and everybody gets covered in goosebumps. And we're wondering, what was that? And it'll be gone just as soon as it's there. We just seem to have spirits that stop by for a visit, and they leave right away. We try to be respectful to the spirits that walk through our home, because they were loved somewhere along the way, and they just don't belong here.

NARRATION: IN A WORLD SKEPTICAL OF THE PARANORMAL, ONE OF THE ENDURING QUESTIONS IS WHY SOME, LIKE THE PRACT FAMILY, SEEM TO ATTRACT THESE EXPERIENCES IN A WAY THAT MOST OTHER PEOPLE DON'T. WHY DIDN'T STEPHEN DEE RICHARDS APPEAR TO THE PREVIOUS OWNERS, OR ANYONE ELSE IN AND AROUND THE TOWN OF NORMAN, NEBRASKA?

RYLEE PRACT: The way that we explain it is, you're in a field of pitch black. You can't see anything anywhere and then, all of a sudden, you see light. And so, you just go to that light, and that's what our house was, because we had three people who could sense them, and so we became the lighthouse within that field of darkness.

NARRATION: IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAS HAD A PARANORMAL EXPERIENCE, YOU CAN SUBMIT YOUR STORY AT [UNSOLVED.COM](https://unsolved.com).

NEXT, ON UNSOLVED MYSTERIES...

BRENDA LOPEZ: Everything was odd about this text. First of all, she never called her daughter Des. And then the way the wording was, that's not from her. Throughout this whole text messages, we usually text Spanglish, which is Spanish and English. None of this seems to be her.

Unsolved Mysteries is a production of Cosgrove Meurer Productions and Cadence 13. It is executive produced by Terry Dunn Meurer and Chris Corcoran. Produced by Lloyd Lochridge, Christine Lenig, Courtney Ennis, and Paige Hymson. The Story Producer for this episode was Cynthia Bowles, and it was edited by Ryan Dann.

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THANKS FOR LISTENING TO EPISODE 14 OF UNSOLVED MYSTERIES.