

THE UNSOLVED MYSTERIES PODCAST | DOUBLE MURDER ON THE FIFTH FLOOR
EP79 Transcript

MIREYA: There's blood around my mom. But my first reaction was like, she fell, you know? She hit her head. I'm like, "What's wrong?" you know, not realizing this had happened hours ago. She wasn't breathing or anything, and I wasn't understanding, you know, why? Like... things were just, they weren't registering, you know? I was just seeing them but I wasn't understanding what was going on, why my mom was tied up or, you know, what happened? I just didn't know what happened, but it was my mom, you know?

NARRATION:

SITUATED IN A WORKING-CLASS BROOKLYN NEIGHBORHOOD IS A GROUP OF EIGHT BRICK APARTMENT BUILDINGS KNOWN AS THE BUSHWICK HOUSES. THE 1,220 UNIT COMPLEX WAS BUILT BY NEW YORK CITY'S HOUSING AUTHORITY AND PROVIDES MUCH NEEDED AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR MANY FAMILIES IN THE AREA. UNFORTUNATELY, BUSHWICK ALSO HAS A REPUTATION FOR ATTRACTING MORE THAN ITS FAIR SHARE OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY. IN MAY OF 2018, ON MOTHER'S DAY WEEKEND, A BRUTAL DOUBLE HOMICIDE CLAIMED THE LIVES OF TWO INNOCENT AND UNLIKELY VICTIMS — NEIGHBORS IN THE SAME BUILDING. AUTHORITIES ARE CONVINCED SOMEONE IN THE COMMUNITY HAS INFORMATION THAT CAN BRING THE KILLERS TO JUSTICE. BUT SO FAR, NO ONE HAS BEEN WILLING TO COME FORWARD.

I'M STEVE FRENCH, AND THIS IS UNSOLVED MYSTERIES: "DOUBLE MURDER ON THE FIFTH FLOOR."

NARRATION:

ON MAY 11, 2018, MIREYA IS JUST GETTING OFF WORK FROM HER JOB AT BROOKLYN HOSPITAL WHERE SHE WORKS THE 9:00 TO 5:00 SHIFT. IT'S TWO DAYS BEFORE MOTHER'S DAY, SO ON HER WAY HOME, SHE DECIDES TO PICK UP SOME FLOWERS AS AN EARLY GIFT FOR HER MOTHER, ANA DEL VALLE. MIREYA ARRIVES HOME AT AROUND 6:00PM WITH A BOUQUET OF ROSES IN HER HAND, TAKES THE ELEVATOR, AND GETS OFF ON THE FIFTH FLOOR.

MIREYA: When I get to the door, I'm about to open with my key, but it's open. And I saw her on the floor, and there was, like, a puddle of blood around her. My first reaction was, like, she fell, you know? She hit her head and I grabbed her and I'm, like, tryna, you know, like, "What's wrong?" I'm banging on her chest, you know, thinking like, okay, you know, she's gonna be okay, you know? It just wasn't registering in my head that my mom wasn't breathing. And when, you know, I lifted her up, I saw, like, a hole by her ear and I was, like, what is this, you know? Like, and then I noticed that she had a hole in her forehead. I didn't know what was happening. I had never seen a gunshot wound, let alone my mom like this.

NARRATION:

62-YEAR-OLD ANA DEL VALLE IS DEAD FROM GUNSHOT WOUNDS TO HER HEAD AND TORSO. HER HANDS HAVE BEEN TIED BEHIND HER BACK WITH THE CORD TO HER ELECTRIC MASSAGER.

OVERWHELMED BY GRIEF AND SHOCK, MIREYA CAN'T EVEN PROCESS WHAT SHE'S SEEING. ALL SHE CAN DO IS CALL 911 AND WAIT ANXIOUSLY FOR HELP TO ARRIVE.

MIREYA: My mom was very cheerful, petite, about five feet, really, really curly hair. She loved having the family together. She made it a point where she would always prepare a home cooked meal. That was her way of showing us her love.

NARRATION:

ANA IMMIGRATED TO NEW YORK CITY IN 1983 FROM HER NATIVE HONDURAS. STARTING OVER IN A NEW COUNTRY AS A SINGLE MOTHER WAS A DAUNTING CHALLENGE, BUT SHE WAS DETERMINED TO BUILD A BETTER FUTURE FOR HER THREE YOUNG CHILDREN.

MIREYA: She started working in a sweatshop making sweaters. She worked there for a couple of years. My two brothers and I, we basically just went to school while she worked, wouldn't let us hangout much. She was pretty strict with us. She wanted us to have a better life than what she had to go through. She was always there for us.

NARRATION:

ANA'S KIDS GREW TO BE RESPONSIBLE ADULTS. HER OLDEST SON EVENTUALLY LEFT THE APARTMENT TO START HIS OWN FAMILY, WHILE MIREYA AND HER TWIN BROTHER CONTINUED TO LIVE AT HOME WITH THEIR MOTHER. WHEN THE FACTORY WHERE ANA WORKED CLOSED DOWN, SHE BEGAN TO CLEAN APARTMENTS TO SUPPORT HER FAMILY THEN EVENTUALLY RETIRED.

MIREYA: That's when she started enjoying herself. She would go to the community center that's there right across from the building where we lived at. She would do cooking classes, knitting and, you know, all types of activities. She loved keeping busy. Very lively, very happy.

NARRATION:

IN 2018, THE DEL VALLE FAMILY LIVE IN THE BUSHWICK HOUSING COMPLEX IN BROOKLYN. HOME IS A THREE BEDROOM APARTMENT IN BUILDING #7, UNIT 5-C. THE BUILDING HAS 13 FLOORS, EACH WITH ABOUT 10 APARTMENTS. THE DEL VALLES HAVE LIVED THERE FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS, BUT THEY AREN'T CLOSE WITH ANY OF THEIR NEIGHBORS. BASED ON WHAT THEY SEE GOING ON IN THE BUILDING THEY JUST TRY TO KEEP TO THEMSELVES.

MIREYA: Downstairs in the main lobby, there would be these young kids just hanging around playing dice. They would be smoking weed, selling drugs in the hallway, selling drugs in the staircase. Anybody would come in and out. They didn't necessarily have to live there. It was also gangs, you could tell. You know, people would hang out in groups. There were shootings a couple of times. We didn't feel 100% safe but, you know, unfortunately, that's where we lived at.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: It was May 11 of 2018, and at around six o'clock in the evening, I received the call of a female found shot in the head inside her apartment.

NARRATION:

AT THE TIME, STEVE MINUCCI WORKS AS A SQUAD DETECTIVE IN THE NYPD'S 90th PRECINCT. THE BUSHWICK HOUSING COMPLEX FALLS WITHIN HIS JURISDICTION.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: We got to the scene within a few minutes of the call coming over. There was multiple officers on location. One of the family members, Mireya, who discovered Ana, had been removed from the immediate area. Upon entering the apartment, we observed Ana lying on the floor in a pool of blood, at least two visible gunshot wounds, and her wrists bound with a wire. In an area like that, you're going to see every type of call you can imagine. Drug related, occasionally gunshots, men or women with firearms, domestic violence. This was definitely a more brutal fashion of crime than what we typically see out there. In this particular case, she was retired, she basically lived for her family. She had no prior criminal history whatsoever. Obviously, as a detective, you have to disconnect and you have to kind of just look at things with a clinical eye and try to see the evidence, not the tragedy. But we all have loved ones, and when you see something like this, you think if it could happen to them, it really could happen to anyone.

NARRATION:

DETECTIVES INTERVIEW MIREYA AND HER BROTHER AND LEARN THAT ANA SPLIT HER TIME BETWEEN RUNNING THE HOUSEHOLD AND ACTIVITIES AT THE LOCAL COMMUNITY CENTER. MANY DAYS SHE WAS HOME ALONE WHILE MIREYA AND HER BROTHER WERE AT WORK AND THE FAMILY HAD A PREDICTABLE ROUTINE.

MIREYA: Normally, my day was going to work early in the morning, Monday through Friday. My brother at the time, he had, like, a part time job and he would also go in early. My mom, she was a busy body, you know. She would be always out and about, either the supermarket or the gym. When I got into work around 9am, you know, I'd give her a call just to see of her whereabouts. We would speak almost throughout the whole day.

NARRATION:

ON THE MORNING OF FRIDAY MAY 11, 2018, MIREYA TELLS INVESTIGATORS SHE WAS RUSHING AROUND THE APARTMENT, GETTING READY FOR HER SHIFT AT THE HOSPITAL. AS SHE WAS LEAVING, SHE NOTICED SOMETHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY. THE DOOR TO THEIR APARTMENT WAS UNLOCKED.

MIREYA: I found it kind of weird because, if my brother would leave before me, he would lock the door. And that morning, he had already left, and the door was open. I started heading out, didn't think anything of it. But, you know, I locked the door.

NARRATION:

AS SHE RACED DOWN THE STREET TOWARD THE SUBWAY STATION, MIREYA HAD A TROUBLING THOUGHT. PERHAPS HER MOTHER STEPPED OUT OF THEIR APARTMENT FOR A MOMENT AND DIDN'T LOCK THE DOOR BECAUSE SHE WAS PLANNING TO COME RIGHT BACK. AFRAID THAT SHE MIGHT HAVE ACCIDENTALLY LOCKED HER MOTHER OUT, MIREYA CALLED ANA WHO SAID SHE WAS, IN FACT, IN THE APARTMENT. RELIEVED, MIREYA CONTINUED ON HER WAY TO WORK, WITH NO IDEA THAT SHE WOULD NEVER SPEAK WITH HER MOTHER AGAIN.

HOURS LATER, AT THE CRIME SCENE, THE CONDITION OF ANA'S BODY INDICATES TO INVESTIGATORS THAT SHE'S BEEN DEAD FOR SEVERAL HOURS, SO IT'S ASSUMED SHE WAS KILLED SHORTLY AFTER SPEAKING WITH MIREYA AT 9AM. A MOP FOUND JUST OUTSIDE THE APARTMENT SUGGESTS ANA HAD BEEN CLEANING THE 5th FLOOR HALLWAY THAT MORNING, SOMETHING SHE WAS KNOWN TO DO. THERE ARE FEW OTHER CLUES LEFT BEHIND. NO SIGNS OF FORCED ENTRY, NO FINGERPRINTS AND NO MURDER WEAPON.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: There was minimal forensic evidence from that crime scene. A small amount of DNA was recovered, but forensically there was not a great deal to go on. She was shot three times in the torso and head, two different caliber bullets, a nine-millimeter and three-eighty. The fact that there is two caliber of ammunition found would suggest to me that there is at least two people kind of controlling the scene. The apartment itself was not particularly disheveled. No, like, furniture knocked over, didn't look like a serious struggle which, to be honest, makes sense. She was a small, older woman. She was probably very easily overpowered. The binding suggests to me that she was being held and threatened possibly to keep her quiet, keep her scared. It's indicative that it's two or more individuals who simply have no regard for human life.

NARRATION:

WITH FEW LEADS TO FOLLOW, INVESTIGATORS BEGIN COMBING THROUGH HOURS OF GRAINY SURVEILLANCE VIDEO FROM CAMERAS IN THE LOBBY AND ELEVATOR. DOZENS OF PEOPLE ARE SEEN COMING AND GOING THROUGHOUT THE DAY, BUT NOTHING ON THE VIDEO POINTS DETECTIVES TOWARD A SUSPECT.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: It does help us kind of narrow down the time of death. It also obviously eliminates both children of Ana del Valle as suspects, being that they're both seen leaving the building, not returning. But other than that, there's nothing more compelling on the video. We don't see people running away or people reacting to a gunshot. Sometimes you get a good shot. You can know exactly who it is. But you have to remember, people are coming, they're wearing hats. They might be wearing, like, a jacket covering up their face a little bit, or the other sad fact is that sometimes people in these buildings, they know the buildings very well. So often, when they're walking by a camera, they'll purposely put their head down a bit so you can't quite see their face.

NARRATION:

NYPD OFFICERS SYSTEMATICALLY CANVASS FOR WITNESSES THROUGHOUT THE HUGE APARTMENT BUILDING. THEY KNOCK ON COUNTLESS DOORS BUT COME AWAY WITH LITTLE INFORMATION.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: In a community like this, you knock on 100 apartment doors. If you get answers to 30 of them, you're probably lucky. People can be out at that time. People can simply not want to talk to the police. People in the building weren't necessarily uncooperative, but no one was able to really give us much information. At the time this occurred, there was no 911 calls. There was no witnesses. No one claimed to have heard anything. It was very much a situation where people would kind of say, "Yeah, this is a terrible thing, but I don't know anything."

NARRATION:

MIREYA INFORMS POLICE THAT THE \$100 IN CASH SHE HAD LEFT ON HER DRESSER IS NOW MISSING, BUT NOTHING ELSE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN FROM THE APARTMENT. THE SCENE RESEMBLES AN EXECUTION STYLE KILLING, BUT ANA AND HER CHILDREN DON'T HAVE ANY CONNECTIONS TO LOCAL GANG MEMBERS OR THE DRUG TRADE. THE FAMILY CAN'T IMAGINE A REASON FOR ANYONE TO WANT THEIR MOTHER DEAD.

MIREYA: I don't see how my mom could have been a target. I don't think she had any problems with anyone. It was like, why her? Why our mom? Who would go in there and do this and not rob her? You know, like if it was robbery, not take anything? Her wallet was there, her phone was there, everything was there. Who would do this?

NARRATION:

DETECTIVES POUND THE PAVEMENT AROUND THE CLOCK ALL MOTHER'S DAY WEEKEND, PUSHING TO FIND A LEAD THAT WILL POINT THEM TOWARDS A MOTIVE OR POSSIBLE SUSPECTS. THEN, AT 4:30PM ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, AUTHORITIES RECEIVE ANOTHER CALL FROM THE BUSHWICK APARTMENTS THAT ADDS A BIZARRE NEW WRINKLE TO ANA'S CASE.

NEWS REPORT: NYPD detectives from the 90th precinct back on the same floor of the same building at the Bushwick houses tonight, now investigating not one, but two deaths. Police tell us family members discovered 54-year-old Basil Gray shot in his apartment 5-B at 140 Moore Street, right next to the crime scene in 5-C. They're now working to figure out if the two are connected.

NARRATION:

IN A SHOCKING TWIST, LESS THAN 48 HOURS AFTER THE DISCOVERY OF ANA'S BODY, POLICE FIND THEMSELVES INVESTIGATING THE SHOOTING OF HER NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR, 54-YEAR-OLD BASIL GRAY. FROM THE MOMENT DETECTIVES ENTER HIS APARTMENT, THEY DOUBT THE TWO KILLINGS ARE JUST A COINCIDENCE.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: Basil was lying in the middle of the floor, shot multiple times. The state of the body indicated he'd been dead a couple of days. There was bloodstains on the door, on the wall, splatters in the kitchen, a trail of blood leading from the door to his body. What it certainly appears as though is that he had been standing by the door when he was shot and then kind of made his way over to the center of the apartment. Similar to Ana's apartment, there was minimal forensic evidence. There was no sign of ransacking, or the apartment have been gone through, or there'd been any kind of struggle in the apartment. The biggest thing we uncovered based on Basil's apartment is that we believe the same nine-millimeter gun that was used in Ana was also used on Basil.

NARRATION:

WAS BASIL SHOT ON FRIDAY AT THE SAME TIME AS ANA? INVESTIGATORS CAN'T BE CERTAIN BUT, BASED ON THE CONDITION OF HIS BODY, IT'S MORE THAN LIKELY. BASIL'S RELATIVES TELL POLICE THEY HADN'T HEARD FROM HIM SINCE THURSDAY. ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, THEY WENT TO HIS APARTMENT TO CHECK ON HIM, FOUND HIM LIFELESS, AND IMMEDIATELY CALLED 911.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: Basil lived there for a few years, not as long as Ana, but several years. For the most part, he lived alone. Occasionally he would have people stay with him for short periods of time. He had a family. He had an on-and-off girlfriend, sisters, nieces, stepchildren. He had a very, very minor criminal history, nothing violent, nothing serious. Generally speaking, he was a good citizen and a good man.

NARRATION:

OFFICERS RECEIVED NO RESPONSE AT BASIL'S APARTMENT WHILE CANVASSING THE BUILDING FRIDAY EVENING, BUT HAD NO REASON AT THAT POINT TO FIND IT SUSPICIOUS. INVESTIGATORS SEARCH THROUGH THE SURVEILLANCE VIDEOS AGAIN, NOW SPECIFICALLY FOCUSED ON BASIL'S MOVEMENTS. THE FOOTAGE SUGGESTS THAT WHEN THE POLICE KNOCKED ON HIS DOOR, BASIL HAD LIKELY BEEN HOME... LYING DEAD IN HIS LIVING ROOM.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: We observed both Ana's children as well as the second victim Basil leaving, and then in the case of Basil, returning to the building around 9am. At no point is he ever seen leaving after that. He's coming back with a, like, a bodega a cup of coffee. He's seen walking in with it, getting in the elevator, getting off the elevator. In the crime scene, that cup of coffee is there, still three quarters full on his nightstand.

NARRATION:

BASED ON THE COFFEE CUP AND OTHER AVAILABLE EVIDENCE, INVESTIGATORS BELIEVE BASIL AND ANA WERE SHOT BY THE SAME VICIOUS KILLERS SOMETIME BETWEEN 9:30 AND 10:00 AM. DETECTIVES ALSO SPEAK TO A FEW PEOPLE IN THE BUILDING WHO RECALL HEARING WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN GUNSHOTS FRIDAY MORNING AROUND THAT TIME. STILL, NARROWING DOWN WHEN THE MURDERS OCCURRED DOESN'T TELL POLICE WHO FIRED THE WEAPONS OR WHY THEY CHOSE TO KILL ANA AND BASIL.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: As victims, I would describe them as unusual but also vulnerable. They were two older people. At frequent times throughout the day, they would have been by themselves. They were neighbors, they were cordial, even friendly, but not particularly close. No one knew of any problems between the two victims and anyone else in the building. The Del Valle family told me basically that they tended to try to keep themselves, especially based on the kinds of things that were going on in the area.

NARRATION:

THE LIMITED INTERACTION BETWEEN THE TWO NEIGHBORS MAKES A PREMEDITATED DOUBLE HOMICIDE SEEM UNLIKELY. BUT ANA AND BASIL DID HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON THAT MAY HAVE PUT THEM AT RISK. THEY BOTH DISLIKED THE GANGS AND OPEN DRUG ACTIVITY PLAGUING THEIR BUILDING. PERHAPS ONE OF THEM HAD ANGERED THE WRONG PERSON AND ENDED UP WITH A TARGET ON THEIR BACK.

MIREYA: I was very worried, because she would be all day by herself. She would call the police, you know, at times, I guess just to try to make it a little bit more safe for people to come in and out of the building. And you know, for people that didn't live there, and you know, to go maybe somewhere else.

People watched. I would tell her, "You're coming in, it's only you in the lobby, then police come afterwards. Of course, they're gonna put two and two together, you know? It's like, don't do this, you know? Just let it be, you know, just go about your business." She was the type like, "No, you know, enough is enough. These people, they don't live here. This is not right. People should be calling. We can't even live in our own building in peace, you know." And that was, you know, her trying to make a difference.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: Basil, like Ana, was concerned with the safety of the building. He would speak to people about selling drugs in the area. He'd also make 911 calls. He was not a violently confrontational person, but he'd speak his mind about it. He didn't want to see that kind of stuff where he lived. We investigated, you know, the fact that she'd call 911 multiple times, as if that might be a possible motive. But at this time, based on what we've learned, we don't believe that was what caused this to happen.

NARRATION:

IF THE KILLER'S PURPOSE THAT MORNING WASN'T TO MURDER ANA OR BASIL, THEN WHY DID THEY BOTH END UP DEAD? ACCORDING TO MIREYA, THE GUNMEN MAY HAVE BEEN TARGETING A DIFFERENT APARTMENT IN THE BUILDING, BUT MISTAKENLY ENDED UP ON THE FIFTH FLOOR.

MIREYA: The people from upstairs, we think that they were, you know, selling or something. You know, they were into bad things and people would go sometimes getting off on the wrong floor, knocking on our door, and they would think they were knocking on the sixth floor. So, my first thought was, like, maybe somebody got the wrong apartment. Maybe she came out to do the floor, mop the floor. Maybe she saw something, you know, when she came out, and maybe she was a witness to it, and maybe that's why they had to do what they did to her. We just don't even know.

NARRATION:

INVESTIGATORS HAVE SEVERAL THEORIES AS TO WHY THE GUNMEN MAY HAVE BEEN ON THE 5th FLOOR, BUT NOT ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO KNOW WHO THEY ARE OR EXACTLY WHY THEY MURDERED ANA AND BASIL.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: Based on the investigation we've conducted up to this point, I don't believe it was just a completely random act. I believe whoever did this went to one of those apartments looking for something or someone, and ultimately, it ended in tragedy. While the victims themselves may not be connected to the drug trade, based on our investigation, we believe there may be a drug connection to why they were killed. It's absolutely possible that whoever did this either had gone to the wrong apartment, looking for someone else who wasn't there, or it's possible someone may have had information that there was either drugs, or money coming from drugs, in one of the apartments, and they were looking for those things, and acting on just bad information. But whatever the case may be, there were two people who were willing to commit an incredibly violent crime, either to get what they're looking for or cover their tracks.

NARRATION:

AFTER REPEATED IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS, INVESTIGATORS ARE STILL UNABLE TO IDENTIFY THE KILLERS IN SECURITY FOOTAGE FROM THE DAY OF THE MURDERS. IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THEY COULD HAVE MADE IT IN AND OUT OF THE BUILDING WITHOUT BEING RECORDED, BUT DETECTIVE MINUCCI BELIEVES THERE MAY BE ANOTHER EXPLANATION.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: The possibility is that, rather than someone entering and leaving the building, it could have been someone coming from another floor and then simply return to that floor. The only time we might see them, if they didn't use the stairs, would be on the elevator.

NARRATION:

COULD THE PEOPLE WHO KILLED ANA AND BASIL HAVE LIVED IN THEIR BUILDING? LIMITED EVIDENCE MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO ESTABLISH LIKELY SUSPECTS OR CLEAR MOTIVES. BUT WITH WHAT IS KNOWN, DETECTIVE MINUCCI BELIEVES THEY HAVE A GOOD IDEA OF WHAT HAPPENED DURING ANA AND BASIL'S LAST MOMENTS.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: What we believe happened is that the two perpetrators entered the building, whether it's from another floor or through the main entrance, sometime after 9am. They confront Ana either in her apartment or just outside of it, bind her and, at that point, what is possible happens is Basil hears what's going on and comes to investigate. At that point, we believe one of the perpetrators chased Basil back into his apartment and shot him before Basil was able to get the door closed. Ana was then shot, and the perpetrators leave the area. What I have to stress is that that is opinion and speculation based on what I've observed. I'm fairly confident that is the case, but we need the person who knows what happened in those apartments. And right now, the only people know what happened are the perpetrators.

NARRATION:

IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING THE MURDERS, POLICE COME INTO POSSESSION OF SOMETHING THAT IS A POSSIBLE LEAD TO THE KILLERS' IDENTITY — A MYSTERIOUS CELLPHONE VIDEO, ALLEGEDLY RECORDED THE MORNING OF MAY 11th THROUGH THE PEEPHOLE OF AN APARTMENT ON THE 5th FLOOR.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: An anonymous individual was able to take what he claimed to be a cell phone video at around the time of the murders, which shows two male individuals and a female individual congregating outside the apartment, and then there are what are possibly gunshots heard in that video. The video is not great quality at all. Only one person's face is even remotely visible. We have released the video to the media, seen if anyone can be identified on it, and we continue to investigate to determine how accurate and useful that video could be.

NARRATION:

WITHIN DAYS OF THE MURDERS A \$2,500 REWARD WAS OFFERED TO ANYONE WITH INFORMATION. OVER TIME THE REWARD HAS GROWN TO \$20,000, BUT IT STILL HASN'T BEEN ENOUGH TO CONVINCE SOMEONE TO COME FORWARD. AFTER SEVERAL FRUSTRATING MONTHS WITHOUT A MAJOR BREAK, THE NYPD PARTNERED WITH THE FBI TO HELP MOVE THE INVESTIGATION FORWARD.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: The FBI initially became involved as they were conducting their own investigation into the drug trade and gang problem in the Bushwick community. The FBI began to assist us, and we worked together to kind of pool our resources and try to further this investigation.

JOHN BASSO: When we came into the investigation, we were trying to do various different things to assist and one of the ways that the FBI and the federal government can help is with money.

NARRATION:

SPECIAL AGENT JOHN BASSO IS PART OF AN FBI TASK FORCE THAT WORKS WITH THE NYPD. IN MARCH OF 2022, THE BUREAU TAKES A BOLD STEP, ANNOUNCING THEIR OWN \$50,000 REWARD IN AN EFFORT TO GENERATE NEW LEADS.

JOHN BASSO: Giving information to law enforcement is often a difficult decision to make, especially in communities that experience violence and, and that sort of thing. So, we decided to add more to what was already being offered by the NYPD. And we're sort of hoping that the amount of money, plus the amount of time that has elapsed, convinces people that might be on the fence to come forward.

NEWS REPORT: Family and friends marking the anniversary of an unsolved double murder in Brooklyn with a vigil.

NEWS REPORT: Four years later, the question remains, "Why," with both the FBI and the NYPD both trying to find that answer.

NEWS REPORT: This case is not closed. We want the families to know and the public to know.

NEWS REPORT: Every aspect, every theory is being looked at.

NEWS REPORT: My heart goes out to her family, Ana, and hopefully they'll catch this guy that did it.

NARRATION:

NOW YEARS LATER, THE FBI AND THE NYPD CONTINUE TO SEEK JUSTICE FOR THE FAMILIES OF ANA DEL VALLE AND BASIL GRAY. AUTHORITIES WON'T REVEAL THE DETAILS OF EVERYTHING THEY'VE LEARNED THROUGH YEARS OF INVESTIGATION, BUT CLAIM TO HAVE DEVELOPED SEVERAL PERSONS OF INTEREST IN THE CASE. HOWEVER, MORE EVIDENCE IS REQUIRED TO FILE CHARGES AND GET THESE BRUTAL KILLERS OFF THE STREETS.

STEPHEN MINUCCI: Sometimes all you need is that one last puzzle piece to bring everything you have together. In a community like this, people know what happened. There's people who have information. There's people who know what's going on, and the fact that people don't seem to care enough to come forward and provide some help in this investigation... it's frustrating. These weren't two bad people. These were two good people. It could have been anybody's mother, could have been anyone's brother. These could have been anyone's loved one. So, what we need is someone with knowledge, someone who knows something about this to come forward and help two families find peace after losing their loved ones in such a violent fashion.

MIREYA: Supposedly, you know, everybody was just going about their business and they didn't see or hear anything. And, of course, shots were heard. This was in the morning. People are going to work, people are taking their kids to school. Somebody had to hear. Maybe they don't want the same to happen to them. People, you know, are just being quiet. Someone had to hear, but no one is saying anything. No one.

NARRATION:

FOR THE VICTIM'S FAMILIES, AS LONG AS THIS CASE REMAINS OPEN, EACH YEAR THAT PASSES IS A CRUEL REMINDER THAT ANA AND BASIL ARE NO LONGER WITH THEM, AND THEY FEAR THE KILLERS MAY NEVER BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE.

MIREYA: It's hard every day without her. It's harder on Mother's Day, obviously, you know, it's when it happened. It's hard to see everybody celebrating, and we're not. I hope this doesn't become a cold case. You know, these people have to pay. How these people can just go about their lives, you know, like nothing happened, and here we are torn apart, you know? Not knowing why. Why her? My brothers and I would just want someone to come forward and say something. Make these people pay.

NARRATION:

BETWEEN THE FBI AND NYPD, A COMBINED TOTAL OF \$70,000 IS BEING OFFERED FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO ANA AND BASIL'S KILLERS. IF YOU HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THEIR MURDERS, OR THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE, YOU CAN SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW BY CALLING THE NYPD PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE AT 646-610-6700 OR THE FBI'S NEW YORK OFFICE AT 212-384-1000. TIPS CAN ALSO BE EMAILED TO ANTHONY.PASSARO@NYPD.ORG, OR SUBMITTED ON OUR WEBSITE AT UNSOLVED.COM.

NEXT ON UNSOLVED MYSTERIES....

FAYE REGAN: It's very hard to understand. I always say that, if this happened to Matt and Phil, this could happen to anyone. I really think what they ran into was someone very sinister, and very evil.

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Unsolved Mysteries is a production of Cosgrove Meurer Productions and Cadence 13, an Audacy company.

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Thanks for listening to Episode 79 of Unsolved Mysteries.