

## Blood Town S1- E2

### Who Are the Authors of This Murder?

[00:00:00] **Penny:** I'm Penny Dearmin, and this is Blood Town.

**Sheriff Masee:** [Rain playing in the background] I will tell you this, it's one of the strangest cases that we've, that we've ever worked. I don't know how to explain this to people that are not in our business, but when we first arrived at the crime scene, it just, there was something about it that was not right. And it was just sort of a bizarre, different kind of scene. We had that conversation privately in our law enforcement circle. It wasn't appropriate CPR it was just a different scene and the [00:01:00] responding EMTs informed the deputies at the scene that they thought the body had been there longer than their timeline. And they documented that because of effects to the body.

Tremendous rain, Very dark out there. There's a swimming pool area in front of a house on Watson Reynolds Road. We made the determination early on to wait until daylight before we truly worked the scene. We didn't think we could appropriately work the crime scene in that type weather especially in the dark.

**Penny:** Welcome to episode two of Blood Town. Last episode, the idea of narrative came up and questions revolving around Mr. Heindel's suicide were addressed. Being invested [00:02:00] in this murder, I read a lot and began seeing that press conferences and news reports also create a narrative through images and details. Today, we compare the details and images shared during the press conference held the day after Marianne's death, the incident report, and the press release.

I have noticed that narrative in the South is often achieved by saying nothing or sharing significant details in order to silence questions. The questions I want to ask today are:

- What is the narrative being created?
- And who are the authors of this murder story?

Let's review the evidence from the incident report, the press release, and the details presented at the press conference.

On Mother's Day. Marianne Shockley was 43 years old. Marcus Lillard was 41 years old, and Clark Heindel was [00:03:00] 69-years-old. A 911 call was placed by Clark Heindel at 1:06 AM on Mother's Day. The press release states that Clark reported an individual having trouble breathing at his residence.

According to the incident report, officers were dispatched in response to a 911 call reporting a female found unresponsive in the hot tub that had been under the water for one to two minutes. At the press conference, Sheriff Masee reported that the 911 call indicated that there was a drowning the scene.

When officials arrived on the scene, Clark was giving chest compressions while Marcus administered mouth-to-mouth resuscitation after wrapping himself in a towel. Marcus

reported that Marianne was his girlfriend. Marianne was bleeding heavily from an injury to [00:04:00] her head. She had no pulse. Marianne was placed in an ambulance, and EMS personnel stated that she was deceased.

A pair of eyeglasses were found on the shallow end of the pool deck next to what appeared to be blood. In the grass, just off the pool deck, were two other spots that appear to be blood-soaked. A woman's silver bracelet was located in the grass near the blood. Photographs of the evidence were taken as it started to rain.

We learned from the press conference that the temperature of the hot tub was 107 degrees. Clark reported that he was swimming in the far end of the pool, and Marianne was in the hot tub. Marcus said that he had been in the woods for 15 minutes gathering firewood. The officer reported that he thought it was odd that Marcus would be trying to make a fire with [00:05:00] everything being wet, and also there was a large pile of firewood beside the fire pit.

When Marcus returned from the woods, Marianne was passed out in the hot tub. The officer asked Marcus if she was under water at that time. And he stated, I don't think so, but maybe she had already been under. Clark said Marianne was not responsive, so they pulled her out and started CPR.

According to the incident report, Marcus said he removed her from the hot tub, jumped in the pool and swam her to the other side. Marcus said that they got out of the pool on the shallow end and he fell, which is how she got her head injury, and then carried her over to where the officers found her.

Clark stated that when they did the CPR, Marianne appeared to be breathing faintly, so they assumed she was coming back into consciousness, [00:06:00] which is why they did not immediately call 911. Clark and Marcus were told they were going to be interviewed. Marcus gave the officer his and Marianne's cell phones, which were located on the front porch.

Marcus was placed in the back of the patrol car after Clark retrieved a pair of shorts for him from the house. Clark was left on his front porch after being told he could not get his cell phone by the pool to call his attorney as it was a crime scene. The Coroner asked for Marianne's driver's license, and the officer went to ask Clark if he knew where her purse was; Clark was no longer on the porch. The officer knocked on the screen door and called his name twice. The officer reported hearing a loud, but muffled noise from inside. He called for two other officers to cover the front of the house as [00:07:00] he went around back.

Not finding anything, he went back around front and all three officers entered Clark's house where he was found deceased from an apparent self-inflicted shotgun wound to the head. Marcus was taken to the Baldwin County Sheriff's office, where he was later arrested on a probation violation. Preliminary autopsy results revealed that Marianne's cause of death was murder by strangulation, and Clark's wounds were self-inflicted.

At 3:00 PM on Monday, May 13th, 2019 Marcus Lillard was arrested for murder by strangulation, aggravated assault, and concealing the death of another [Thunder and rain].

[00:08:00] We've listened to so many details about the crime scene, and I've invited Jim back to talk to us today because I have a lot of questions, especially those aspects of the case without enough information. One of those is that the scene looked a little inappropriate as far as pure drowning. Jim, what do you think they mean by inappropriate?

**Jim:** I interpret that as perhaps foul play. The 911 call went out that there was a drowning. I believe they arrived and surveyed the scene, and decided that, although they didn't use the term foul play, [00:09:00] but something wasn't on the up and up.

**Penny:** What do you think strange demeanor might mean?

**Jim:** That was a more curious one.

Milledgeville sees a lot of...a cast of characters. So, strange and Milledgeville, or strange demeanor, must really mean strange demeanor. And I gather it to be maybe some erratic behavior, some behavior that's not normal to even Milledgeville.

**Penny:** [Laughing] And that would take A LOT. How could inappropriate CPR be related to this strange demeanor that they describe?

**Jim:** It's with the introduction of the word inappropriate that I think the rhetoric really wrenches up. Inappropriate onto itself as a judgment word. So, if [00:10:00] it's not appropriate, it's inappropriate, being that whatever these, these actions were going on, whatever the scene looked like, it kind of takes on the fact that everything was perhaps inappropriate that they saw.

**Penny:** What is inappropriate behavior by the South's standards?

**Jim:** Well, I think it was mentioned that someone was a lifeguard. When I heard inappropriate CPR, you know, CPR, cardiopulmonary resuscitation is, it's not a, it's a rather violent process. I mean, one has to break or at least crack the sternum in order to make the ribs spring, in order to pump the lungs and to try to get the oxygen back into the bloodstream. There's that appropriate tilt of the head that has to happen. When I read [00:11:00] inappropriate, initially, I believe that perhaps they were doing it wrong.

**Penny:** Do you think something different now?

**Jim:** Yeah, I don't think the accuracy of the process had anything to do with it. I think that it was much more sinister and darker and deeper than that.

**Penny:** And you know this because you were also a lifeguard.

**Jim:** Yeah. Many, many years ago. However, I think that the individuals involved were all lifeguards. But, when I heard the term inappropriate CPR, I was like, well, they must have really been doing that wrong.

**Penny:** One of the questions that a reporter asked at the press conference was whether Marcus Lillard had mentioned a fight or an argument. Sheriff Massee said that he can't get into the interviews because it's an ongoing investigation, but he didn't believe that it came

[00:12:00] up. What are some of the possible motives for murder and why might that be important to the reporter asking that question?

**Jim:** I believe that one of the first questions that is asked at a murder scene is motive, especially when it comes to deciding if someone is guilty or should be detained or...to quote, to quote, the authorities are bizarre scene. You know, motive here, man, that's hard to find.

**Penny:** Right. We know there was means because of the Coroner's report or preliminary results with that list of the cause of death as strangulation. There was obviously opportunity because they were all at Clark's house when Marianne's body was discovered. We will have to [00:13:00] see how this all plays out in hearings and a potential indictment or trial as the case moves forward.

**Jim:** And it, and it'll come down to, you know, who argues it the best. One of the, the most interesting things that I heard in, in your podcast was, you know, who's the author of this crime?

**Penny:** Who do you think the author or authors are?

**Jim:** I believe it's yet to be seen. And perhaps all of the cast of characters haven't come on stage yet.

**Penny:** Interesting. Another aspect that I don't think we have enough information about, in fact, Sheriff Masee told the reporters that we don't have the ability to determine Marianne's time of death, and he laid out some of those potential reasons why we may never be able to determine that. The first one being the 107-degree temperature of the hot tub, and [00:14:00] not knowing how long she had been outside of the hot tub, as well as only being able to speculate that she actually was in the hot tub because when authorities arrived, she was already on the pool deck.

There are so many details swimming around the determination of her time of death in this case. Why is that so important? And what are you thinking about that?

**Jim:** You mentioned earlier in the first season that I was from Alabama, and I really asked a friend of mine a question, who was a medic in the Marine Corps, and is now a medic, is a fireman in the Birmingham, Alabama fire districts, and he's not a writer, he's not a...I just said, how do you determine [00:15:00] death? And he said, well, second to motive, time of death is one of the more crucial facts of a crime scene. And I explained to him that there was a jacuzzi or a hot tub involved. I don't think they've called them jacuzzis since the eighties.

However, he said, well, if there was a jacuzzi there, then that's perfect because we have a saying in EMT and medics that they're not dead until they're cold and dead.

**Penny:** So, it's a challenge to determine a person's time of death when their body temperature is extremely high because they were in a hot tub.

**Jim:** Yeah. I mean, kind of like a freezer. If you could place a body that had been warm, 98.6 degrees, in a 107 degree [00:16:00] pool that's a very concentrated pool of heat and steam

as was mentioned earlier, that determining the cause of death or the time of death is even more obscure.

**Penny:** I also think it's important to determine time of death so they can place the suspect or suspects at the scene when the crime occurred.

**Jim:** One of, one of the things that I really took note of was that an absolute confusion of the time of death was one of the more, one of the reasons that decisions were made to put Lillard in the back of the car and leave Heindel on the front porch.

**Penny:** Right. And I believe sheriff Masee said, one of the reasons for that was that [00:17:00] Marcus was the one who brought Marianne to Clark's house. That was one of the factors that led to them putting Marcus in the patrol car and Clark on the front porch.

Hopefully, we'll get more details about that decision.

**Jim:** Well, one of the charges being that a concealment of death, and the phone call placement. It just adds, it's just one of those many, many questions and inconsistencies to this murder.

**Penny:** I hope we're able to find out more about that phone call because I know Sheriff Masee talked about the person on that phone call, having actual medical training and how that might help them determine her time of death.

A final question that I have, going back to the hot tub or the jacuzzi. We already went over why that impacts the ability to determine her time of death. [00:18:00] However, the EMTs at the scene said that the body had been there longer than the timeline reported by Clark and Marcus. And I know you mentioned you have a friend who is an EMT, but I don't know if you had the opportunity to talk to your friend about what effects to the body might be present that could indicate that a person might have been deceased longer than reported.

**Jim:** His name is Robert Rainey, and he's most certainly going to come on if, if you continue with the podcast, and he really is not a man to really mince words. And, and, you know, I think he said it twice. They're not dead until they're cold and dead, which is a very hard, cold thing to say. They're not dead until they're cold and dead.

So, if you can maintain the [00:19:00] body's temperature for several hours, then it would be almost impossible to determine the time of death.

**Penny:** That's a lot to think about as far as what questions as audience members you might have, and I have as we're seeking the answers to the questions I put forth at the beginning of this episode, especially regarding what is the narrative that's being created and who are the authors of this murder story?

I want to thank you, Jim, for coming on again and sharing your perspective as a lifeguard and as a fellow writer. As we talk about narrative, and also your friend Robert's experience as an EMT, I do hope we have the opportunity to speak with him because I'm sure our audience will have some [00:20:00] questions that we can hopefully answer in future episodes.

**Jim:** I just want to say thanks again for having me on and to help you explore the truth behind all these questions.

**Penny:** Thanks for listening today. If you enjoyed this episode, please rate and subscribe and we look forward to bringing you episode three very soon.