

Witness to History



THE BEATLES ONSTAGE AT THE DC COLISEUM...FEBRUARY 11, 1964.
ICON/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

At 8:31 p.m., John, Paul, George, and Ringo swooped down from a stairway, flanked by policemen, through hordes of screaming girls and jumped onto the stage. They wore their familiar gray Beatle jackets with black trim around the collar, black Beatle boots, and the most famous haircuts in the world. They sang twelve songs in thirty-five minutes, mostly impossible to hear, the words and music drowned out by deafening screams. Because they were performing in the round, with the audience on all four sides of them, the Beatles stopped after every few songs to reposition the microphones and drums, giving everyone a chance to see their faces. Whether from the front, back, or side, they were amazing from any angle.

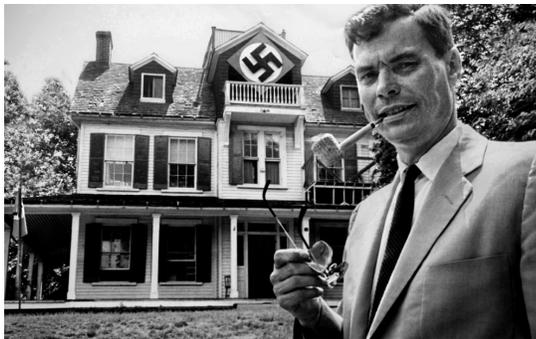
I think I was the only girl in the audience not screaming. I watched the people around me, and I watched the Beatles. I realized I was watching history, wanting to savor the moment, trying hard not to lose focus by yelling. I could not believe I was there and to this day still boast about being one of only 8,092 people at the first Beatles concert in America. Twenty-seven years later, I would see Paul again in another Washington three thousand miles away. The fact that I was there when he first stepped on the stage at the Washington Coliseum would, in the future, get me a front row seat at his press conference in 1990 during his “Wings Over America” tour at Seattle’s Kingdome. I did not scream then either, but I did cry.

Revulsion, Expulsion, Exclusion

THE NAZIS

LESS THAN TWENTY YEARS after the fall of Nazi Germany, the American version of the Nazi party set up shop in Arlington, Virginia, at 928 Randolph Street, across from my high school. One of my many boy-crushes, Ricky Farber, decided to throw rocks and yell insults at the Nazis' house after a school dance. Ricky, who was Jewish, was grabbed and dragged into the house, handcuffed, and questioned at gunpoint by two thugs later arrested for assaulting Ricky. I liked Ricky even more after that.

George Lincoln Rockwell, the founder and leader of the American Nazi Party, had a fancy name, an unflagging hatred of Jews and blacks, and often sported a Hitler-like moustache. He began life as a somewhat sane person, working in advertising and publishing, and did not become a Hitler sycophant until the late 1950s and early 1960s. He once said, "When I was in the advertising game, we used to use nude women. Now I use the swastika and storm troopers. You use what brings them in."



GEORGE LINCOLN ROCKWELL STANDING SMUGLY IN FRONT OF HIS HOUSE OF NAZIS. THIS WRETCHED PLACE WAS NEAR OUR HIGH SCHOOL. © AGE FOTOSTOCK

The house on Randolph Street both attracted and repulsed the students at Washington-Lee High school. A large banner sometimes hung outside the shabby, Nazi headquarters and read: "White Man . . . Fight! Smash the Black Revolution Now." We never saw much of Rockwell himself, but his coterie of young, misguided punks often left anti-Semitic and racist leaflets on the windshields of cars in the student parking lot. Occasionally when the drapes were pulled back from the house, we could see a bright red flag with a black swastika in the center mounted over the fireplace. The young, Nazi aspirants sometimes called in bomb threats to several businesses owned by Jewish families, including my father's clothing store and my uncle's record store in the Clarendon shopping center. No bombs ever exploded, but the threat was scary enough. They had the audacity to picket Mario's Pizza House on Wilson Boulevard, much-beloved by W-L high school students for their pizzas and sub sandwiches, after the owners, the Levine family, refused to serve the Nazis while continuing to serve black customers. Their picket signs read: "Mario the Jew." The wannabe American Nazis were, most simply put, vermin. We students, our parents, and most of the residents of Arlington hated these people. Still, they were impossible to ignore. A cancer growing in our town.

Movie Stars and a Monster



IN JANUARY OF 1974, young girls were disappearing off the streets of Seattle and vanishing from Lake Sammamish State Park twenty minutes east of downtown. Witnesses at the park recalled a light-brown Volkswagen cruising in the area, a car connected to the very handsome and seriously deranged Ted Bundy. The grim details of his life, the dozens of women he murdered, and thousands of lives he ruined are well documented in other books. But in 1974, it was the first time I ever heard the words “serial killer” spoken together and the first time I would venture professionally into a very sick, dark world.

Theodore Robert Cowell was born in Burlington, Vermont, in a home for unwed mothers, and one does not need a degree in forensic psychiatry to have some basic understanding of how Ted Bundy came to slaughter as many as one hundred women. It is unknown who his father was. Family members later told authorities they thought his mother was impregnated by her father, that he was raised by his mother’s parents and grew up believing his birth mother was his older sister. It is confusing just to absorb that information, let alone grow up with that reality. When he was around four years old, his mother/sister moved to Tacoma, Washington. His mother married John Bundy who adopted young Ted. It was not until he went to college at the University of Washington that he learned the convoluted and shocking truth of his past, which experts believe triggered his staggering killing spree. People who have made a career studying Bundy believe his first victim was an eight-year-old child, Anne Marie Burr. Neighbors recall her traipsing after Bundy in their Tacoma neighborhood while he was on his paper route. Her body was never found.

By his late twenties, Bundy’s victims were young, beautiful women whose remains were found brutalized, beaten, and often decapitated. Sometimes he picked up the women in his tan Volkswagen, and at other times, he broke into their homes at night and bludgeoned them to death as they slept. Bundy experts believe he occasionally went back to the places where he dumped the bodies and spent hours with the corpses, grooming them, and performing sexual acts until the extent of the decomposition made his post-murder depravity impossible.

Every murder leaves behind countless, grieving family members who, despite what some people believe, often do want to talk to reporters, both to share their grief and vent their outrage. My colleague Robin Groth and I were the designated duo to cover the monstrous Ted Bundy. The assignment editors thought victims' families would find it easier to talk with female reporters instead of men. I think the men simply did not want any part of talking to grieving families. I never liked doing it, but I was good at it. Despite perceptions that reporters always barge into homes or accost victims in the throes of misery, I never went anywhere in these circumstances without an invitation. I learned, in my early steps into the world of human misery, the art of listening, how not to intrude during silent moments, and the importance of giving people as much time as they needed to say whatever they needed to say.

Ted Bundy's hunting grounds ranged from the University of Washington campus to Colorado, Utah, California, Oregon, Idaho, Vermont, and eventually to Florida, where he murdered at least four women. He was arrested, tried, and convicted. Bundy, who once described himself as "the most cold-hearted son of a bitch you'll ever meet," was executed in the electric chair on January 24, 1989. Though he confessed to some thirty murders before he died, experts believe he may have murdered as many as one hundred women over his lifetime. He took so much from so many but left me something I never wanted, the ability as a reporter to talk with people in the saddest and most painful moments of their lives and find a way to share that pain with viewers. I ached every time I did those stories but learned how to be compassionate and professional without letting the sadness devour me. I had a job to do and I did it and subconsciously began building an inner shield that kept most, but not all, of the suffering, from getting deep inside me. The skills I learned covering Ted Bundy's savagery would be honed over the years in many other tragic circumstances. KING's chief photographer, the indomitable Phil Sturholm, said I was "always the best at asking people complicated and delicate questions in the worst moments of their lives."

What a strange thing to say. Though I never considered the truth of that as I was covering those stories, it occurs to me now that Phil was insightful. I was never taught how to conduct myself in difficult situations or how to interview grief-stricken families. I do not think you can ever be taught how to do that. I just knew.

Inevitably my beat became 'crime and suffering' with, thank God, lighter moments in between.

James Caan. Warren Beatty. Ted Bundy. John Wayne. Four of some two hundred stories in my first year in television news. I grabbed a prominent city official by his balls, broke absurd rules designated by movie directors, interviewed big movie stars, and covered one of the most notorious serial killers in American history. I proved to myself I could do this work and erased doubts among some of my male colleagues that women could succeed in their previously all-male club. I was off to a decent and promising start.

Chapter 18

The Lost Child

AT FIRST THE SCREAMS sounded like a child playing, but the howls were the terrified shrieks of a child dying. A man who heard the racket looked down from his second floor balcony and saw the attacker holding a small child huddled in the alley below. He recognized the young girl as someone who lived in his building, a beautiful, blond eight-year-old, kicking, shouting, and trying desperately to escape. The man with shaggy, brown hair put his hand over the child's mouth trying to muffle the noise she was making. The witness ran downstairs and found the assailant holding the child, her clothes covered with blood, ripped away from her body. She had a slash on her hand and a large stab wound in her chest penetrating her heart. She was pale, quiet, and dead. A bloody butcher knife lay nearby, the weapon that finally silenced the young girl. It was September 28, 1976. Her family has asked that I not use her name.

The attacker holding her was nineteen-year-old Michael Charles Green, his shirt and pants soaked with the child's blood. He was arrested at the scene and taken to a Seattle police station where it was noted that the fly of his pants and his underwear were smeared with blood in such a fashion, according to police reports, "as to expose his genitals." Green was charged with aggravated first-degree murder, "aggravated" because the crime, according to prosecutors, was committed during "furtherance of a rape or kidnapping." A change in the death penalty statute just a year earlier called for a mandatory death sentence for aggravated murder. The state wanted Michael Green to die for what he had done. So did many others.



WITH JEREMY, AROUND 1978.

Divine Intervention



DIVINE...AN UNFORGETTABLE DRAG QUEEN.
STEPHANIE CHERNIKOWSKI/COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES

IN THE WINTER OF 1978, after starring in the John Waters film *Eat Your Makeup* where he was dressed in drag to portray a fictionalized version of Jackie Kennedy, Harris Glenn Milstead made a stop in Seattle. Better known as Divine, the character in that film begins kidnapping models, forcing them to eat their own makeup. If not famous on the big theater screens, Divine was, quite literally, a big, big star. Obese, outrageous, and over the top.

Harris was born and raised in Baltimore to a conservative middle-class family, which, I am guessing, did not see all his movies. He starred in another Waters film, *Pink Flamingos*, and would finally make it onto the big screen in the unforgettable *Hairspray*. Idolized by the LGBT community, Divine was described by *People* magazine as “the Drag Queen of the Century.” The twentieth century.

He arrived in Seattle in the late 1970s for some personal appearances and to make the rounds at some very private parties, which I attended because of my friendship with fashion photographer Billy Bernardo, a friend of Divine’s. Billy was trying to do a photo shoot in Seattle and needed some young kids to pose as models. He called and asked if he could borrow my two-and-a-half-year-old, Jeremy. Though it had snowed quite a bit the night before, Billy was intent on coming over, taking Jeremy shopping, buying him some too-expensive clothes, and taking pictures in the snow at various locations in Seattle. Never one to take a cab or rent a car, Billy said he was coming over in a limousine to pick up Jeremy in about an hour.

The doorbell rang . . . and rang . . . and rang. I didn't hear it, but Jeremy did. He opened the door, and unable to process what was standing there, he called upstairs to me in his toddler voice, "Mommy there's something at the door, but I don't know what it is!"

"It" was a portly adult, resplendent in pink tights, a fluffy pink tutu, a massive blond, curly wig, arched black eyebrows, too much lipstick, and dangling earrings. It was Divine in drag. Having Divine come first to my door was Billy's idea of a great prank. He anticipated I would answer the door, not my child. Billy came out of the limousine, and he and Divine came into the house for a few minutes. After some coffee and a quick chat, they left . . . without Jeremy. I was not a particularly overprotective parent, but I was concerned about the possible lasting effects on a two-year-old as a result of being with Divine for more than a minute.

Before leaving, Billy invited me to a very private party later that evening where I was escorted by a couple of my gay friends. Needless to say, the "drag queen of the century" arrived exquisitely dressed and was, inevitably, the center of much attention. I sat on his ample lap for a few minutes eschewing many offers of cocaine and other assorted drugs. Bowls of cocaine were everywhere, big Chinese export bowls filled with white powder that was not confectioner's sugar. I was the only biological woman there, though I was no competition for Divine, who wore better clothes, had better make-up, and was far more entertaining than any other guest in the room.

In 1973, he said of himself: "Divine. That's my name. It's the name John [Waters] gave me. I like it. That's what everybody calls me now, even my close friends. Not many of them call me Glenn at all anymore, which I don't mind. . . . You always change your name when you're in the show business. Divine has stuck as my name. Did you ever look it up in the dictionary? I won't even go into it. It's unbelievable."

I looked it up in the dictionary.

"Heavenly. God-like. Extremely good. Unusually lovely."

In other words, Divine.

Pregnant . . . with Something

EVERY WEEK IN THE TELEVISION NEWS BUSINESS is a smorgasbord of experiences. It can run the gamut from interviewing murderers to a moment with the Dalai Lama, from covering a forest fire to hanging with musician Patti Smith or Jackson Browne . . . or with Cindy Crawford, the supermodel with the famous mole on her face. I once spent a day with her driving around in a chauffeured limousine going from one personal appearance to another. At a stoplight, Cindy uttered a rather memorable comment, saying she was sometimes insecure about her looks. I found that fascinating. Clearly, even the most beautiful people see flaws imperceptible to the rest of us. I could not see a hint of what she was talking about. In any case, despite my own imperfections, which I am certain others saw, my professional and personal life were moving along fine. But as John Lennon famously said, “Life is what happens to you while you’re busy making other plans.”

In 1980, with a toddler at home, I was trying to get pregnant again without success. I went to the doctor for what I thought would be a routine physical. The exam included a vaginal probe, a pap smear. I felt the cold speculum and the latex-gloved fingers of my doctor poking around inside me. He wanted to make sure everything felt right. It did not.

“Julie, are you pregnant?”

“No,” I said. “I just had my period.”

“Well, you’re four months pregnant with something.”

“*Pregnant with something?* What does that mean, ‘four months pregnant with something’?”

“I’m not sure, but I need to send you downstairs right away for an ultrasound exam.”

I instantly had that sinking feeling when you know your life is about to take a dramatically and dangerously sharp turn, one that will either leave you dead or mangled by the side of the road. The moment reminded me of a scene from John Irving’s *The World According to Garp*. The title character’s son, when warned to be careful about the undertow in the water, hears the word “undertoad” instead, believing a scary amphibian is hiding in the water waiting to pull him in and drown him. In the book, the word “undertoad” conveys an expression of anxiety, a reference to life’s unseen events that will, in essence, pull you under. I believed the undertoad was coming to drown me.

I went down into the bowels of the hospital to the diagnostic imaging department. I removed my clothes and donned one of those thin, hideous green hospital gowns that rarely cover your entire body and always destroy any sense of privacy or dignity you might have possessed. I handed my paperwork to a nurse who could barely be bothered to look at me.

“Take a seat . . . we’ll call you when we’re ready.”

When “*we’re ready*”? I thought to myself. I wasn’t ready but had to follow orders, something I rarely did well. I could not sit down or calm down. I was sick with fear and anxiety. The undertoad was getting closer.

The Porn King



THE RENTON THEATER, WHERE THE JURY IN THE ROGER FORBES' PORNOGRAPHY TRIAL CAME TO WATCH X-RATED FILMS, FULFILLING THEIR CIVIC DUTY.

A LOT OF PEOPLE WATCH PORNOGRAPHY. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, porn sites attract more visitors each month than Amazon, Netflix, and Twitter. An estimated 30 percent of all internet content is pornography. The industry generates more money than football, baseball, and basketball, combined. That was not always the case.

Back in the 1980s, there was no pornography on the internet because there was no internet. If you wanted to watch it, you rented videos or went to an X-rated establishment to see live shows or to a theater showing sex films. In any case, people have always loved sex and loved watching other people having sex. Some very savvy business folks made their fortunes from pornography.

One of those men was Seattle "Porn King" Roger Forbes. That is what we in the media dubbed him. It was not a title he liked, but it made for convenient headlines. Roger did not make sex films but owned X-rated movie houses. He bought the land and theaters that showed them. For research purposes, I went to his theaters back in the Seventies and Eighties and witnessed both porn on the screen and in the audience when a male patron masturbated in front of me.

Roger Forbes was as elusive as he was infamous, which inevitably made him more interesting. I tried repeatedly to meet him and to learn more about the man who would not be found, but without success. In the early 1980s, Roger was forced out of hiding. He bought two theaters in downtown Renton, Washington, back then a quiet suburb of Seattle known for family-themed entertainment, more Disney than *Deep Throat*. Mr. Forbes shook things up, deciding to show sex films in one of the theaters, but ran into a massive roadblock in the form of Renton city Ordinance 3526.

Bringing the Devil Home



LEFT: A TATTOO FROM THE ARM OF KILLER BRETT KENDRICK, DEPICTING AN INSECT PENETRATING THE HEAD OF A WOMAN...MUCH LIKE THE WAY HE MURDERED COLLEEN GILL AND HER DAUGHTER. PHOTO PRESENTED AT TRIAL. RIGHT: A SECOND TATTOO ON THE ARM OF BRETT KENDRICK...A NEEDLE AND A SKULL.

UNTIL THE MORNING OF MAY 30, 1984, Seattle's Windermere neighborhood along the shores of Lake Washington was safe, elegant, expensive, and quiet. Just before noon that day, the calm was shattered along with the hopes, dreams, and happiness of a large, prominent family. When a housekeeper and member of the Gill family could not get into the house or awaken the mother and daughter who lived inside, they called a nearby resident for help. The neighbor climbed a ladder, looked inside, saw a bloody body on the floor, and called police.

The body of fifty-six-year-old Mary Colleen Gill, a mother of nine, was lying in a pool of blood. In another bedroom lay the corpse of her sixteen-year-old daughter, Katy, her eyes still open, her throat slit. Both mother and daughter were beaten around the head, strangled, and bruised. Mrs. Gill had been stabbed. A tool handle protruded from her right eye socket, a penknife shoved under her left eyelid. A knitting needle stuck out from the back of her neck. Her daughter suffered similar atrocities, a pencil and screwdriver were imbedded in her head. A knife protruded from her side, and the killer left a bite mark on her left breast, evidence that would, in time, help convict a sadistic killer. On the floor next to the bodies was a blood-spattered game of Clue.

According to Seattle police detectives, it was not an ordinary, run-of-the-mill murder, if any such crimes can be considered routine. Everything—the location, the victims, and the brutality—seemed uncommon. To veteran Seattle police detectives, it seemed intentional and methodical. Dresser drawers were pulled out, and clothes scattered around, as if made to look like a burglary, but there was no evidence of forced entry into the beautiful home or signs of anything stolen but the lives of a mother and daughter.

Exile/Resurrection

It's a law that every challenge, fear or loss you encounter, bears gifts far more valuable than the price of the trouble they cause. . . . And . . . no loss ever goes unsettled in the long run.

—MIKE DOOLEY'S 'NOTES FROM THE UNIVERSE' TUT.COM



HOW DO YOU WRITE ABOUT the worst day of your life? Worse than being raped. Worse than having a three-pound tumor that gutted your belly and took a year of your life. Worse than losing your parents. Worse than cancer. Where are the words to describe an event you never saw coming, like a car crash, hurricane, or heart attack? A cataclysmic shock that would tear your life apart. A day when people you trusted betrayed you. A calculated and vengeful act that would steal your job, destroy your reputation, and turn you into a drug addict. It was a crisis that created a dark, fetid pile of rage that festered inside me and hurt so badly I wanted to kill myself. Death would have been a relief, but this was worse than death. I lived. The worst day. Ever.



IT WAS MONDAY, APRIL 21, 1986. I was finishing a story about Spider-Man visiting a Seattle elementary school when news director Don Varyu walked over to my desk in the back corner of the old, musty KING newsroom, a sprawling expanse of metal, gray-green desks, covered with file folders, newspaper clippings, ashtrays, and typewriters. There were no computers. I was typing on an IBM selectric.

“Hey, Julie, when you’re finished with your story, could you come to my office, please?”

When a news director or any boss asks to see you alone, it is almost never good news. I heard a sense of urgency and nervousness in his voice, finished my story, and walked across the newsroom to his office. I had a strong sense of foreboding and imagined the undertoad was coming back to pull me under the water and drown me.

“We need to go up to Sturges’s office,” Varyu said.

Sturges Dorrance was the general manager of KING Broadcasting, and now I had no doubt I was going to drown.

Chapter 34

Pariah

HE WAS, TO USE A CLICHÉ, tall, dark, and handsome. Movie-star handsome. It was hard not to notice Steven George Farmer, but he wanted to be noticed. He was a beautiful, young gay man. He was also a sex predator who was HIV-positive and knew it. The teenagers he solicited for sex did not know that, but two of his friends did.



THE PHONE RANG at my desk.

“Is this Julie Blacklow?”

“Yes . . . who’s this?”

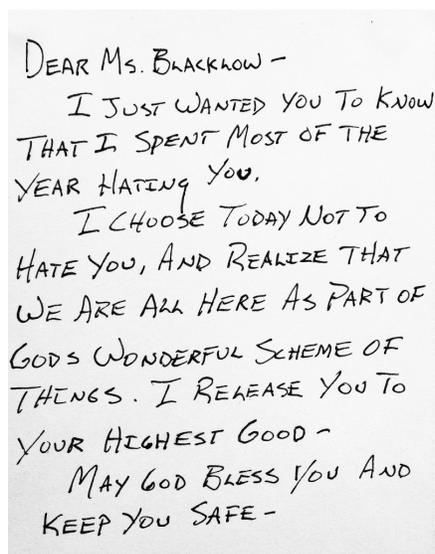
“My name is Mavis Jones. You don’t know me, but a friend of mine and I need to talk with you right away.”

“About what?”

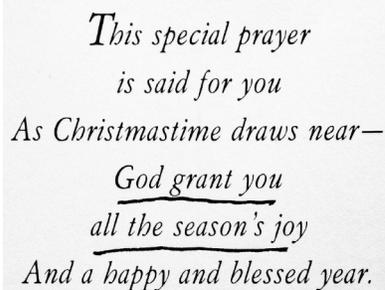
“We can’t tell you over the phone . . . we need to see you. We’re troubled about something, and we need to talk with you.”

The urgent tone in her voice startled me. I had been back at work for only a few weeks, still withdrawing from Xanax, still shaken from my ordeal of the last year, still unsure and insecure about how the people who fired me would deal with me.

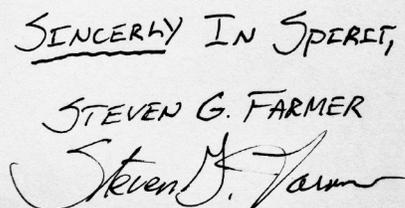
I should have handed the phone to another reporter. I did not.



DEAR MS. BLACKLOW -
I JUST WANTED YOU TO KNOW
THAT I SPENT MOST OF THE
YEAR HATING YOU.
I CHOOSE TODAY NOT TO
HATE YOU, AND REALIZE THAT
WE ARE ALL HERE AS PART OF
GOD'S WONDERFUL SCHEME OF
THINGS. I RELEASE YOU TO
YOUR HIGHEST GOOD -
MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND
KEEP YOU SAFE -



*This special prayer
is said for you
As Christmastime draws near—
God grant you
all the season's joy
And a happy and blessed year.*



*SINCERELY IN SPIRIT,
STEVEN G. FARMER*
Steven G. Farmer

LEFT: A MESSAGE INSIDE A CHRISTMAS CARD FROM STEVEN FARMER.

RIGHT: THE MESSAGE FROM STEVEN FARMER'S CHRISTMAS CARD.

The Mutilator

ON MAY 20, 1989, around eight in the evening, Helen Harlow was beginning to worry. Her little boy, Ryan, had gone out for a bike ride earlier and had not yet come home to his Fern Hill neighborhood in Tacoma. She got in her car, went looking for him, thinking he had gone to see a friend and parked his bike outside a home somewhere. She called her mother, and they both drove around, searching for Ryan.

Meanwhile, as Helen frantically looked for her son, a disheveled ex-con went into a nearby Winchell's to buy doughnuts, temptations he would later use as a lure for any innocent victim who had the misfortune to cross his path. The man with the doughnuts went into the woods not far from Helen's home and waited as an animal would for its' prey.

Helen Harlow was not the only one who was worried. Newly elected Pierce County prosecutor John Ladenburg was sick with fear. Some months earlier, he had been notified by officials and doctors from Western State Hospital that a dangerous pedophile, having served his sentence for unimaginable crimes, was about to be released into the Fern Hill area.

While most murderers, rapists, and child abusers leave clues from their past explaining why they do the terrible things they do, Earl Kenneth Shriner was truly one of a kind. At the age of three, he was diagnosed as mentally deficient and tested showing he had an IQ of 67. As a young boy, he was caught setting off firecrackers in the rectums of dogs and once led his teachers to a tree where he had tied up a girl and strangled her to death.

Despite Prosecutor Ladenburg's efforts to keep this monster in prison, the officials at Western State Hospital said, "He had served every day of his sentence. He served all the time he was supposed to serve." They set him free to wreak havoc again and soon face charges of attempted murder, rape, and assault.

Without laws on the books to keep Earl Kenneth Shriner incarcerated, Ladenburg nonetheless filed papers and appealed to Western State to keep Shriner locked up. There were no precedents for holding sex offenders in prison after they had served their time, no matter how dangerous they were. Failing that, he notified local police of Shriner's pending release and sent photographs to some residents so they would know who he was. To the best of Ladenburg's knowledge, no public officials had ever taken such brazen steps to protect the public in an attempt to warn people that a predator was living among them. Helen Harlow and her son lived just outside the notification area. Ladenburg was told he could face lawsuits for doing what he did, but he did not care. All that mattered to him was that an extremely dangerous pedophile who drew pictures in prison of his sick fantasies and who threatened to attack, rape, and mutilate children was now free.

Ladenburg alerted police to watch out for Shriner and said that if they ever saw him near a child to arrest him. In late winter of 1989, Shriner grabbed a young boy at a local 7-Eleven. The child struggled to get away and escaped Shriner's grip when the store employee intervened. Shriner was immediately arrested, and while such a crime would normally be charged as a misdemeanor, John Ladenburg made sure Shriner was charged with a gross misdemeanor. That landed Shriner in jail for ninety days. After that, he was back on the streets.

Chapter 45

The Ranch

A great horse will change your life.

The truly special ones define it.

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN



ROSEBUD RIVER RANCH...NESTLED AGAINST MT. SI.

THE FIRST TIME I INHALED the scent of a horse, took the reins, and clutched a saddle horn, I was only eighteen months old, and if a baby can convey such a thing, I looked calm and confident, as if I belonged there. The patient pony likely had to endure dozens of toddlers on its back as a roving photographer captured a keepsake of the parents' child on horseback. As I look at that picture now, more than seventy years later, it seems to capture a moment impossible to put into words. I was feeling and learning something before I could talk or even comprehend language. I am certain a powerful connection was made, one that would stay with me forever and grow stronger over the years. The day that picture was taken was the day I fell in love with horses.



MORE THAN TWO DOZEN, gnarly, old sycamore trees line the sides of the road leading to Rosebud River Ranch, where my dear friend Pepper Schwartz lived and bred horses. A month after September 11, 2001, knowing how much I loved horses, she invited me to come spend an afternoon with her. It was one of those perfect fall days . . . bright blue skies with not a cloud in sight . . . a good place to forget for a moment the horror of the previous month. The air was crisp, the colorful

trees were just starting to drop their leaves. As I slowly drove under the canopy of sycamores, I felt as if I was being transported back in time, driving to Bernie's to ride ponies. It was a road that paralleled the Snoqualmie River where, just two years earlier and only a mile away, we had scattered my father's ashes. Now as I turned into the driveway, I remembered my father's last words to me: "You should go back to horses . . . it's what you loved most as a little girl."



BABY HOLLYWOOD...THE FOAL THAT CHANGED MY LIFE.



ME AND HOLLYWOOD...A POWERFUL LOVE CONNECTION. 2002.

Epilogue

I abide by a few rules I consider extremely important. If you make a mess, clean it up, whether it involves picking up clothes or apologizing for being thoughtless or unkind. Try never to be late for an appointment because it is disrespectful. It is one thing to waste our own time but inconsiderate to squander someone else's.

Speaking of wasting time, I have come to believe in the vital importance of slowing down and being still in the world. We are all too busy, overcommitted, and spend too many hours of our lives doing things we do not want to do with people we really do not want to be with. The word 'no' is powerful and should be used more often, especially by women, to allow time for rest and restoration. Time given to doing nothing in particular, whether sitting by a river, walking in the woods, or staring into the night sky, is time well spent.

The most important thing—always tell the people you love how much you love them, and tell them often. Those words can never be said too much.

We never know our expiration date.



LADDY KITE