

**UNDISCLOSED, The State v. Dennis Perry**  
**Episode 14 - 1-800-PRIME-SUSPECT**  
**October 29, 2018**

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**Rabia Chaudry:** Hi dear listeners. I just wanted to remind you that about a month and a half ago Undisclosed began its Patreon page. We now have our second episode up. It's a bonus episode where Susan, Colin, and I talk about the new season of Serial. We go over the first two episodes and we're gonna continue to follow it. And in our first episode we covered the case of Curtis Flowers, the State vs. Curtis Flowers, which is featured in the second season of In The Dark, an award winning podcast. So check out these episodes, sign up to become a Patron today of Undisclosed in order to support our work, and also to get some great content. And every month at least, if not more frequently, we'll be dropping bonus episodes, and doing maybe some updates on some other cases that we have been covering the past few years. To sign up and become a patron for as little as \$5 a month. All you have to do is go to [www.Patreon.com/Undisclosedpod](http://www.Patreon.com/Undisclosedpod). Once again, that's Patreon.com/Undisclosedpod. Thank you so much for your support, and for listening.

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**[1:11] Rabia Chaudry:** If Jane Beaver had information all along that could've solved the Swain case, then why did it take until 1998 before any investigator knew about it? According to Deputy Dale Bundy, it wasn't due to any lack of effort on Jane Beaver's part. The problem was that, before he came on to the case, the investigators all had tunnel vision on Donnie Barrentine.

**Dale Bundy:**

So when anybody else called in with anything for a long time, it was shooed away. She tried. That's why she told me when I walked up on her steps that night, "It's about time, come on in and I'll tell you what you need to..." No, she said, "It's about *damn* time," she says, "Come on in and I'll tell you what you need to make your case."

*Unsolved Mysteries* first aired in October of 1988. That means, if Bundy is right, the tip from Jane Beaver must have been there, in the Camden County Sheriff's Office, for

over a decade, but somehow no one had noticed. At any time over all those long years, any investigator could've picked up the phone, made a call to Jane Beaver, broken this cold case wide open, and then neatly tied it up again with a bow. But no one ever made that call.

Then again, before an officer could've made a call to follow up on that tip from Jane Beaver, they'd had to have known that it existed. Mike Ellerson, who was investigating the case in 1998 and spent a lot of time reviewing the case file, doesn't recall ever seeing it in there. And it's not there now -- since 1998, the only person who can recall ever seeing this tip from Jane Beaver is Dale Bundy. There's no copy of it in the file today, and no one else we've spoken to has actually ever seen it.

But if they had seen it, here's something they likely would've noticed: contrary to the official story of this case, that tip from Jane Beaver didn't come from *Unsolved Mysteries* at all. It came from a different show. One that the Camden County Sheriff's Department and the Brunswick Circuit District Attorney's Office has done its best to forget.

Hi and welcome to Undisclosed. This is episode 14 in our series on The State vs. Dennis Perry. My name is Rabia Chaudry, I'm here with my colleagues Susan Simpson and Colin Miller.

**Susan Simpson:** Hi, this is Susan Simpson. I'm an attorney in Washington D.C. and I blog at TheViewFromLL2.

**Colin Miller:** Hi, this is Colin Miller, I'm an associate dean and professor at the University of South Carolina School of Law and I blog at EvidenceProfBlog.

**[6:12] Rabia Chaudry:** Dale Bundy is critical of GBI Agent Joe Gregory and Deputy Butch Kennedy for failing to follow up on the Jane Beaver tip during the initial phase of the investigation. But it's worth pointing out: Dale Bundy is guilty of that exact same sin he accuses Gregory and Kennedy of committing. Because Dale Bundy didn't follow up on any tip from Jane Beaver. He only found her after talking to Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams, and learning from them that a white woman had once shown them a photo of the killer. Cora Fisher had refused to tell Bundy the woman's name, but she did give him some pretty specific instructions about where he could find her.

**Dale Bundy:**

“Where does she live?” “She lives between the Waverly Store, between Reed Store and the county line in a house trailer.”

And Dale Bundy had spent days going up and down US-17 from the Reed's Store to the county line, knocking on trailer doors, until finally, *finally*, he got to a trailer just around the corner from Dover Bluff, and this time, when he knocked on the door and said he was there for information on Dennis Perry, Jane Beaver ushered him inside. And she told him what he needed to know to make his case.

Dale Bundy had managed to find Jane Beaver in the end, but he did so the hard way. If only he'd looked in the case file first and found the tip from Jane Beaver, and followed up on that -- it would have saved him a lot of time and effort.

**[7:38] Colin Miller:** But Dale Bundy is right. If there had been a tip from Jane Beaver about Dennis Perry, it should have been followed up on by investigators. So why did no one ever investigate Jane Beaver's tip? Susan asked Deputy Butch Kennedy, who was the lead investigator at the time that *Unsolved Mysteries* first aired, why he hadn't ever tried to check it out.

**Susan Simpson:**

Do you recall Jane Beaver giving you tips about Perry?

**Butch Kennedy:**

(grunts)

**Susan Simpson:**

Do you think it's possible that she did? Or would you say that it's unlikely?

**Butch Kennedy:**

I'd like to say that it's unlikely, but I don't know.

**Susan Simpson:**

She says they ask her why she didn't come forward sooner and she said that she did all the time, she was just dismissed.

**Butch Kennedy:**

I don't believe that. Honestly I don't. As hard as we were trying to get somethin' or somebody, almost to that point you know, that we graspin' for straws.

From the records of Butch Kennedy's investigation that we still have, it is hard to imagine a tip of the sort Jane Beaver had described would've just been ignored.

**Susan Simpson:**

It didn't seem like there were any leads that were too bullshit for you to check out, so it seems very odd to me that given the stuff you did spend time ruling out that you wouldn't have looked into what Jane Beaver was saying.

**Butch Kennedy:**

Sure we would have. I just feel sure we would have.

Here's something strange, though. Deputy Butch Kennedy wasn't the only one on the Swain case in those days. For the better part of a decade, Kennedy worked closely with GBI Agent Joe Gregory in investigating the case. The two of them spent hundreds of hours poring through Unsolved Mysteries tips together. And Agent Joe Gregory *does* recall Jane Beaver calling in a tip.

**Joe Gregory:**

Perry's ex-girlfriend's mother called us, oh, within 2 days of the show being aired. Now why she never came forward with this information before, I don't know. But two days after the show was on, she calls us and said that Dennis had come to her and confessed to killing the Swains.

Agent Gregory believes the tip from Jane Beaver was received, investigated, and ruled out. But Butch Kennedy and Joe Gregory can't both be right here. One of them has to be remembering wrong. Either Butch Kennedy has forgotten that a tip came in from Jane Beaver, or else Joe Gregory is remembering a tip from Jane Beaver that never actually was made. Those are the only two options. Right?

**[10:03] Susan Simpson:** Both Deputy Kennedy and Agent Gregory had plausible reasons for remembering what they did, and trying to pinpoint whose memory was the more plausible wasn't getting me anywhere. For a time, though, I wondered if perhaps Joe Gregory was the one who was getting things wrong -- because his memory of what Jane Beaver had called in a tip about was also wrong. I had to correct him. Or at least I thought I was correcting him.

**Joe Gregory:**

She told the court that he confessed, told her that he did it.

**Susan Simpson:**

Well she actually says that he told her in advance.

**Joe Gregory:**

Well, excuse me, told her he was gonna do it. But even that makes no sense, you don't go to a woman who hates your guts and tell 'em you're gonna kill somebody.

Jane Beaver's story, of course, is not that Dennis Perry confessed to her. Jane Beaver's story is that before the murders, Dennis Perry told her about why he wanted to kill a man that matched the description of Harold Swain. So this would make it seem like Joe Gregory is the one whose memory is wrong. If he's remembering Jane Beaver calling in a tip about Dennis Perry confessing to her.

But then I spoke to Carlton, who was working down at the convenience store in Waverly, and he recalled the same thing.

**Susan Simpson:**

So how'd you know Jane Beaver?

**Carlton Johnson:**

Like I said, she come in to the store down there.

**Susan Simpson:**

Okay. So you just knew her by sight, or like, did she ever tell you about Dennis Perry?

**Carlton Johnson:**

Noooo. Mm-mm.

**Susan Simpson:**

Okay. How did you know that she was connected to the case?

**Carlton Johnson:**

Well they said he told somebody that he had done that. That's what I heard. The street committee say now.

**Susan Simpson:**

The what what?

**Carlton Johnson:**

The street committee!

**Susan Simpson:**

The street committee (laughs)

**Carlton Johnson:**

You walk around in the streets!

The street committee's report was that Dennis Perry had confessed to Jane Beaver. As in, after the fact. After the murders.

**Susan Simpson:**

So the street committee said that he had been talkin' and told somebody-

**Carlton Johnson:**

Told them now.

**Susan Simpson:**

Who's them?

**Carlton Johnson:**

That Jane woman you're talking about.

**Susan Simpson:**

Supposedly he told her before the murders.

**Carlton Johnson:**

I don't know that! Coulda told him after the murders!

**Susan Simpson:**

Yeah no, that's not what she says. That's what I'm trying to figure out.

Greg Reed, who owned the Reed's Store near Rising Daughter and right next to Jane Beaver's trailer, told me the exact same thing: He'd heard that Jane Beaver had heard Dennis Perry confess.

That means Carlton Johnson, Greg Reed, and Joe Gregory all remember things the same way. The same *wrong* way. Over the years, all three have come to conflate Jane Beaver's story about Dennis Perry telling her he wanted to kill a black person with a different story about Dennis Perry telling Jane Beaver he *had* killed a black person.

**[12:38] Rabia Chaudry:** Actually, there's at least one more person who also has this same mistaken memory. And that's Cora Fisher. In 2001, a defense investigator interviewed her at her nursing home, and she told him something that was big. Or at least, should have been big. For unexplained reasons, Dennis Perry's defense attorneys didn't end up using it at his trial. But it *should* have been big.

Because Cora Fisher had told the defense investigator that on the day Jane Beaver had come to her house and shown her the picture of Dennis Perry, Jane Beaver had told her that the man in the photo had actually confessed to her. That he had told her, quote, that he had "shot a couple of coons," end quote.

That makes four people, in total, who remember that Dennis Perry confessed to Jane Beaver *after* killing the Swains. Not that Dennis Perry told Jane Beaver in advance that he was going to kill a black person.

**[13:31] Susan Simpson:** For a while, these discrepancies kept nagging at me. The easy answer is that the official story about Jane Beaver's tip is right, and all that the people who remember things differently are remembering things wrong. Except, easy answers are supposed to make everything easier to explain. And this answer does the opposite of that. This answer makes the story impossible to explain.

**[15:29] Colin Miller:** To show why Dale Bundy and Jane Beaver can't be right about how this case was solved, let's go back to the oval photo. The oval photo is the snapshot of Dennis Perry lying on a living room floor, holding his baby brother. The photo itself was cut into a rough oval shape to fit into a picture frame. And, according to the official story, it is the oval photo that Jane Beaver showed Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams, and they identified the man in that photo as the killer at Rising Daughter. And Dale Bundy's investigation had confirmed that this is what happened.

**Dale Bundy:**

'Cause I took the picture, and after they said they had seen the picture, I showed it to them, "Is this the picture that Ms. Beaver showed you?" "Yes." So I did that.

What Bundy is describing is a single suspect identification procedure. This kind of identification procedure has been, in the words of the United States Supreme Court, widely condemned, because they are extremely suggestive, and prejudicial, and in normal circumstances, should never be used by law enforcement. A private citizen had already gone around and conducted a single-suspect identification procedure of her own, without any knowledge or involvement by law enforcement. Still, out of caution, and before going to Cora and Vanzola and showing them Jane Beaver's photo of Dennis Perry, Dale Bundy had called the DA's office to ask how he should proceed.

**Dale Bundy:**

And I said listen, let me tell you what's happened in this case. And George Turner, who is now dead, he was the assistant district attorney down here then, and he says, you're right. He says, If they've already seen the picture, then it's not gonna make any differ- you know. A photo lineup would be a moot point.

Only after getting permission from the DA had Dale Bundy taken the oval photo he'd gotten from Jane Beaver, and gone to show it to the church ladies.

**Dale Bundy:**

The lawyer asked me a question yesterday about why I felt it necessary to go to some of the witnesses and show 'em the single picture. Dale Westling, Dennis Perry's attorney, asked me that in a pretrial hearing. And I explained it to him very simply: I said, so when I'm sitting on the witness stand, and some defense attorney like yourself asked me how I knew it was the same picture, I could say, "because I showed it to 'em."

Bundy's memory of what he testified to at the pretrial hearing is right on point here. When he was asked why he'd shown Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams the oval photo of Dennis Perry he'd gotten from Jane Beaver, Bundy had answered: so that when a defense attorney asked him about Jane Beaver's photo, Bundy would be able to confidently testify that, yes, the photo Ms. Beaver had given him is the exact same photo that she'd shown to the church ladies, years before.

**[17:53] Rabia Chaudry:** And that, Bundy says, is why he'd done the single photo identification procedure. Because he was asking the women to ID the oval photo itself, not just the man in the photo. He'd had a mugshot of Dennis too, from a misdemeanor arrest years before in Florida, but that was a secondary concern. At the pretrial hearing, he testified that it was only as he was leaving the ladies' residence, and was on his way out the door, that he briefly showed the mugshot photo as well.

It's still not really clear to us why Bundy had thought it was so important to have Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams confirm that the oval photo was the same photo that Jane Beaver had shown them. But even assuming for sake of argument that was important, Bundy's explanation here has a problem. At the pretrial hearing, Jane Beaver had testified that the oval photo was *not* the photo she'd shown the church ladies. That it was a different photo. In fact, Jane Beaver said, she'd never given Bundy any oval photo at all. Just a square photo. And it was not a photo of Dennis with his baby brother.

At the pretrial hearing, in an attempt to figure out what on earth was going on with all this mismatched testimony, defense attorney Dale Westling pulled out the oval photo, and asked Jane Beaver to confirm that it was the picture that she had shown to Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams. Here's how the exchange went at the hearing:

**Dale Westling:** *Is this the photograph you showed Ms. Williams?*

**Jane Beaver:** *No, it -- no, it isn't.*

**Dale Westling:** *All right. Is this the photograph you showed Ms. Fisher?*

**Jane Beaver:** *[No.] The original photograph that I showed them was one of Dennis standing in my father's backyard.*

There isn't any ambiguity about it. Jane Beaver insists that she didn't show the two church ladies the oval photo. She showed them a different picture, she says, of Dennis Perry standing outside next to a tree. We'll call this photo the tree photo. And this picture of Dennis Perry with a tree is the *only* picture she showed Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams.

Side note: we don't actually know what this tree photo looks like. Jane Beaver says she gave the tree photo to Dale Bundy, but Dale Bundy doesn't recall seeing it, and no one else recalls seeing it either, and no one knows where it is now. All we know is that it was a picture of Dennis Perry standing next to a tree, and it was taken sometime around 1984.

Anyway, Jane Beaver is clear: the Oval Photo is not the photo that she showed the two church ladies. That's the Tree Photo. And the Tree Photo is the only picture she says she gave to Dale Bundy. Or maybe she gave more photos to him, but only square ones, no oval ones.

**[20:23] Susan Simpson:** When it comes to the question of which of Beaver's photos was shown to the church ladies, the transcript reads like some kind of Who's On First

routine, only more mind numbing and with no punch line. To make things worse, 18 months later, at Dennis Perry's trial, there's a sequel. Second verse, same as the first. Jane Beaver changes her story about which photos were shown when. This time, she testifies that she took *two* photos to show the church ladies. She took the Tree Photo and also another photo that was similar to the Oval Photo and also somehow different, but also kind of the same. And Dale Bundy changes *his* story too. When asked about what photo he showed the church ladies, he mentions only the mugshot. He's not asked about, and does not mention, Jane Beaver's photos.

**[21:12] Rabia Chaudry:** It's all a mess. A tedious mess that doesn't seem like it really matters, and doesn't seem like it's really going anywhere. And maybe that can help explain why no one along the way seems to have noticed that there was a bigger problem here. A much bigger problem, lurking just under the surface of what Jane Beaver and Dale Bundy had said at the pretrial hearing. Amid all this dense and aimless testimony about what photo Bundy got from Beaver and whether it has corners or whether it was round or whether it had a baby or a tree, everyone in the courtroom -- the investigators, the prosecutors, the defense attorneys, the judge, the jury -- all of them, seem to have missed the fact that it doesn't matter what photo from Jane Beaver that Dale Bundy took to show Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams.

Because Dale Bundy shouldn't have had *any* photo from Jane Beaver. Not if he's telling the truth about how he investigated the case. Because at the time that Dale Bundy met with Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams, he wasn't even supposed to know who Jane Beaver was. And he definitely wasn't supposed to have any photos from her.

**[22:17] Colin Miller:** Now in case you didn't catch why Bundy's whole story about the Jane Beaver photos is impossible, let's run through the chronology of Bundy's investigation again. The official story goes something like this. On July 1st, 1998, Dale Bundy began his reopened investigation into the Swain case. Then, on July 8th, he decided to talk to witness Cora Fisher, who tells him the killer is Zeke Wilson's grandson, and that a white lady had come by a few years before and showed her a picture of him. Then, on July 14th and July 16th, Bundy went to the houses of Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams respectively, and shows them Jane Beaver's photo of Dennis Perry, and they confirm that the photo is the same photo the white lady had shown them, but neither of them know the woman's name. He does not interview Cora Fisher or Vanzola Williams again -- this is the last time he meets with either of them before arresting Dennis Perry. And after talking to them, Bundy then spends a couple days knocking on doors up and down US 17 until, finally, on July 23rd, he knocks on Jane Beaver's door, finally discovering the woman who will help him make his case. The

next day, Bundy goes back to Jane Beaver's house, and she gives him the Oval Photo that, years before, she had shown Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams. On July 24th, Dale Bundy sees the Oval Photo for the first time. And this is ten days *after* Bundy showed Cora Fisher the Oval Photo. And eight days *after* Bundy showed Vanzola Williams the photo.

**[23:38] Rabia Chaudry:** See the problem there? Unless Bundy has a time machine, none of this happened. Because how could Bundy have shown Cora and Vanzola the Oval Photo from Jane Beaver on July 14th and July 16th, when Bundy hadn't found Jane Beaver until July 23rd? Dale Bundy is very clear that July 16th is the only time he met with Vanzola Williams, and July 8th and 14th are the only times he met with Cora Fisher, so this isn't a case of him going back later and showing them the photos. Which means, when Bundy met with Cora and Vanzola, he had not met Jane Beaver yet, and she had not given him any photos.

Now if this was in a movie, we'd call it a plot hole. But this isn't a movie. Jane Beaver and Dale Bundy are either seriously mistaken, or they are seriously lying. And the continuity errors are not the only problem here, because the more you poke around at the official narrative about how Dale Bundy found Jane Beaver and solved the case, the more it all starts to collapse in on itself. Starting with how Dale Bundy said he got the statements from Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams in the first place.

**[24:54] Colin Miller:** Bundy's narrative of how he solved the Swain case is simple and satisfying. The reason the Swain case had not been solved before he came along was that the black residents of Camden County had been too scared to come forward. They had always known who the killer was, and they had always been too frightened to tell anyone in law enforcement.

**[25:09] Deputy Dale Bundy:**

I know these, some of these older black people around here, and I've gained their trust, and they felt good talking to me, and I didn't betray their trust. I didn't let anything happen to 'em. And that's all they wanted.

In short, the reason that Dale Bundy solved this case, when all who came before him had failed, was that he was the first investigator that the witnesses ever trusted, and so he was only investigator that the witnesses ever told the truth to.

Like Bundy, GBI Agent Joe Gregory also described how scared some of the women had been when talking about the murders. But when Susan told him about what Cora Fisher

had testified to in her deposition, about how she'd said she'd always known who the killer was but had never come forward before, Gregory was confused.

**[25:49] Susan Simpson:**

This is what she said, in the trial testimony. This is what she says.

**Agent Joe Gregory:**

But why would she not have told Butch and I that?

**Susan Simpson:**

Well, according to Bundy, it's because he really understands what the older black people have gone through and so they trusted him more.

**Agent Joe Gregory:**

He does, okay, he communicates with 'em better.

**Susan Simpson:**

That's what he led me to believe, is that he was much more effective in winning their trust than y'all were.

**Agent Joe Gregory:**

[sigh] I don't think there was a more trusted law enforcement officer in that county than Butch Kennedy. And never *will* be.

The women had been scared, Agent Gregory said, but not so scared that they wouldn't have done whatever they could to bring justice to the Swains. Deputy Butch Kennedy had a similar reaction.

**[26:33] Deputy Butch Kennedy:**

I really think that, *especially* Vanzola, and can I say *especially* Vanzola? She and I had a real good relationship. I wanna think she had some faith in me, to talk to me if she knew something else.

How then did Deputy Bundy succeed in convincing Vanzola and Cora, after visiting them one time, to trust him more than Deputy Kennedy, whom she'd known for years?

**[27:04] Rabia Chaudry:** The answer is: he didn't. The church ladies didn't trust him. And they wouldn't talk to him. That's why Bundy had brought Deputy Mike Ellerson onto the case in the first place. To convince the church ladies to speak to him.

**Deputy Mike Ellerson:**

The only thing I had to do with the case to a certain point was two of the witnesses. Ms Williams, and, what was the other black female up there? [Susan: Cora?] Cora [Fisher] Fisher. They wouldn't talk to anybody at first. Because they were afraid that once they'd started talking about it, and they were afraid that it would get out and the man would get them too. So being that Ms. Williams -- her granddaughter and I, we talk all the time -- and Ms. Fisher -- of course when you know Spring Bluff area, you know all their relatives and stuff too. So they were asking me, I wanna say, Bundy, the sheriff, I wanna say Darryl was in there also. And they explained that they are afraid to talk, they asked me "Did I know them?" I said "Yeah. I pass by Ms. Williams' house all the time. Yeah, I know Ms. Fisher, by way of Jewel Lizzamore" I knew Ms Fisher, and through her relatives. So I went up there and spoke to each one of them. And told them what was going on. They needed their witness statements from 'em. And they both told me how afraid they were. And I promised them, I said "I'll tell you what. If anybody says anything to you the wrong way, if at any given time you don't want to talk or whatever, you tell them to call me, and I will come with you. But if anybody says anything to you all in a threatening manner or you all feel afraid of somebody, this and that, you tell somebody and I will come. I will deal with them myself.

Before Dale Bundy was ever able to speak to Cora Fisher or Vanzola Williams, Mike Ellerson had gone up there to talk to them first.

**[29:09] Deputy Mike Ellerson:**

I know I went there once by myself to both houses that same day to talk to them so they *would* talk to Bundy. Because they didn't feel comfortable talking to nobody. They didn't want to talk to anybody, cuz those ladies...when I say, it was more or less Ms. Williams. She was *afraid*. I'm talking about, you could see it. When I'm, I remember knocking on her door, she came to the door, I told her who I was, she didn't know, and I told her, I said "I know your granddaughter. I graduated with her". And she said - oh yes, such and such's ex-boyfriend, this and that...[Susan Simpson: That's how you know her..] Yeah, yeah, yeah. And when it came to Ms. Fisher it was the same thing - well I know such and such and such, we played ball together...And that's when with Ms. Williams, she, uh, "Come on in". And the look on that woman's face - she had relived it. Just like that. Ms Fisher wasn't so bad, but Ms. Williams, I can still see the look on her face. It was straight horror. And she was scared, and I had to promise that lady

that I would protect her, that I would go upside somebody's head for her, I don't care. And that's when she said she would talk to somebody.

Dale Bundy supposedly learned that Dennis Perry was his suspect after talking to Cora Fisher. But Mike Ellerson recalls that Dennis Perry was the one and only suspect of interest when he came on to the case. That means that Dennis Perry was the one and only suspect *before* anyone ever spoke to Vanzola Williams or Cora Fisher.

**[30:45] Susan Simpson:**

When you get on this case, and you were just looking at paperwork. Had any witnesses been talked to?

**Deputy Mike Ellerson:**

No.

**Susan Simpson:**

How long did that go on for?

**Deputy Mike Ellerson:**

I want to say, it was probably weeks. Maybe a couple of weeks, maybe. Maybe even longer than that. When they asked me about going to see her and stuff.

If this were a movie, well, the script writers would've been fired by now. Because this is another major plot hole. Remember, Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams are important to this case because they were the two church ladies that Jane Beaver had shown a photo of Dennis Perry to. But Dale Bundy is only supposed to have learned this after randomly deciding they would be the first witnesses he spoke to.

And yet, even before speaking to either of them, Bundy somehow knew that it was Cora and Vanzola that Mike Ellerson needed to go to, and coax into speaking to Bundy.

**[31:35] Susan Simpson:**

But why, there were a lot of ladies still alive, why Fisher and Williams? Why not anybody else?

**Deputy Mike Ellerson:**

I don't know. I have no idea.

If Ellerson is right, the only conclusion is that Dale Bundy had known, before ever talking to any witnesses, that out of the eight surviving church ladies listed in the case file, that it was Cora Fisher and Vanzola Williams alone who had special information that could help him make a case.

**[32:08] Colin Miller:** This is not something that Dale Bundy should've known. He began his investigation by preemptively identifying the two witnesses who had spoken to Jane Beaver, and *only* the two witnesses who'd spoken to Jane Beaver, even though, at that time, Dale Bundy allegedly didn't know who Jane Beaver was. For this story to be true, Bundy doesn't just need a time machine, he needs psychic powers.

Of course, if this story is not true, then there's a much easier way to explain what's going on here. And it doesn't require any bending of the laws of physics. The easy explanation is that Dale Bundy already knew about Jane Beaver when he started his investigation. And, for some reason he's lying about it.

**[32:45] Susan Simpson:** We were confident that Dale Bundy's story about Jane Beaver couldn't be true. But that by itself didn't really do much to help us explain what really *had* happened here. To explain how Dale Bundy really *had* gotten that photo from Jane Beaver.

Eventually, the answers would begin to come together. But the first clue to solving this mystery would come from an unexpected place. It was in a letter that had been sent to the Camden County Sheriff's Office back in 1992, from a man in a prison in New Jersey.

**[35:57] Rabia Chaudry:** In 1975, Stefan Pasqua made a pipe bomb that used a rat trap as a fuse, and mailed it to his grandmother. He'd hoped to collect on her life insurance policy, and then use it to further a group that he'd formed with two friends. They called themselves "Magnum Force," and having some objections to prevailing world conditions, they planned to change it by mailing out pipe bombs. The group's revolutionary dreams came to an abrupt end after their very first attempted bombing, though, when a waitress discovered the package sent to Pasqua's grandmother and defused it. 17 years later, while in prison in New Jersey, he watched a TV shown on the Swain case, and wrote to the Camden County Sheriff's Office, claiming that he could tell them who the killer was.

And that in and of itself wasn't weird -- there were a lot of other letters like it in the file, with inmates serving long sentences or even on death row writing in to Camden County, claiming they had unspecified info that could solve the Swain murders, if only someone

could help them with their case. But this one from Stefan Pasqua was a bit different. On Dec 12, 1992, he wrote:

*"Dear Sir,*

*I saw a program on Prime Suspect on NBC about the murder of Harold and Thelma Swain at the Rising Daughter church. Prime Suspect showed a composite of the man who did it. ... I understand that there is a \$25,000 reward for this person. I am in State Prison in New Jersey. I cannot come to Georgia. However, I may know his identity.*

*I knew him for six months in 1978. The age matches. So does the ruthless nature of his crimes. I will gladly reveal the identity of the man I think did it. I just want the \$25,000 reward."*

*Very truly yours,*

*Stefan Pasqua*

There is no indication that the Camden County Sheriff's Office tried to follow up on this tip, but Stefan Pasqua kept on writing. And, based on his later letters, you can imagine why investigators might have been skeptical that this tip was worth flying up to New Jersey for. Such as this letter that Stefan Pasqua wrote to the Camden County Sheriff's Office months later:

*"Dear sir,*

*I have written a dozen letters to various Georgia agencies. So far, I have gotten no response. I saw the program on Prime Suspect on Dec 12, 1992. [...] I know who [the killer] is. [...]*

*Please send someone here to interview me. I will tell you more than his name. I want to show you a little known interrogation technique. It will enable you to read his mind when you catch him. Then you will have enough evidence for a conviction. He is originally from Tennessee. However, he travels much. He could be anywhere. I saw the two composite pictures. I also saw the bust of him. There is no doubt it is him. I would turn him in anyway. Just the same, I want the \$25,000 reward offered for his capture."*

*Very truly yours,*

*Stefan Pasqua*

**[38:29] Susan Simpson:** My initial thought was that, obviously, Stefan Pasqua must have watched a rerun of that old *Unsolved Mysteries* episode, and then gotten confused about the name of the show he was watching. Because for one thing, there wasn't a single other tip in the file referencing anything called *Prime Suspect*. And if this had been a real TV show, there should've been tons more tips from it.

Still, something about Pasqua's eagerness to collect this alleged \$25,000 reward stuck with me. In his letters, Pasqua seemed pretty certain this reward had been announced on the show, and that it was real, but I was just as certain that *Unsolved Mysteries* had *not* announced the availability of any reward, let alone one in the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars.

All the same, just in case, I decided to see if I could find this *Prime Suspect* show that Mr. Pasqua had referenced. And, I found it pretty quick. And it turned out that *Prime Suspect* was a highly acclaimed BBC crime drama starring Helen Mirren as Detective Chief Inspector Jane Tennison.

**Helen Mirren; *Prime Suspect* Drama Clip:**

Look, I am the only officer of my rank who is continually overstepped, side stepped, whatever.

**Male Actor:**

Now, Inspector, is not the time to thrust your women's' rights down my throat.

**Susan Simpson:** Now, I can't say I watched the whole show, but it seemed fairly unlikely that the Swain case would've had any significant role in a BBC miniseries about an ambitious and uncompromising female detective trying to navigate the male-dominated world of the London Police force. And, Part 2 of *Prime Suspect*, starring Helen Mirren, had come out in 1992 -- the same time that Pasqua had written his letters. Pasqua must have somehow confused the title of the series with *Unsolved Mysteries*.

But, I kept looking. I assumed that, if this show really did exist, finding it would be easy. I was wrong. Because, do you know how many true crime shows have the words "prime suspect" in either their title or the show description? Like all of them, basically.

Eventually, I found a book that had a citation to a syndicated true crime series by the name *Prime Suspect*, and it had run from 1992 to 1994. Right subject matter, right time period. I even found a couple clips of the show on YouTube.

**Mike Hegedus:**

Hello, I am Mike Hegedus, and this... is *Prime Suspect*. This program is your chance to make a difference-- to fight back, against crime. And, if you don't believe it, just ask Robert Charles Montefaring. Thanks to *Prime Suspect* viewers, he's been taken off the streets.

**Susan Simpson:** This had to be it. The show from Pasqua's letter. And then I found something that confirmed it: an old TV Guide listing from December 13th, 1992. *Prime Suspect* played in the 12:05 am slot that Sunday morning. And in the episode summary, there was a brief description of the cases to be covered. It said: "A youth counselor accused of child molestation; the rape of a Seattle woman in her apartment building; a Georgia deacon and his wife found dead in a church classroom."

Bingo. Not exactly right, since the Swains hadn't been found dead in a classroom, but right enough where I felt sure this was the Swain case. And on the evening December 12th, 1992, a New Jersey inmate named Stefan Pasqua must've turned on his TV and watched the episode.

**[41:46] Colin Miller:** From there, everything began to fall into place. The *Prime Suspect* episode on the Swain case had first aired seven and a half years after the Swains had been murdered. Jane Beaver testified that seven and a half years after the Swains were murdered had been when she'd first gone around showing the church ladies the photo of Dennis Perry, and Deputy Butch Kennedy, who did not remember the tip from Jane Beaver, had been fired from the Camden County Sheriff's Office after the 1992 election. Which means that, when the *Prime Suspect* aired in December of 1992, Butch Kennedy wouldn't have been around the Sheriff's Office to see the tips that came rolling in. But Agent Joe Gregory, who thought he *did* remember a tip from Jane Beaver, had still been with the GBI after 1992, and he would have been around to see that tip.

**[42:26] Susan Simpson:** It all just kind of fit together. And this theory was great, it all made perfect sense. Or at least, it almost all made perfect sense. But if there really had been another true crime TV show about the Swain Case, then... seriously? Where were all the tips from it? The only *Prime Suspect* tip in the entire file was that one from Stefan Pasqua, and this show was supposed to have run nationally -- if so, there had to have been more tips than just one, even if they were all just people calling in to say that 3 years ago, they were standing in line in Wendy's and saw a man who looked kind of like the composite.

**[43:01] Rabia Chaudry:** In 2000, right after Dennis Perry's arrest, the Camden County Sheriff's Office issued a press release applauding itself for finally solving this 15 year old case. On one side of the page, was a helpful little box with a timeline of major events in the investigation. It read:

*"Fall 1985 - Unsolved Mysteries episode airs. The show generates hundreds of leads, but none of them pan out.*

*November, 1992 - Prime Suspect films interviews. Episode aired shortly thereafter, offering \$25,000 reward. Again, hundreds of leads were generated."*

So, where were these leads now? Let's forget the leads for a moment. What's the deal with that \$25,000 that was apparently being offered? This wasn't the first reference we'd seen to a reward being offered in the Swain case, and not long after the murders, a reward fund had been set up. By all accounts, though, the resulting reward had been relatively modest. A few hundred had been raised by the community, and Governor Harris had pledged another \$2,000 to the total amount. And maybe, over the years, that amount had grown. But there'd never been any indication that the reward fund had ever grown to \$25,000, the amount apparently offered on *Prime Suspect*.

**[45:46] Susan Simpson:** When I went to talk to Jane Beaver's daughter Carrol Ann, I'd already suspected, strongly, that Jane Beaver's role in this case had begun in 1992 after she'd seen an episode of *Prime Suspect*, about the Swain case. I had wanted to ask Carrol Ann about it, but even before I got the chance, Carrol Ann confirmed it. "There'd been a reward," she said. "Mama told me about it. She said she'd seen it on that crime program."

Carrol Ann didn't know the name of the show, but the fact there'd been a reward on it meant the show Jane Beaver had seen must've been *Prime Suspect*, not *Unsolved Mysteries*.

And I really, really needed to see this TV show. For a lot of reasons, but for two reasons in particular that involved Jane Beaver. The first was the reward. Where had this \$25K reward come from? Did the *Prime Suspect* show explain that? And what conditions were there on the reward? What would someone who'd seen the show need to do to get the money?

And the second reason that I really needed to see this show, was that I wanted to know if Jane Beaver's story about Dennis Perry had in any way been influenced by what was

on the show. Some of the things she said had just been so strange -- like the part of her story about Dennis Perry wanting to borrow money from Harold Swain, because Harold Swain was a drug dealer and had lots of money, but when Harold Swain had refused to lend the money to Dennis, Dennis had gotten angry. Could Jane Beaver have somehow learned that story from somewhere else?

Because there was *already* a suspect in the case file who'd reportedly tried to borrow money from Harold Swain, and who had been upset when Harold said no. That suspect was Lawrence Edward Brown, the stepfather of the girl that Harold and Thelma had raised since she was a toddler. The girl's mother was married to Lawrence Brown, but it was the Swains whom she'd grown up with, and considered to be her parents.

In 1995, though, one of the Swains' family members had gone to the police, and told them that not long before the Swains were killed, Lawrence Brown had asked Harold Swain if he could borrow some money. The relative wasn't clear on what this money was for, but he thought it was related to some drug trafficking charges that Brown was facing. Anyway, Harold Swain had said no, apparently, and Brown had been upset by it.

**[48:02] Susan Simpson:** And, according to yet another witness in the case, Lawrence Edward Brown was the reason that Donnie Barrentine and his coldblooded, blonde headed friend had been hired to kill Harold and Thelma Swain. That story comes from Jeff Kittrell, who'd been arrested with Donnie Barrentine in July of 1985, up in Telfair County, Georgia. Kittrell had told the police that the Swains had a relative named Ed Brown, and he'd owed somebody a lot of money for drugs. But Brown had gone into hiding and couldn't be found. So, the guy who'd been owed the money had hired Barrentine and his coldblooded, blonde headed friend to go kill Ed Brown's relatives in retaliation.

Dennis's defense attorneys didn't introduce any of this evidence at his trial, but all of it was in there in the case file. And I wondered if perhaps it was the kind of evidence that a show like *Prime Suspect* might've covered on its episode about the case. And I wondered if, perhaps, that's where Jane Beaver had first heard a story about drug dealers, and someone asking Harold Swain for a loan.

The only way to know would be to watch that episode of *Prime Suspect*. If I could find it.

**Mike Hegedus:**

They are the fugitives police want the most. *Prime Suspects*... Only you can help bring to justice.

**[49:24] Colin Miller:** *Prime Suspect* is not available online. Or offline. And not knowing where else to look, Susan reached out to the host of the series to see if he might know where we could find a copy of a *Prime Suspect* episode that aired in December of 1992.

**Mike Hegedus:**

This would have been one of the first cases that we did.

That's Mike Hegedus. He hosted all 3 seasons of *Prime Suspect*, as well as its predecessor show, *Murder 1*.

**Mike Hegedus:**

We did *Murder 1* in '91. We won an Emmy for it that spring, and that helped us launch the National show, and so we would have launched in '92.

Hegedus' background was not actually in true crime -- he'd been a sports reporter before being hired for *Prime Suspect* and was a business reporter after it went off-air. But at the time, ending up on a true crime show wasn't really a surprising turn of events.

**Mike Hegedus:**

The genre was very popular in the '90s. Everywhere from *Real Stories of the Highway Patrol*, things like, *Unsolved Mysteries*, of course, *America's Most Wanted...* it was the kind of "reality TV" that was just the thing to do back then. And we distinguished ourselves, or separated ourselves by telling people that, of course, we didn't do reenactments. These were the real people talking to a real journalist, and we gave them the real story.

Unlike *Unsolved Mysteries*, which alternated its coverage of unsolved murders with segments about UFOs and sightings of the Virgin Mary, *Prime Suspect* stuck close to its true crime roots. And compared to some of the other true crime shows from that era, *Prime Suspect* had a blunter, more technical approach to the cases it covered,

**Mike Hegedus:**

It was the kind of thing... you're not gonna see crime scene pictures very many other places than on our show.

Other shows tended to shy away from such a detailed look at murder cases, but *Prime Suspect* didn't. If crime scene photos were important for understanding the story, they were included.

**Mike Hegedus (Show Audio):**

Now, add Elko. Also next to an interstate. Also shot, stripped completely nude. But the key is the position of the bodies. Watch. Superimpose one on another.

**Male Voice Over (Show Audio):**

It's really uncanny, if you look at the way yours is laid out here. If you'll notice here, look at the wrist, the head, and the feet.

**[51:33] Susan Simpson:** There are no full episodes of *Prime Suspect* available online. Just a handful of clips that Mike Hegedus himself had posted. Based on those clips, though, it seemed like *Prime Suspect* was the kind of show that might've covered the Swain case in a fair bit of detail. More detail, anyway, than the older *Unsolved Mysteries* episode had done. It definitely seemed possible that the show could've covered suspects in the case other than just Donnie Barrentine. Perhaps it even covered Lawrence Edward Brown. So, what exactly about this case had Jane Beaver seen? And, if I could watch the show, would any of the garbled and meandering parts of Jane Beaver's testimony start to make more sense?

I told Mike Hegedus about our case, hoping he might recall something.

**Susan Simpson:**

The only reason I found out this whole show happened is that there was a letter, a handwritten letter from some inmate who wrote in all these letters saying, "I saw *Prime Suspect*, and I have important information for you. Please call me."

**Mike Hegedus:**

Huh. Yeah, we were big in prison. There's no doubt about that. We were a popular show in prison.

**Susan Simpson:** Whatever was on that episode about the Swain case, Mike Hegedus would've been the one who personally conducted the interviews and presented it. He personally reported on all of the cases that *Prime Suspect* covered.

**[52:51] Mike Hegedus:**

Here, I'll let my smart phone do the math. It's uh ... we did 26 weeks times 4 years, that's 104 shows, times 3 ... that's 312 major cases. And then we would do things like interstitial - we would put up a mugshot and some information about a fugitive that police in, let's say, Flint, Michigan were looking for, and so,

you know, we probably did a couple of those a show. So you're talking somewhere around --

**Susan Simpson:**

A lot (laughs)

**Mike Hegedus:**

400 cases, yeah.

Today, Mike Hegedus doesn't have any particular memory of the Swain case or why it was chosen for the show. But, Hegedus said, the prior publicity the case had received on *Unsolved Mysteries* would not have been a factor.

**Mike Hegedus:**

No, you mean the fact that it had been on *Unsolved Mysteries*? Would that have been a problem for us?

**Susan Simpson:**

Yeah. Or just been a factor?

**Mike Hegedus:**

No.

**Susan Simpson:**

Okay.

**Mike Hegedus:**

No, no. I mean ... besides, I think it was on *Unsolved Mysteries* like years before, correct?

**Susan Simpson:**

Yeah, yeah.

**Mike Hegedus:**

Yeah, so no, it wouldn't have made any difference. And we didn't, frankly, care if they ... our mantra really was to try to help as much as possible, so we didn't really care, as long as it wasn't on the same weekend. We didn't even care if the case had been on *America's Most Wanted*. It didn't make any difference to us.

You know, we were happy to do whatever stories came our way if we actually thought we could do a good story.

Mike Hegedus told me that it was very possible that a reward for information on the Swain case could have been announced on *Prime Suspect*. They worked closely with law enforcement to create a program that maximized the chances of receiving useful information from viewers. And for some cases, Mike Hegedus recalls, they had almost instantaneous results from the show.

**Mike Hegedus:**

I got a phone call in the middle of night, after that episodes aired, and I forget where she was, but there was a woman who was working at a convenience store somewhere in the southern United States, I believe, who had been watching the show and when the show ended, she looked across the counter at her next customer, and it was David Laudani.

**Susan Simpson:**

Wow!

**Mike Hegedus:**

And so she called the hotline right away and reported him to the cops

It didn't always work quite that well, but the whole point of *Prime Suspect* was to encourage viewers to call in with information.

**Mike Hegedus:**

"Remember, you can make a difference." That was our tagline at the end of the show.

And, like many true crime shows, *Prime Suspect* provided a tip line for viewers to call in on.

**Mike Hegedus:**

The 1-800 number was sort of *de rigueur* in those days. And, I actually believe ... I don't know how many companies there were, but I know the company we hired to handle our phone tips, was also the same company that handled tips for a couple of other shows. You would farm it out, and they ... you know, you would give them your 1-800-PRIME-SUSPECT, and when people called it would go to this one call center.

The call center would print out the tips that had been called in, and then pass them on to *Prime Suspect* for review.

**Mike Hegedus:**

The majority of airings, particularly on the NBC owned stations were on Saturdays, or Saturday evenings, so there was often that Steve and I would spend Sunday going over the tip sheets.

If any tips did come in for a case, they were passed on to local law enforcement, which means, when Jane Beaver called in to report her tip to *Prime Suspect*? Yeah, a copy of that, and all the other tips that came in, would've been given to Camden County. They should still be in Camden County's files today.

**Mike Hegedus:**

By the time that we'd left the air, we were the number one half hour show on the weekends around the country. Our number of apprehensions, of course, increased with the number of viewers that we had.

*Prime Suspect* would only run for three seasons. For obscure, Hollywood-related reasons that I still don't entirely understand, *Prime Suspect's* popularity resulted in its own demise.

**Mike Hegedus:**

And there was a, kind of a political battle, between the two producing entities, but they each wanted to own the show and continue it. But the other one would not relent and give up their option, so rather than the show continuing, because they both just stood their ground and said, you know, the heck with you, the heck with you, that was the end of the show.

The show went off air. If you want to watch it, you're out of luck. There are no reruns, no boxed sets for purchase, and no uploads to YouTube.

**Mike Hegedus:**

When the show was no longer in production, I still worked at NBC, and I was walking over one day from my office to the world famous NBC commissary, and I looked in the dumpster, next to the commissary, and that's where all the *Prime Suspect* tapes were.

**Susan Simpson:**

Oh no!

**Mike Hegedus:**

Yeah, well ...

That dumpster was not the final resting place for *Prime Suspect*.

**Mike Hegedus:**

So I actually got a couple of guys to get all the tape out of the dumpster and put them in cardboard boxes, and I carted those all back to our house in Los Angeles, and I had them for years. And I got tired of moving them around, so what I did, I suppose this is a possibility for you, I donated them all to the University of Missouri School of Journalism. Not with any thought whatsoever that they would be preserved as some sort of legacy, but rather thought maybe they could use them in their television production department.

My hope is that those tapes are still tucked away somewhere at the University of Missouri School of Journalism, on some dusty, long-forgotten shelf. But if they are, it's on a shelf that's so dusty and so long-forgotten that no one I've spoken to over at Mizzou has any idea about how to find it. And maybe, instead, those tapes met their final end years ago, as B-roll for some journalism student's class project.

**Mike Hegedus:**

I mean, for your benefit, I hope it's just sitting in cardboard boxes in the basement, because down there, somewhere, would be that episode.

Mike Hegedus had one final suggestion for me on where I might find a copy of the *Prime Suspect* episode. And that was back down in Camden County. Because *Prime Suspect* made sure that each law enforcement agency that had a case featured on the show got a copy of that show for themselves.

**Mike Hegedus:**

If it wasn't the whole episode of the show, it certainly was a copy of their story, so that they could have it for their archives. And I ... we did that, in fact, we designated one of the in-house producers to always do that, so I'm sure we did it.

Yeah, I told him, that's not likely going to help. If Camden County still had a copy of the show, I should've already seen it by now. Although there are copies of multiple versions

of the *Unsolved Mysteries* episode in Camden County's files, there is no tape of the *Prime Suspect* episode.

Which means if it's possible to still find those tapes somewhere, it's probably back where they came from -- in Hollywood. Luckily, here at Undisclosed, we have a specialist investigator on call just for these kinds of tv-show related emergencies.

**[59:58] Jon Cryer:**

Hey there, Susan Simpson!

**Susan Simpson:**

Hey, how are you doing?

I told Jon Cryer about *Prime Suspect* and the missing episode on the Swain case, and how it wasn't on YouTube so I was basically out of ideas on where to look, and he began to chase down leads.

**Jon Cryer:**

Well, first we tried to find out who made it, and it was actually a local TV Station who made it, but they actually sold it to a bigger company, Rysher, to syndicate. We figured that we had to go with figuring out who owns all of the stuff that was created by Reischer back then, because the company actually went out of business, and what happens in those cases is a lot of the content that they produce gets sold off to various companies who are willing to try and sell it for whatever money they can make from it. And in this case, Reischer sold most of its library to Paramount, which then sold most of its library to CBS Television Distribution. So, then um ...

**Susan Simpson:**

This kinda reminds me of mortgage lending, it just keeps being packaged and sold off to someone new...

**Jon Cryer:**

Yes, yes! It's very similar. So many film companies go out of business and if you wonder where those movies go to die, what happens is people sort of scoop them up and see if there's anything they can sell or license to people. And a lot of these old syndicated shows, you know, some of them license really well, and then some of them just disappear and just, you know, are gone and in the archives.

It turns out that trying to find a lost TV show is way more complicated and way more corporate than I expected.

**Jon Cryer:**

The library ended up with CBS Television Distribution, and I thought, "Great, I worked for CBS for 13 years, so I have some ins there!" Um, it turns out, CBS Television Distribution is vastly different than the CBS Television Network (laughs) so ... completely different group of people. We contacted them and met with a stony wall of obstruction. Basically, the person I talked to there said that their whole *raison d'être* is to hold the shows that they actually license out for clip usage very close to the vest. They do not let anybody see them. And I said, "Okay, well we don't know exactly what episode we're looking for. Can you at least give us a guide for the episode?" He said, "We don't have a guide for the episode."

**Susan Simpson:**

So, (laughs) ...

**Jon Cryer:**

And I said, "So how would you even know (laughs) ... like, let's say somebody did want to license a clip, they have to know what ... like exactly where the clip is?" And they said yeah. (Laughs). And I said, okay ...

As far as I can tell, the whole purpose of these TV show libraries is to ensure that old TV shows are never, ever watched again. Or if that's not these libraries actual purpose, that's going to be their end result.

**Jon Cryer:**

They only license 30 second clips, and it's \$10 thousand dollars a clip. And at one point I said okay ... you know, I explained the reason we were looking for it, because there was a person who may well be wrongfully convicted who's in jail. This is a person's life on the line here, and is there any way we could at least find out the catalogue, the list of episodes? You know, that must be in your possession? And he said, "You know what? The amount of work it would take just to find it, would cost you probably \$10 thousand dollars." So I said, "Well, look, okay maybe we're willing to pay that. I can't guarantee it, but maybe we're willing to pay that." And he said, "Look, what you want to do can't happen."

**[1:03:20] Susan Simpson:** Sure, if you already know the exact minute and second that the content you want appears, you might be able to obtain it. Of course, if you already know that, you probably already have a copy of the content for yourself. And if you don't, well, you're out of luck.

**Jon Cryer:**

As I said, their whole reason for being is to hold these things back so that people have to pay top dollar for them.

*Prime Suspect* was a 30 minute long show, so probably had somewhere around 24 minutes of content per an episode. Which means, even if I figure out what number episode had the Swain case on it, it would still cost us, oh, \$480,000 to actually get access to the whole episode. And that's only if we're lucky.

**Jon Cryer:**

By the way, I'm not a hundred percent sure he's sure that he even has it.

**Susan Simpson:**

Wow.

**Jon Cryer:**

He was saying that, basically, just the amount of trouble it would take to find it would make it prohibitively expensive.

Jon did have some good news for me, though. Or, at least he had some not-terrible news.

**Jon Cryer:**

So consequently, that's why a lot of shows just go away and, you know, those tapes get reused, and you know, it's impossible to get that stuff again.

**Susan Simpson:**

So I hate to consider this, but is it theoretically possible that this entire multi-season TV show just doesn't exist in this world anymore?

**Jon Cryer:**

It is possible. It is unlikely though, because it was the '90's, it was not that long ago ...

**Susan Simpson:**

It's '92. I mean like it's ...

The show probably still exists. It might also be gone forever. But more likely, a copy of it still out there, somewhere. It's just a matter of finding it.

**Jon Cryer:**

It's crazy. It's very frustrating. As I said, I feel like there's other ways to skin this cat, and we will get closer and closer.

At this point, though, our best bet may be to find someone out there who just happens to have a homemade recording of *Prime Suspect* hanging around in storage somewhere.

**Jon Cryer:**

Totally possible. It's totally possible. As I said, I'm really surprised that it's not on YouTube. But uh, yeah ...

**Susan Simpson:**

We need to hope that the person is a huge fan of *Undisclosed* and *Prime Suspect*, and they want to clean their attic out.

**Jon Cryer:**

Yes, exactly (laughs). So if you got an elderly relative who was a big fan of *Prime Suspect*, and kept all their old VCR tapes, please do let us know.

**Susan Simpson:**

Standing invitation to be an Addendum guest to anyone who get me a copy of the tapes.

**Jon Cryer:**

Yes (laughs). That's a very sought after gig.

**Susan Simpson:**

(Laughing).

So don't forget to check your attics and hallway closets, folks. Maybe one of you has a copy of this episode on VCR. As *Prime Suspect* would say: remember, you *can* make a difference.

*[Prime Suspect Closing Theme Song]*

**[1:05:56] Rabia Chaudry:** As we mentioned earlier in this episode, at one point after Dennis' arrest, a defense investigator had gone up to Camden County to interview Cora Fisher. In that interview, Cora Fisher told the investigator some important things about the time that Jane Beaver had come to her house and shown her a photo of Dennis Perry. Important things that the defense completely ignored. Like how Jane Beaver had claimed her daughter had a child with the man in the photo, and how Jane Beaver had also said that the man in the picture had confessed to her that he'd killed two black people. Things that could've been used to impeach Jane Beaver's testimony at trial.

And Cora Fisher also said something that might explain where Bundy had gotten that photo of Dennis Perry from. Cora Fisher told the defense investigator, talking about the woman with the photo of Dennis Perry, quote, "The lady told her that she was going to send the photograph of the man to the television station."

If Cora Fisher was right about this, that means Jane Beaver planned to send the picture of Dennis Perry to Prime Suspect, and that would explain how Bundy had Jane Beaver's photo before he'd ever talked to a single church lady.

What it doesn't explain is why Bundy isn't telling the truth about where that photo came from. Or why the contents of that tip from Jane Beaver have never been disclosed.

But one of the reasons for that could be the \$25,000 reward, and how it motivated Jane Beaver to come forward with her story about Dennis Perry. Because if there was ever any room for doubt as to whether that reward played a role in her decision to name Dennis Perry as a suspect, that doubt has been dispelled by the DA's file. Because on January 14, 2000, the day after Dennis Perry was arrested for the murder of Harold and Thelma Swain, someone in the DA's office got a phone call. The person who took the call wrote a memo about it, and logged it into the DA office's internal system. That memo reads:

*New Message for John B.  
From: Jane Beaver  
Re: Camden - Perry Murder case*

*Stephen or John,*

*[Jane Beaver] has question about the reward money. Says it was because of the picture & info she turned in that case solved. Said she tried to give the sheriff info several times over the years & they wouldn't listen. Says they have told her that the reward money is no longer there. Please call her. She wants to collect reward.*

John B. is John B. Johnson. Stephen is Stephen Kelly, the District Attorney for the Brunswick Circuit. Which means the prosecution in this case knew that Jane Beaver, their star witness, knew that the reward that had been offered, and that she was extremely interested in collecting it. And there is no indication, whatsoever, that this information was ever disclosed to Dennis Perry's defense.

And there's something that wasn't initially disclosed to Jane Beaver either. When Jane Beaver had gone to Dennis Perry's trial, she'd believed that her testimony would entitle her to \$25,000 dollars. But what Jane Beaver didn't know, is that she wasn't the only witness who was after that reward money.

Next time, on Undisclosed.

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**[1:09:01] Susan Simpson:** Thanks for listening to Episode 14 of Undisclosed: The State v. Dennis Perry. There's an addendum this Thursday, so send us your questions with the hashtag UD addendum! And we'll be back on Monday with Episode 15.

Mital Telhan, is our Executive Producer. Our logo was designed by Ballookey, and our theme music is by Ramiro Marquez and Patrick Cortez. Audio production is done by Rebecca LaVoie of Partners in Crime Media, and host of the Crime Writers On podcast.

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