

UNSOLVED MYSTERIES PODCAST | 911 CONFESSION
S138 Transcript

BUTCH KNIGHT: Yes, is this the Fennville Police?

DISPATCH: It's the central dispatch, we take their calls for them. How can I help you?

BUTCH KNIGHT: Okay. Um, hm. On Sunday, January 11...

DISPATCH: Uh huh?

BUTCH KNIGHT: I strangled her. She is dead and she's laying on the living room floor.

DISPATCH: Okay, and what's your name, please?

BUTCH KNIGHT: That's not important. I'm getting ready to leave the country, but you need to get law enforcement out there to do whatever they do with dead bodies. Thank you.

DISPATCH: Can you at least give me your name, sir? Hello?

NARRATION: ON A BITTERLY COLD TUESDAY IN JANUARY 2015, THE HOME OF HAROLD AND SARA KNIGHT IS QUIET AND DARK. LOCATED IN FENNVILLE, MICHIGAN, THE HOUSE SITS ON A RURAL ROAD ABOUT 20 MILES FROM THE BLUSTERY SHORES OF LAKE MICHIGAN. INSIDE, THE FURNACE HAS BEEN TURNED OFF AND IT'S SO COLD, THE WATER IN THE TOILET HAS FROZEN OVER. IN THE LIVING ROOM, THERE'S A SHEET DRAPED ACROSS THE MIDDLE OF THE FLOOR, AND UNDERNEATH IT IS A SHOCKING SIGHT — THE ICY CORPSE OF 48-YEAR-OLD SARA KNIGHT. SHE'S BEEN STRANGLED TO DEATH.

I'M STEVE FRENCH, AND THIS IS UNSOLVED MYSTERIES: "911 CONFESSION."

CRAIG GARDINER: That day, I remember it because it was so bitterly cold. It was one of those days that, if you're standing outside, I mean, you felt it. Your ears were burning, your fingers. I mean, you couldn't stand more than a couple of minutes outside. You had to, you know, get someplace and get warm.

NARRATION: AT THE TIME OF THE UNUSUAL 911 CALL ON JANUARY 13TH, 2015, CRAIG GARDNER IS A VETERAN CASE DETECTIVE WITH THE ALLEGAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT.

CRAIG GARDINER: I was sitting in the office and we received a call from our Central Dispatch saying that they got an anonymous call to the dispatch center and the caller stated that he had killed her, he had strangled her, and she is dead and that she's laying on the living room floor, and gave the address of where they should send police, or "whoever handles dead bodies" out to the scene.

NARRATION: WHEN THE OFFICERS ARRIVED AT THE HOME, THERE ARE NO CARS IN THE DRIVEWAY, AND THE HOUSE APPEARS EMPTY. BUT BASED ON THE INFORMATION GIVEN IN THE 911 CALL, THEY MAKE A QUICK DECISION TO GO INSIDE.

CRAIG GARDINER: When they went up to the side door of the residence, they saw a set of keys that were laying on the stoop, I guess, leading into the house. And they noted that the keys were frozen to the deck there and they were able to pry them up and use them to make entry into the house. The house was locked. And as you're walking into the first part of the house there, you can see kind of an open living room area. And at that time, they could see that there was a person laying underneath a sheet on the living room floor.

NARRATION: THE BODY OF 48-YEAR-OLD SARA KNIGHT HAS BEEN PRESERVED BY THE FREEZING TEMPERATURE IN THE HOUSE, AND HAS SUFFERED LITTLE DECOMPOSITION.

CRAIG GARDINER: At the time of the scene, we couldn't really, definitively, say what would the cause of death was, but you can see that there were some ligature marks around her neck that would be consistent with strangulation. She had been deceased for some time. I couldn't tell, at the time, if it had been, you know, several days, or a day, but she had been there for at least a day or so. It appeared as if there wasn't a big struggle in the house, or a big fight, or anything like that. There were, you know, evidence technicians that come in and they did check for prints. They checked for DNA. They did swabs on things, but there was not a lot of evidence at the time. Next to the body, in the living room, there was a folder with contact numbers, family member's names, and also the passcode for a phone to contact relatives and notify them that Sara was dead.

NARRATION: ROXANNE HARRIS IS SARA'S DAUGHTER AND ONE OF THE FIRST PEOPLE CONTACTED BY THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT.

ROXANNE HARRIS: I talked to her, either it was Friday or Saturday. Sunday, I tried to call her. Monday, I tried to call her. Tuesday, I had received a phone call from my husband saying I needed to come back to my shop. I pulled into the shop parking lot. There was two cruisers sitting in the parking lot, and the sheriff came out and said, "We need you to go in your office, sit down, and we need to talk." And I was like, "Okay." And so, I sat down, and the sheriff had asked me some more questions about my mom. They asked me when's the last time I seen her? And I said, "Well, you know, it'd been a while, but I had just talked to her." And they asked me, "When?" and I said, "Well, what is this all got to do with it?" And the sheriff sat down and said, "You know, your mom is gone." And I was like, "Okay, I'll call her, not a big deal. Is she missing? Like, maybe she lost a patient, maybe she's just having a rough day. And they were like, "No, you're not understanding," and they said that she was deceased. So, I sat there for a minute and I was trying to grasp it all. And it wasn't until the sheriff told me I needed to pack a bag and then I needed to go to Allegan county that everything started to line up. And then, the reporter started calling. Before I could even leave the driveway, the reporter started asking me questions. And then I put two and two together that this wasn't, like, a car accident, or, you know, she passed away at home just from natural causes. Something else was happening. And then, I got to Allegan County and Allegan County had told me that Butch had killed my mom, and that they were trying to get to the bottom of it. I didn't believe it until I went and identified my mom and they said that they really strongly suggested I didn't go in and see my mom, because of the three days of being on the floor. And I said, "Nope, I want to see. You're not gonna stop me." And so, they took me in there, and that's when I really, truly understood that I was really in my nightmare, that that was my mom laying on the slab.

NARRATION: SARA WAS BORN IN MICHIGAN AND LIVED THERE ALL HER LIFE. SHE SUFFERED FROM ACUTE ASTHMA, A CONDITION THAT INSPIRED HER TO BECOME A RESPIRATORY THERAPIST, TAKING CARE OF ELDERLY PATIENTS. SHE MARRIED HER HIGH SCHOOL SWEETHEART EARLY ON, AND THEY HAD TWO DAUGHTERS, ROXANNE AND ANGELICA. BUT THE MARRIAGE WAS TROUBLED AND ENDED IN DIVORCE. SARA GOT A SECOND CHANCE AT LOVE WHEN SHE REMARRIED IN 2001. THROUGHOUT IT ALL, ELLEN STANLEY WAS ONE OF SARA'S CLOSEST FRIENDS.

ELLEN STANLEY: Sara was like my little sister. We've been friends since she was probably a senior in high school. We met in an EMT class. I had just come out of a bad divorce and was looking for something to do for a distraction, and they partnered us as partners in the class, and that's how we met. Sara was a very sensitive soul and she'd been through a rough life and, in her life, you do what you can to please people to make your life easier. And Sara was very good at pleasing people. She was very good at taking care of people, at nurturing, you know, at just loving people. And that made her happy, too. She was an awesome mother. She loved her girls. She put them ahead of her. Everything was great with her and the girls until Butch came into the picture, and that's when things went a little haywire.

NARRATION: HAROLD KNIGHT, BETTER KNOWN TO FRIENDS AS BUTCH, WAS SARA'S SECOND HUSBAND. AND WHEN SHE WAS MURDERED, HE WAS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND, MAKING BUTCH THE PRIME SUSPECT. DETECTIVE GARDINER'S FIRST STEP IN THE INVESTIGATION WAS TO IDENTIFY THE ANONYMOUS 911 CALLER WHO CONFESSED TO STRANGLING SARA.

CRAIG GARDINER: I was able to determine it was Harold Knight by taking a portion of that call and making contact with his son and playing it for him, and he identified it as his father, Harold.

NARRATION: BUTCH MADE NO ATTEMPT TO HIDE THE FACT THAT HE HAD KILLED SARA, BUT HE MADE SURE HE VANISHED INTO THIN AIR BEFORE SARA'S BODY COULD BE DISCOVERED.

CRAIG GARDINER: He left a note explaining who to call. He also gave a time of death, that she died on January 11th, 2015. If what the note said was true, that gave him two days head start on us to try to figure this out and get him in custody.

NEWS CLIP: As the search continues for Harold "Butch" Knight, the man accused of strangling his wife, the family has nothing but questions. Why would a man who often sent his wife love letters turn around and kill her?

NARRATION: WHEN THEIR RELATIONSHIP FIRST BEGAN, BUTCH WAS AS CHARMING AS COULD BE, AND SARA WAS OVERWHELMED BY ALL THE ATTENTION HE PAID HER.

ROXANNE HARRIS: It was around '94, '95, so I was about 9, 10 years old. My mom was working at the hospital and Butch's parents were in Gladwin hospital and my mom was their respiratory therapist. I just remember him sending flowers, taking her to dinners, sending her cards. After my parents got divorced, I remember him showing up almost every weekend and taking Mom to some dinner, some

place. We used to go up to the lake house a lot. She was wooed by him. He came in, promised her the world, told her that, you know, she was going to get a new house, and Butch was really good at telling my mom exactly what she wanted to hear. And he was believable.

NARRATION: SARA AND BUTCH HASTILY ELOPED IN 2001. SARA SEEMED EXCITED FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER IN HER LIFE, MOVING INTO A NEW HOME THAT BUTCH BUILT FOR THEM IN GLADWIN, MICHIGAN. BUT DESPITE HOW SWEET HE ACTED TOWARDS SARA, HER CHILDREN, ROXANNE AND ANGELICA HAD SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT BUTCH.

ROXANNE HARRIS: I did not like him. He treated me like I was stupid, and he made that very known, that he didn't think I was very bright. He didn't think that I had a future. He was a smooth talker, very smooth talker, but he also had personality changes. He would talk to my sister one way, talk to me a different way, talk to my mom a different way. He would say one thing to her and then, like, snap at me and Angel. And we would try to tell Mom what was going on, but she was like, "Oh, no, he wouldn't be like that. He's so nice. He's so sweet." He basically played a double life with me and my sister against my Mom. My sister hated him.

NARRATION: AN INCIDENT INVOLVING ANGEL A COUPLE YEARS INTO THE MARRIAGE RAISES MORE RED FLAGS AROUND SMOOTH-TALKING BUTCH.

ROXANNE HARRIS: There was a time in 2003, I think it was. We still had the lake house, and she claims that he pushed her underneath the dock. She was struggling in the water, and he made it look like he was helping her out of the water. She claims otherwise. And I remember my mom standing there going, "Well, he wouldn't do that." And Mom just thought that Angel was not so much making it up, but maybe not telling the full truth. You know, we didn't make it very easy on my mother, but he didn't make it very easy either. And he made it out to being that we were the problem. We were not the problem, he was. And it was like that for a long time.

NARRATION: SARA'S FRIEND ELLEN ONLY MET BUTCH BRIEFLY, BUT HE LEFT A TROUBLING IMPRESSION.

ELLEN STANLEY: The first time I met him, my first thoughts were probably, "Oh crap, what has she gotten herself into?" He was an arrogant, controlling idiot. He thought he was smarter than everybody else, and he didn't mind that you knew that he thought that. He was mouthy. He thought he was funny, but it was actually kind of a cruel kind of teasing, kind of bullying-type funny, which isn't funny to most of us. But just his apparent self-confidence and huge ego... so, you know, that was Sara's choice. She chose to marry him, and she chose to make things as good as she possibly could. And I wasn't going to be there to criticize her or him, because that, I think, would have only made things worse for her.

NARRATION: FOR YEARS, SARA IS BLIND TO BUTCH'S DARK SIDE, BUT IT GRADUALLY BECOMES MORE APPARENT AS THE HONEYMOON PHASE OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP WEARS OFF.

ELLEN STANLEY: I think he started getting more demanding, more controlling, and he always made Sara feel like she had done something wrong. She was very insecure, because you never knew what you did wrong, or if you did anything. She didn't do anything wrong. I'm sure she didn't. But he always kept her off kilter. And I think that it kept Sara more just trying to concentrate totally on him and what she could do to make him happy so that he was happy, and he left her alone. We did talk about it. She knew that he was controlling or, you know, trying to control. I don't know whether, maybe once you're in that deep into a relationship with somebody that's supposed to love you, or that you love them, that, you know, you're going to try harder. And Sara tried hard. She did everything she could to make Butch happy.

NARRATION: ON TOP OF THE INCREASING EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE, SARA FEELS FINANCIAL PRESSURE. BUTCH INSISTS THAT HE CONTROL THE CHECKBOOK, AND AT THE SAME TIME HE SEEMS TO BE WORKING LESS AND LESS.

ELLEN STANLEY: When Sara would bring her paycheck home, she would hand it over to him. He would not even give her enough money to keep in her purse so that she could stop and have coffee with a friend on the way home from work. He took everything. She had to have permission, or beg him, or ask him, if she could have a couple of dollars for whatever she might need. He controlled every single dime. And I'm sure she never saw one of his paychecks, if he ever actually had one.

NARRATION: BOTH OF SARA'S CHILDREN, ROXANNE AND ANGELICA, LEAVE HOME AS SOON AS THEY'RE ABLE TO GET AWAY FROM BUTCH. ANGELICA GOES INTO A FOSTER HOME SHORTLY AFTER THE NEAR DROWNING INCIDENT, AND ROXANNE MOVES OUT AT 17, JOINING THE MILITARY. THIS LEAVES SARA ISOLATED WITH BUTCH, AND HE ASSERTS EVEN MORE CONTROL OVER HER. IN 2007, BUTCH CONVINCES SARA TO WALK AWAY FROM HER LIFE AND FAMILY IN MICHIGAN AND MOVE TO MAINE. ROXANNE IS SHOCKED.

ROXANNE HARRIS: I came home from the military in 2007. And so, they were off on an adventure. I really don't know why they moved to Maine. It was not my mother's idea, but he had convinced her that it was okay to do so. She followed him.

CRAIG GARDINER: Butch loved Maine, everything about Maine. He loved living there. He loved the outdoors. He loved to go kayaking. He loved to go hiking. He took an interest in going to lighthouses, you know, on the coast. But he also liked the northern Maine. He liked going up into the woods, so he was familiar with that area. He knew that there's not a lot of police presence around there. There literally is no police in the area, you know, that patrol regularly. So, there's more, probably, wildlife officers than there are police officers in that area.

NARRATION: SARA LIVES WITH BUTCH IN MAINE FOR NEARLY SEVEN YEARS, AND DURING THAT TIME SHE RARELY GETS TO SEE HER DAUGHTERS AND OTHER FAMILY AND FRIENDS. THEN, IN EARLY 2014, SARA ABRUPTLY RETURNS TO MICHIGAN AND MOVES IN WITH HER DAUGHTER, ROXANNE. BUTCH DOES NOT COME WITH HER.

ROXANNE HARRIS: We were so happy that my mom was back, and my kids were so happy that Grandma was around. We were hunting and fishing and swimming and going on trips and to the movies. We were living life. I never put two and two together that there were no phone calls between her and Butch. Mom never mentioned anything about it, and I didn't ask questions.

NARRATION: IT ISN'T UNTIL AFTER SARA'S MURDER THAT ROXANNE LEARNS HER MOTHER HAD CONFRONTED BUTCH ABOUT HIS ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR WHILE THEY WERE STILL LIVING IN MAINE.

ROXANNE HARRIS: It was shortly after Mom had passed, and I was sitting in church one day and flipping through Mom's bible, and uh, there was a letter in the very, very back, and it was kind of a plea on Butch's side that said, "You told me to do X, Y and Z. I've started doing what you asked me to do. I'm gonna be a better man. I'm gonna do everything that you ask me to do. I want you back. I want to try and work things out." And I'm guessing, from what the letter stated, Mom had given him maybe an ultimatum, and either you straighten up your act, you get a job, you pack up the house and you move back here, or we can call it quits. I think that she was only going to put up with his crap for so long, and I think that was a big fight between the two of them.

NARRATION: SIX MONTHS AFTER SARA RETURNED ALONE, BUTCH MOVED BACK TO MICHIGAN. SARA'S DAUGHTER ROXANNE BELIEVES THAT HE SOMEHOW CONVINCED SARA THAT HE WOULD CHANGE HIS CONTROLLING WAYS. AND SARA, WHO WAS KNOWN FOR HER CARING AND FORGIVING HEART, WELCOMES HIM BACK, WILLING TO GIVE BUTCH THE SECOND CHANCE HE BEGGED FOR.

ROXANNE HARRIS: They moved to Fennville, which is three, maybe four hours away from where we were at. And he made sure that we were very isolated. He really wanted to keep Mom the farthest he could from us, and I feel like Fennville wasn't far enough.

NARRATION: IT DOESN'T TAKE LONG FOR BUTCH TO REVERT TO HIS ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARDS SARA. SHE LEARNS QUICKLY THAT BUTCH HASN'T CHANGED AT ALL, AND THEIR FINANCES BEGIN TO SUFFER ONCE AGAIN.

ELLEN STANLEY: I know things were not good with them. He was, you know, mad at her all the time, and just that they weren't getting along. But the frustration was trying to pay the bills. They couldn't pay the bills.

NARRATION: IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS LEADING UP TO SARA'S MURDER, ROXANNE RECALLS A COUPLE OF ODD THINGS HER MOTHER MENTIONED WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN A WARNING SIGN THAT SOMETHING WAS NOT RIGHT.

ROXANNE HARRIS: A couple weeks before, she was talking about how she got life insurance. And I was like, "Mom, you know, you're not even 50 yet. We don't have to worry about it." I wish I would have listened. I don't know if that was a subtle way of saying, "I'm worried about something," or not. Looking back now, I think it was. I know that she confided in my Aunt Ellen, saying that how Butch was getting more verbal, getting more distant. He stopped paying all of my mom's bills. She gave the money to Butch, or put it in their joint account, and he was to pay the bills because he was sitting on

his duff doing nothing. Mom's life insurance hadn't been paid. Her gym membership hadn't been paid. I think he was pocketing the money. She didn't discuss it with us, but I'm guessing that that could have been the argument they were having. The last time I spoke with my mom was the weekend before, and she said that she was walking down the hallway in the house. Butch had walked into her like she wasn't even there. We didn't really go into detail of how much of an attitude he really had. I believe, looking back at it now, he was disassociating himself from the situation and leading up to murdering my mom. I think this was very premeditated, very planned out.

NARRATION: SARA'S CLOSE FRIEND, ELLEN STANLEY, RECALLS HER LAST COMMUNICATION WITH SARA, AND HOW IT MAY HAVE FORESHADOWED THE MURDER.

ELLEN STANLEY: She had called, and then she had messaged me on Facebook. And all the message was, "I tried to call you," which is really weird because Sara always left a message, not just a couple of words, or whatever. She always left a message was, "Hey, tried to call. Sorry I missed you. Love you," you know, the normal stuff. And I honestly believe that, when Sara called and left that message for me, I think the phone call originally was, "I'm leaving. Can you help me?" And it was a few days after that, that I got the phone call from the police department in Michigan to inform me that she had been murdered. I think the reason that Butch killed Sara is because she was going to leave him and he knew it.

NARRATION: WAS SARA'S MURDER A CRIME OF PASSION THAT HAPPENED AS THE RESULT OF AN ARGUMENT OR CONFRONTATION? OR WAS HER DEATH A COLD AND CAREFULLY CALCULATED ACT?

CRAIG GARDINER: For my investigation, there's a couple things that stood out as far as, you know, is Butch capable of violence? He kind of fancied himself like, uh, he liked Tom Clancy novels. You know, things like that. Kind of a spy, kind of a secret agent, things like that. So, that was kind of telling and in the way he planned this, and, and methodically wrote out some of his plans, which we later found out through search warrants. He was planning on leaving. Uh, he withdrew their cash. On January 10th, so it'd be the day before he murdered Sara, he went to their bank in Grand Rapids and withdrew \$1,250. And then on January 12th, the day after he murdered Sara, he went to the same bank. He closed out their bank account, taking all the money left in it, and he withdrew \$3,314. He didn't have a lot of cash, and then on top of that, on the same day, on the 12th, January 12th, Butch went to a gun range in Battle Creek, Michigan and, and purchased a Glock 22-pistol and ammunition. And he was researching online where to shoot someone to kill them.

NARRATION: AFTER STRANGLING HIS WIFE, BUTCH MADE HIS ESCAPE FROM FENNVILLE IN A GREEN SUBARU HE OWNED WITH SARA. THAT VEHICLE HELPS DETECTIVE GARDNER TRACK HIS MOVEMENTS.

CRAIG GARDINER: We were able to download the information off the GPS. We know that Harold left Michigan and went to Maine. We know that he ended up arriving in Rumford, Maine on January 14th, 2015. We do know that he did probably go back to his and Sara's old house in Turner, Maine. We went there. The house was totally empty. I don't know if he stopped there just to take a look, or if he had left something there thinking he was gonna come back. I mean, he's diabolical enough that he could have planned this out before he even left back for Michigan.

NARRATION: WITH BUTCH ON THE RUN, AND A SIGNIFICANT HEAD START, AUTHORITIES KNOW HE WON'T BE EASY TO CATCH. HE'S A CUNNING CHARACTER WHO HAS SPENT HIS ENTIRE LIFE DECEIVING THOSE AROUND HIM. WHEN INQUIRIES ARE MADE AT THE TRUCKING COMPANY WHERE BUTCH SAID HE WORKED, LAW ENFORCEMENT HITS A ROADBLOCK.

ROXANNE HARRIS: I had taken him to the trucking yard a couple of times. He would leave out on Sunday night. He would get picked up on Friday. He had a map book with him, a GPS, a cooler full of food that my mom, you know, prepared for him, and I dropped his butt off. I never asked questions. And it was really weird because the police department really was fixated on that. They asked me several times, "Did you ever see him get into a truck? Did you ever see pictures of a truck?" But to go as far as, "Did I see him get into a truck?" No. Did I ever pick him up from a truck? No. I picked him up from a trucking yard, but never from an actual semi-truck. Butch was saying that he was working, but the police department can't find where he was working.

ELLEN STANLEY: It was Sara's understanding that he was going to work. But later on, they had checked, and he had never worked for a trucking company. But that would have been a great cover. You know, "I'm on the road for four days, honey. I'll see you when I get back," and I would think Butch would be very good at double life. I really believe he would be very good at that.

NARRATION: A WEEK AFTER SARA'S MURDER, IT SEEMS BUTCH MAY HAVE COVERED HIS TRACKS PERFECTLY, NEVER TO BE HEARD FROM AGAIN. BUT THEN ON JANUARY 20th, SARA'S FAMILY RECEIVES A STRANGE MESSAGE.

ROXANNE HARRIS: It was a few days after we found out that my mom had passed. I was making arrangements for my mom's funeral, and the package showed up and they opened it up and there was money in it. And there was four pages, front and back, single spaced, itty bitty tiny letters of nonsense. He had put in there — I took it as a hitlist. He named me, my sister, my uncle, my grandmother, and basically pointed out all of the family fights and that it was our fault, the way everything was.

NARRATION: DETECTIVE GARDNER IS ABLE TO DETERMINE THAT THE PACKAGE WAS MAILED OUT OF A POST OFFICE IN RUMFORD, MAINE ON JANUARY 16.

CRAIG GARDINER: In the package, he had \$2,000 separated in \$1,000 increments and they were wrapped in paper. There was a note where he told Sara's mom that Sara wanted to be cremated and that they better cremate her, and the \$2,000 was to help that out. The note also indicated that Sara "had to die." She was in the way of his drug dealing business. We investigated that aspect, and we found no evidence that he was involved in dealing drugs. I think it's just something to try to throw the police off track and kind of explain things, I guess, in his mind. He made statements on how he planned this murder and got away with it by watching crime television shows. He talked about how he got away with murder and he's free as a bird.

NARRATION: 18 DAYS AFTER SARA'S MURDER, THERE'S ANOTHER BREAK IN THE CASE.

CRAIG GARDINER: His abandoned Subaru was found on January 31st, 2015, at a Walmart parking lot in Farmington, Maine.

NARRATION: DETECTIVE GARDNER IMMEDIATELY PULLS SECURITY FOOTAGE FROM THE WALMART, AND HE SPOTS THE GREEN SUBARU AND THE ELUSIVE BUTCH IN THE PARKING LOT.

CRAIG GARDINER: It looks like the vehicle was having trouble. I can see in the video at the Walmart that he does go under the hood for a little bit. And then after a short period of time, like he gave up, he grabbed a briefcase out of the car and walked to the front of the store. You can see him waiting there. He had some black dye and changed his appearance. He dyed his mustache and what little hair he had all black, jet black. And uh, he's wearing a camouflage one piece snowmobile suit, a winter hat that has, like, the earflaps with the rabbit fur, and that's camouflage, also. We can see him waiting there until somebody actually does give him a ride. And we were able to track down who that person was, identify them, and talk to them. He said that Butch Knight was standing out front of the Walmart, asked for a ride to Rangeley, offered \$100 cash for a ride. Said his vehicle broke down, and this person drove him up to Rangeley, which was roughly 40 miles, and dropped him off at a gas station. From there, they searched around Rangeley. It's a very small town, try to see if he, you know, stayed the night anywhere. And they were able to find the hotel called, Town and Lake Motel in Rangeley, Maine, where Harold had stayed. He appeared to be there three or four days, at the hotel. The hotel employees noted that he just kind of kept to himself. He didn't say too much. He didn't leave anything behind in the room that would be of evidence, and he didn't have a car anymore after his car was abandoned. Harold checks out of the Town and Lake Motel in Rangeley, Maine on January 19th, 2015, and that is the last time anyone saw him.

NEWS BITE: Hunt for Harold Knight is on. But are the feds already too far behind the suspected killer?

NEWS BITE: Knight was spotted in Rangeley, Maine in the days after his wife was found dead in Fennville. But that's been three weeks now since his last sighting.

NARRATION: SINCE HIS DISAPPEARANCE FROM THE TOWN AND LAKE MOTEL IN RANGELEY, MAINE, THERE HAVE BEEN MANY REPORTS FROM LOCALS WHO BELIEVE THEY'VE SEEN BUTCH KNIGHT.

CRAIG GARDINER: The problem that we're running into is that he looks like everybody's grandpa. I mean, he looks pretty typical of what an older, kind of heavysset guy would look like. We've gotten tips and followed up on them where people swore for, you know, up and down, it was Butch. They knew it. And it looks just like him, but it's not Butch. So, the fact that he just kind of looks like this friendly old grandpa, he probably doesn't bring police attention on himself when he's driving around, or walking around. Somebody that you wouldn't look twice at.

NARRATION: NONE OF THE SIGHTINGS DEVELOP INTO SOLID LEADS, AND AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS, BUTCH'S TRAIL GOES COMPLETELY COLD. FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND THE POLICE CAN ONLY SPECULATE ABOUT WHERE HE MAY BE TODAY.

CRAIG GARDINER: There's a few different theories. Uh, one is that, at the time of year that this was going on, when he checked out on the 19th, there was a, like, a snowmobile festival going on Rangeley, Maine. Rangeley, Maine's about six miles to the Canadian border. So, a theory was that maybe he hooked a ride with somebody on a snowmobile, tried to cross the border into Canada. Another theory is, in talking to local wildlife officers in the area, said that, if he didn't have a car and he didn't have a ride, for him to try to walk and cross into Canada, it would be through wilderness. The snow was very deep at the time. They said, with his age, and the diabetes, and things like that, that he probably wouldn't make it walking. And that, possibly, he wouldn't be recovered. We have a theory that maybe he knew of cabins and things in the area that, especially in the winter, there wouldn't be people living there. We had, you know, all the wildlife officers in the area check those cabins and they didn't turn up any leads that, you know, any of them were broken into, or that anybody had been living there that wasn't supposed to. And then the lastly, if he lost his car, I mean, somebody had to help him. He had to been meeting somebody up in Rangeley, Maine and then left from there. It could be somebody that was a love interest that has no idea that this even happened. He might have hidden his identity from her. And if that's the case, it could be somebody that has no idea who Butch Knight is, what he's about, and they could be in danger.

ROXANNE HARRIS: I think there's a good possibility that Harold is in Maine, or in the New England area. I don't think he went into Canada. There's no proof that he went into Canada. I believe Butch went to Maine for a reason. Maybe he met somebody at the hospital waiting for my mom. It wouldn't be too far-fetched. So maybe he has another family out there. I do think he's alive. I know that some time has gone by, and that people are maybe giving up hope. I don't. I get that he's older, but if he was to have died, I do believe that he would let somebody know, just because he's so arrogant. And I think that he is on to his next victim. And it's just going to be a matter of time before he either 1) kills again or 2) he turns himself in, or is found.

NARRATION: AFTER SIX YEARS, BUTCH KNIGHT'S WHEREABOUTS ARE STILL UNKNOWN. BUT FOR DETECTIVE CRAIG GARDINER, THE CASE WILL NEVER BE CLOSED UNTIL BUTCH IS FOUND AND BROUGHT TO JUSTICE.

CRAIG GARDINER: It really bothers me that I can't get closure for the family. This is the one case that, that haunts me, because although it's solved, we know who did it, it will never be solved until Butch faces justice. I believe the family deserves it. And so, that's one of the reasons, while I'm retired, I'm not going to give up on this case. My fear is that, if Butch is still alive, we know that he's got a gun. I know that he's researched where to shoot a human being to kill 'em. My fear is that somebody will come across Butch, and he's not gonna like them, and he's going to use violence. Whether that's a police officer pulling him over, or he's stealing to make ends meet, or committing a crime. It worries me. So, you know, I hope that he's caught and that nobody else is hurt.

NARRATION: AS SARA'S FRIENDS AND FAMILY LOOK BACK, THEY WONDER IF THERE'S MORE THAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE TO SAVE HER LIFE.

ROXANNE HARRIS: I wish I would have asked more questions. Truthfully, there was a lot of times that he wasn't around, and I didn't really care. So, we just continued having fun and doing what we wanted

to do, but I didn't question it and I should've. I truly miss the annoying phone calls a hundred times a day. I can remember being so busy and my mom stopping and saying, "I just wanted to say hi." And I'm like, "Dude, I'm so busy." And she was like, "I know, but I just wanted to say hi, or see what you're doing." And I miss those phone calls. I miss being able to have something exciting happen in my life, where, like, my kids take their first steps, or graduating high school, or whatever is going on in my life and just calling my mom and going, "This funny thing just happened." You know, I just miss our friendship.

ELLEN STANLEY: I miss a lot about Sara. Sara just wanted to see people be happy. She was just that kind of person. And Sara would make people happy, even if it maybe wasn't the best thing for her. She always put other people first. He didn't have to kill her. That was all him. That was all his ego and all his thing. He couldn't lose. He just couldn't lose. She was either with him, or she was dead. You don't defy Butch. I hope he's alive. I hope he's not a dead bag of bones somewhere, because I want him to get caught. Because I want him to know that he lost, and he didn't get the last laugh.

NARRATION: HAROLD WESLEY KNIGHT, ALSO KNOWN AS BUTCH, IS A FUGITIVE WANTED FOR MURDER. BORN JULY 11TH, 1948, HE'S A WHITE MALE, SIX FEET FOUR INCHES TALL, AND WEIGHS ABOUT 285 POUNDS. HE HAS HAZEL EYES AND WHITE HAIR, BUT HE MAY HAVE DISGUISED HIS APPEARANCE. HE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ARMED AND DANGEROUS. IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT THE WHEREABOUTS OF HAROLD "BUTCH" KNIGHT, CONTACT THE ALLEGAN COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT AT 269-673-0500, OR SUBMIT A TIP AT [UNSOLVED.COM](https://www.unsigned.com).

NEXT, ON UNSOLVED MYSTERIES...

KAYLEE PALMER: We see her in front of the elevator. We see her on the phone, and then we know that there are a few calls that are made after she exits the view of the CCTV footage but she's never heard from again. She just literally disappears.

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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, Paige Hymson, and Paul Yates. The Story Producer for this episode was Ann Toler, and it was edited by Ryan Dann.

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THANKS FOR LISTENING TO EPISODE 38 OF UNSOLVED MYSTERIES.