

Episode 59: Eric saved a crashed skydiver

Welcome to What Was That Like. I'm your host, Scott Johnson. This is a show where we talk to regular people - people just like you and just like me - who have found themselves in an extremely unusual situation. We'll hear their stories and get inside their head because we all want to know what was that like. More information about each episode at whatwasthatlike.com. Here we go.

Every sporting activity involves some degree of risk. Risk of injury or even risk of death.

I bike about 10 miles each morning and I'm pretty careful. And I record video with a GoPro mounted on my helmet for every ride, which was inspired by my interview with William, episode 20 of this podcast if you want to check that out. But I know that no matter how careful I am, there is still the small possibility that something could happen. Same with almost anything else – running, playing tennis, swimming, you name it.

But for most people, when you think of the question, “What is the most dangerous sport?”, the answer that comes to mind is skydiving. It just seems like common sense that jumping out of a plane is really dangerous, right? But in reality, just driving a car is a LOT more dangerous. In fact, statistics show that if you decide to go and do a skydive, you're 24 times more likely to die in a car accident on the way to the drop zone than you are to die while you're skydiving.

But, the unexpected does happen.

Today we're going to hear from Eric. Eric lives here in Florida and he and I have known each other for years. We're mostly connected through the ultrarunning community, even though I don't think either of us actually runs ultramarathons currently. Eric is an avid skydiver.

One day Eric was skydiving with about 10 other people. It was a fairly routine jump when they exited the plane, but one person had a serious problem with his main parachute. Then he had a serious problem with his reserve parachute. As you probably know, there isn't a third parachute.

Somehow, Eric was able to see what was happening from thousands of yards away. And he ended up saving someone's life that day.

He also got that whole thing on video, which you can see at WhatWasThatLike.com/59. It's a pretty cool thing to watch.

I hope you enjoy this conversation I had with Eric.

Scott

How many jumps have you done up to date?

Eric

Skydivers have something called a logbook that we're supposed to, in theory, jot down numbers and information about every jump after each time. I stopped doing that about 5 years ago. My best guess is I've got about 1,500 jumps now.

Scott

I'm curious about why did you stop doing that.

Eric

About half of the people out there will stop logging their jumps and the other half would still do it. We're also in the runner community and I am not a big "Garmin" guy - I'm just more fluid and less OCD in that sense. I just don't track them. There are a few different levels that you'll try to achieve in skydiving that is based on jump numbers. Once you get past 500 or 1000 jumps, the only tracking that you really do is to show somebody that you're current if you're going to a new drop zone. So, the need isn't really there to continue to log them.

Scott

Yeah. I get your comparison with the running community. Some people like all the stats and some people just run because they love to run. On this particular day that you did this jump, did you know anyone else on the plane?

Eric

I did not. It's my local drop zone. I would typically go out there and got a crew of people that I jump with. This group is not my crew, but I know a few of them. In this jump, I did not know the person that we are going to talk about today.

Scott

What was that particular jump? What was the altitude that you jumped from?

Eric

Yeah. Usually, 13,500 feet is the standard jumping altitude for normal skydiving.

Scott

Alright, and do you videotape every jump?

Eric

Just about, yeah. If we go back to the runner analogy, a runner without a stopwatch or a Garmin is like any skydiver without a camera. Pretty much, everybody has it nowadays.

Scott

Alright, well, let's talk about that particular day. First of all, you did videotape this jump - I'll put that video on the show notes for this particular episode so that people can see it. It's very well documented. You've got a lot of arrows pointing like, "Here's that guy" and that kind of thing. It's very interesting to watch. On this particular jump, you call it a belly jump. Can you describe what that is and just take us through what happened?

Eric

Sure, yeah. I'll set the scene for you. There are a few different types of skydiving. When you look at a normal skydiving video that most people see, you're seeing people in a belly-to-Earth orientation - they're falling, kind of, like they're about to do a big belly flop into a pool. That would be considered belly flying. That's one of the most stable ways - that's how you learn to fly. As the sport has progressed, there's something called free-flying, which is more of a three-dimensional form of flying. You flip upside down on your head, kind of, like you're in a handstand, you stand straight up vertically and fall in a standing position, or you do what's

called sit-flying in a sitting position. Generally speaking, new school is free-flying and old school is belly jumping. At that point, the joke is kind of "All the cool kids are free flying and all the older folks are still stuck in the belly jumps." That's not entirely accurate, but that's the good-natured joking that we do at the drop zone.

For the most part, I've been doing free-fly type stuff for quite a while. This group was a group of people that had been in the sport for a long time. Some of the older skydivers - not age-wise, but had been doing it longer - were going on a 10-way belly jump, which means 10 people are gonna jump out of the plane. There's a group of 4-5 that, kind of, chunk out the door, as we call it. They leave the plane, kind of, holding hands all together grouped up. Then, another 5 people come diving out of the plane, fly down in freefall to the formation, grab on, and then we do what's called Turning Points, which essentially just kind of means, like, dancing in the sky. You'll do a 180 or 360 and then you'll grab hands again or grab onto somebody's leg strap and do a formation and then you'll turn another point that's barely flying, which I don't typically do. So that was the joke on the video, "What could possibly go wrong on this 10-way belly fly?" That's kind of the setup. I don't typically do it. I was excited to be on it. I was sitting on the plane with these 10 other people at that point in time. This would have been 2016. We're in 2020.

I've got - give or take - 1,500 jumps. I've been doing maybe 250-350 jumps per year - so I would call it 300 on average. So I might have had 500-600 jumps at that time which, for me, was a relatively new and casual jumper, so I was still nervous on the plane. Looking around at everybody's gear is a standard practice because you've got this parachute on and you want to look at the way people have everything connected and routed and, kind of, look out for your friends on the plane. There was a guy sitting in front of me. It's interesting that this whole thing played out this way. I can't forget the guy who was sitting in front of me, who ended up being "The guy".

On the way up to altitude, a lot of people will check your own gear multiple times. You'll look at where your handles are. You'll look at the way the connection points are routed. You'll make sure everything's tucked in. A lot of people are a little paranoid about it and they develop these OCD manners on the way to altitude where they have to check each thing 3 times. This guy didn't check a thing - I just remember in the plane just, kind of, sitting there. He was also leaning against a bench. When you lean your parachute against something, you have snagged points and things that can get caught on stuff. I just remember thinking that I never saw that guy check his gear, but it was a fleeting, kind of, passing thing. As soon as you jump out of the plane, all of a sudden, your thoughts become really present. You don't tend to hang on to thoughts that you had in the plane. I remember thinking about this particular guy, and then I didn't think about it again until I saw that he was having an incident in freefall.

Scott

Let me ask you one thing before you continue. You mentioned that - when you were referring back to back to this time - you probably had around 500 jumps and, at that point, you were still nervous on the plane. Two things strike me. One is that, after 500 jumps, you still get nervous on the plane. Does that also mean that, after some time since then, you no longer get nervous?

Eric

Such an interesting question. It'll be different for everybody. It took me 10 years to do my first 100 jumps, which is not typically common. I was scared for 10 years. I was "Petrified" kind of scared, and that was what I enjoyed about it. It's a story I like to tell, that I would give my wife a big hug and kiss. I think about, on my drive to the drop zone, how I wanted to have fun today,

but I really didn't want to get hurt or die. I would be in the airplane hangar waiting for the plane and all I could think about is "I hope everything goes on okay." I call my parents. Then, I get on the plane and the entire way to altitude, I was like "Man, I hope I don't die. I hope everything goes okay." I was really paranoid about it. Then, the last thing I think before I jumped out of the plane is, "Shit, man. I hope I don't die." In freefall, you don't think about it at all. I love telling people - it's a great analogy that I have - "There's nothing to fear but fear itself." The moment that you're safe in the plane, in the hangar, you can't think about anything but death. When you jump out of the plane, that's the last thing you think about because you're just in the moment loving it. Humans are wired for this crazy, insane feeling. I went through 500 jumps. I didn't jump super regularly, so there's always a little bit of hesitation. If you take a long break, if you take some time off, even now with 1,500 jumps - due to COVID, I took a couple of months off - in the plane, on my first jump back, my heart rate was going crazy. In this case, a 10-way jump is kind of a bigger jump. At that time, I wasn't super current. Being on a jump with 9 other people all at once— there's still a lot going on for somebody if you're not super current and super familiar with that situation.

Scott

Yeah, that makes sense.

Eric

So we all get into the formation. We hopped out the door. We were in freefall. You're typically on a belly jump. You could be falling about 130-140 miles an hour. It's about a 45th to 52nd freefall, from 13,500 feet until 5,000 feet, which is considered a break-off point, which is where the 10-way formation would all go in different directions, turn 180 degrees, do a formation like a star, and just get as far away from everybody as possible before you throw your parachute so that you don't open a parachute pointed at another skydiver and end up having an impact underneath the canopy because you opened really close to somebody else.

Scott

Is there an unknown or an unspoken rule about which direction everybody's gonna go to get away from everybody else? It seems like, by chance, you might go in the same direction as somebody else.

Eric

If you think about it this way, at the end of the jump, in theory, you should always kind of be looking at each other - if the jump doesn't go well, it's called the zoo jump and we make fun of those - you're always looking at somebody, and you're kind of in a huddle. If you think about a football team, you would huddle up and attempt to all leave in similar directions. To spread out, you have to, kind of, fan out in the star formation like how fireworks would explode. So, that's the unwritten rule. You turn away from a 10-person circle and everybody kind of goes exactly the opposite direction, but you fan out at an angle depending on how many people are in the circle. If there are just 3 of you, there's a 75-degree angle between each person. If there are 10 of you, there's a 30-degree angle.

What you do is stiffen your body up as straight as possible - think about a surfboard and a wave. The interesting thing about skydiving that's really fun to tell people is it's a very tactile sensation. When you're in freefalling on your belly, you could think about it a lot like body boarding or boogie boarding at the beach. The air at 130 miles is extremely tactile. When you put your hand out the window at 90 miles an hour and you do that thing where you point your hand up and down, the wind pushes your hand. So, when everybody breaks off - it's called

break off - at 5,000 feet, you pin yourself into, like, what would look like a surfboard - really straight, really flat - and you point yourself at a 30-degree angle. The goal is to cover as much distance and just get the hell away from people because opening the parachute in a big group of people can be one of the more dangerous parts of the sport.

On this particular day, we all hopped out of the airplane. It's a 10-way. We met up. The skydive went regularly as planned. We were doing our turning points, which is 10 of us holding hands or doing whatever we do - turning in a circle. All of that went fine. We got to break off at about 5,000 feet. 40 seconds later, we broke off. Everybody turned around as expected and started breaking off. If you watch the video - Scott, I know you have - they'll see how tiny people are. In theory, we're thousands of feet away from each other at the end of this break-off point.

Somehow, as I was throwing my parachute, I was looking around and I could see somebody who was still in freefall who should really be pulling a parachute out at this point. My parachute popped open and I swiveled around. The likelihood of me opening my parachute after seeing this man freefalling and pointing the other direction, being able to turn around and find this tiny little pinpoint of a person thousands of feet away who is still in freefall— somehow I did. It was very concerning, obviously.

I kept watching and then I saw a parachute come out - I could see some fabric over his head - but he was still moving really quickly and radically from my vision. I realized that the guy actually had a malfunction called a two out, which essentially means that he had a malfunction on his main parachute. He went to throw his reserve parachute. Both of those parachutes, for some reason, the main and then the reserve, were still there. When you throw your reserve parachute, the idea is you do that and get rid of your main. You have to cut away your main parachute to allow the reserve parachute to inflate and open uninhibited and unobstructed. If two parachutes open above your head, you can imagine they're going to fight for control and they're likely going to get twisted amongst each other. Essentially, those are your only options to save your life. If they get tied up together, there's no third option. So, really, two out is a really, really, really bad situation.

I realized, as I was on my parachute, that this guy had a two out situation. It's interesting. For whatever reason, my instincts had me go chase this malfunction, which you would normally see, but you would land at the drop zone, and you would tell somebody, and then they would go chase it in a truck. For some reason, on this day— I shouldn't say normally because I'm sure that there are other people that would chase under circumstances - I certainly would again knowing how this ended and assuming it's safe to land there. I saw this guy with his two parachutes out and instead of going towards the drop zone, I followed his malfunction away from the drop zone. I ended up watching this guy falling with two parachutes out that are tangled and he doesn't fall very slow. He was still - my best guess - falling at 40 miles an hour-ish. So, if he were to hit the ground, that can be devastating. So I was watching the guy. I could see that he's gonna land about 2 miles off at the drop zone. I was following him. I got the whole thing on camera. As I was watching his parachutes and him come landing down, there's a set of trees that's, kind of, set away from everything else and it just so happens that this guy was going into those trees

Scott

He had no control over his direction, right?

Eric

No control, yeah. He may have had some ability to try to adjust it, but not in the sense that you could steer and park a car in a driveway kind of thing. Maybe he had some level of input, but certainly not control.

Scott

Was anyone on the ground at the drop zone seeing the problem he was having?

Eric

Yeah. Anytime somebody is going to land off the drop zone— there's usually a spotter. There are a couple of employees at the drop zone that will keep their eyes up to the sky. They count the people that were in the plane versus how many parachutes came out. If somebody's not landing at the drop zone, their first response would be, "Oh boy, that guy's a dummy. He's gonna have to pay for a ride back or something like that." The second response would be, "Does everything look okay? Is there a cutaway?" and then, obviously, get concerned. So certainly they would have seen that somebody was going to land off the drop zone. More than likely, they would have seen that there were two different color parachutes.

Yeah, so as luck would have it, I kind of knew in my head that if this guy hits the ground the way he would, he's probably not gonna make it. I was thinking, "Thank goodness. He landed into the trees. The likelihood of, maybe, getting snagged or caught up is probably a good thing in that situation." Again, I was kind of a newer jumper and somebody who doesn't have a ton of great what we call canopy piloting. A lot of people go skydiving and it's all about the freefall part but, at the end of it, you're flying this canopy that you have to learn to drive and there's a lot about it.

So - landing off of your drop zone - as I was about to try to go chase this guy, there were power lines, roads, and trees. It's not a groomed landing area. There could be cows and livestock. Typically, you're out in the middle of nowhere. In this case, it was exactly that. I ended up having to land between a barbed wire fence and inside of a set of phone poles and phone wires right off to the side of the road flanked by a bunch of trees. It was probably 10-15 feet wide. I was, like, maybe 50 feet to land in and - dynamics of a parachute - it was interesting. I was proud of my landing. I came swooping in really close to where the guy was, kind of yanked off my parachute, and started yelling at the guy, "Are you okay?" I couldn't see him. He was swallowed up by the trees. I went running in that direction, pulled off my helmet, yelled for the guy, and dropped the helmet. It turned out that the guy was - I saw him - hanging from the tree and I thought, "Thank goodness." His feet were, like, literally 3 inches above the ground just kind of swinging back and forth above the ground. I was like, "Holy shit. This guy didn't even hit the ground. It's amazing."

Scott

You said his feet were three inches off the ground?

Eric

Literally swinging back and forth 3 inches from the ground. He didn't make it all the way to the ground, which saved his life, and then almost killed him because, as I got closer to the trees, I realized that he wasn't answering me. He was purple. He was kind of foaming a little bit at the mouth - blue lips, purple lips. The way your parachute is built from your shoulder straps to the top of the parachute is what's called your risers. They're the pieces of fabric that attach your body harness to the parachute as a wing. One of the risers had somehow looped around his neck and he was literally hanging, choking, and suffocating by the tree and by his gear.

More learning lessons— a lot of skydivers carry a hook knife, which is a little knife that's built into a hook shape - a little 180-degree hook shape - so that you can use it to cut ropes and stuff if you get tangled up in a tree. I never carried a hook knife. I didn't have one. He was unresponsive. I tried as best I could. There's too much tension on his body because he was a 200-pound man hanging from ropes. So I couldn't unharness anything. I couldn't disconnect his gear due to the tension, so I tried to lift him up as high as I could to unloop the risers from around his neck but I couldn't lift him off of the ground high enough to get above his head by myself to free him. But as I lifted him, I realized that I was able to take the tension off of his neck and I kind of heard him take these breaths. As this was happening - thank goodness and other skydivers - one of the guys in the picture that you have also landed close, probably about 500 yards away. As this was happening, I was holding this guy up. Duncan is the name of the skydiver that had this accident. I was holding him up and I saw a gentleman named Matt - one of the local skydivers - come running over. I screamed at Matt. With the two of us, we were able to hold him up high enough that he was breathing and then unloop the risers off of his neck to get him down of the tree alive.

Scott

At what point in this whole scenario did you realize, “Oh, yeah. That's the guy who didn't check his gear.”

Eric

That would have been later that night after, kind of, talking it through with some friends and my wife.

Scott

What injuries did he actually have?

Eric

None. The man walked away with no injuries. His parachute didn't get ripped up from the trees. He actually borrowed somebody else's parachute - it was the drop zone manager's rig, a guy named TK - and he went up on a skydive about 45 minutes later, after this whole scenario.

Scott

That's one of the most remarkable things about this whole story. I mean, I would think after that, “Man, this is either not my lucky day” or he could look at it like, “Wow, this is my absolute luckiest day.” I don't know. It just depends on your perspective, I suppose.

Eric

It's one of those situations where skydivers or people -that do some sort of adrenaline type of thing like this would always say, “You gotta get right back on the horse. Otherwise, that demon will eat you up.” He's not a Facebook guy. He's not a social media guy. Frankly, I don't know that he had ever seen this video. He knows what happened, but I think seeing it from a third-person is a hell of a lot scarier than it is from a first-person because I had to cut away my main and ride the reserve. It's such a “Quick, scary, but you're in control and you've been trained to do what you do” kind of a thing. Man, when you get knocked out, when you go unconscious, when you pass out if somebody chokes you up, you don't remember a whole lot. You don't necessarily remember that stuff is going good and then you wake up. I'm guessing he doesn't remember and I haven't really talked to him. I've seen him a few times since this. Frankly, out of respect, I just really didn't talk to him too much about this. I don't know if it was scary for him as it might have been for somebody watching it third person.

I do remember one of the big things for me is this guy is definitely a dead man - there's no question - if I don't land there, if somebody doesn't land there, and if you don't get him out of the tree. He was choking. He was suffocating. It would have been 10 minutes before other people showed up in their cars. They found the area because they saw somebody's parachute close to the road. He would have been hard to find. I just remember looking at that guy. He went skydiving again which, at the time, I thought was crazy just like you did and expressed - now, I get it. All afternoon, I looked at him and I was like "That's a dead man walking." He travels to Zephyrhills, Florida every year for Thanksgiving. He's from the UK. He's got a family. He's got kids, he's got a wife, and he left on a vacation to go have fun to go do skydives for a week. He was, like, a hair's breadth from somebody calling his wife and telling his wife and kids that he wouldn't make it home. It impacted me so much staring at this guy and thinking, like, "He's gonna go home to his family and he's just walking around here like nothing happened." It's crazy.

Scott

Is this the first time you've ever saved someone's life?

Eric

Yeah, hopefully, the last.

Scott

Okay, so it hasn't happened again since then.

Eric

It hasn't. I've pulled people out of the trees before - that's not the only time. That's kind of the joke at the drop zone when I happen to be around when people fly into trees. That's not terribly uncommon. In this case, it was definitely the only time in the sport that I've saved anybody's life and am glad to have been there. The drop zone was super thankful. They ended up giving me the equivalent of 800 bucks or 50 skydives or something just for looking out for people around. It's really, really interesting. It was just a series of lucky things - seeing that guy as such a small tiny dot in freefall and being able to see him again, and just the fact that he landed in the trees instead of landing on the ground with that situation. Weird stuff.

Scott

It is, yeah. I encourage people to watch the video because— I mean, you've annotated an arrow so that people can see that's the guy. I mean, it's just a dot. I still don't understand how in the world you could have spotted him, but you did. Thankfully, you did.

Eric

Well, as a skydiver, you're definitely trained to look around. There's a bunch of other parachutes flying around. It's not super common, but people get injured and they die because somebody in freefall falls too close to them and impact somebody who's already pulled the parachute. There's a whole set of rules like merging on the highway or these silly roundabouts. I was talking about belly flying and free flying. If I'm on my head falling in a vertical line - kind of, like, a pencil falling straight down - I could go 250 miles an hour without a problem. A belly flier goes 130 miles an hour. A belly flier - because of their surface and the physics of the body and their drag - moves side to side with the wind. They'll jump out of the plane. If there's a 20-mile-an-hour wind, they're going to drift a little bit into or away from the line of flight. So, there are all kinds of stuff with people falling through people. I don't want to scare people from skydiving, but

there's a lot that goes into it and a lot of rules and a lot of things, so you got to keep your head on a swivel and you got to look for stuff. It was really crazy being on a jump and seeing this guy go through that.

Scott

Do you have any theory on what caused his problem or how it could have been avoided?

Eric

Yeah. Anytime somebody goes through a situation like this, you take a look at the gear usually. In his case, what we believe happened after looking at his parachute— the way a parachute works is that you have a pilot chute tucked into your container at the back. The pilot chute is “the ripcord”. When people say pull the ripcord, we don't use ripcords anymore. We have a pilot chute that you take and throw into the wind while you're in freefall. This tiny little pilot chute pulls on a rope or your bridle. It pulls on this rope 15 feet and then it gets to your container and unlocks the container through the tension of the wind pulling the pilot chute back.

In his case, when you look at the video - there's actually a picture of it at the very end - this pilot chute and the handle on the end of the pilot chute somehow kind of wrapped around itself, which kept the pilot chute from fully inflating. It didn't allow it to fully inflate, so it didn't cause enough drag to pull his main out, which would be why he continued to freefall lower than he should have. He would have tried to pull his pilot chute. You would have tried to open up his main parachute. The pilot chute wouldn't inflate. Therefore, it wouldn't pull out the main parachute. So how did he get 2 parachutes out? Well, at that point, he says, “Shit, I need to get my reserve out” and he went to pull his reserve parachute. Honestly, I don't know this, but he should have tried to cut away his main first. Even though it's not out, you cut it away so that when you pull your reserve parachute - if the main comes out which, in this case, it did - hopefully, it cuts away. He may have done that. But by releasing the reserve - both of these giant parachutes were stuffed in your bag - he might have opened up enough space, changed the way the main parachute was sitting and changed the tension on the bag itself. Then, all of a sudden, both parachutes came out and somehow tangled around each other. You can see that they were kind of tangled up and spinning around. So I believe that he had an issue with his pilot chute on the main parachute.

Scott

Okay. I'm just confused about this part. Logistically, if the pilot chute isn't doing what it's supposed to do and you cut that away along with the main, does the reserve also have its own pilot chute? What pulls it out?

Eric

The reserve is on a spring - that one operates differently. There are a few different ways that that can work. Talking about gear for a second— skydivers have an optional piece of gear that they can buy called an AAD or an automatic activation device. People always ask “Why do you wear a helmet? It's not going to save you if hit the ground.”-- As I said, I do 200 miles an hour. You do 100 miles an hour. If I hit you in freefall, it's going to be bad for you, so we wear a helmet to keep us from getting knocked out. If you get knocked out and you happen to have an automatic activation device, it senses that you're still in freefall and that you've not pulled your reserve and it will automatically deploy it.

Scott

Is that based on a certain altitude?

Eric

it is. You can set it. Usually, it's set somewhere between 700 feet and 1,100 feet. Based on the pressure in the air, it knows how fast you're falling and at what altitude you are and it'll automatically spit that thing out. Those are \$1,500 and a lot of people don't have them - believe it or not.

Scott

Wow, 700 feet seems way too close for me.

Eric

I've seen somebody had to count on that to save their lives - that happened right above the top of our drop zone. This woman had an issue pulling her main parachute out and she just couldn't get it out. Then, on top of it, she had an issue with pulling the cable for the reserve. To your point, when you see somebody open a parachute, it's going to take a couple of hundred feet for it to open. They also make a lot of noise when they open that you wouldn't typically hear on the ground because it's thousands of feet above your head. In this case, there was almost like a thunderclap right over the top of the drop zone and you looked up and everybody's like, "Holy shit! Where did you come from?" So if the reserve is on a spring, it's tucked in there. As soon as you pull the reserve handle, that kind of blows it off your back. That's one way. The other way is they connect it to your main parachute as a secondary. If you have this type of setup, the main parachute pulling away from you is what extracts the reserve out of the back - that's a second option.

Scott

No doubt there are people who are thankful they spent that \$1,500.

Eric

Yeah, it comes up all the time. Absolutely. Sometimes, in skydiving, there's always a series of mistakes - usually, it's typically not just one thing. Maybe you didn't check your gear. Maybe you rubbed against the back of the seat, in this case - you're leaning against the seat and maybe something gets pushed inside of the pocket a little further than normal and when you go to reach for it, you can't find it because it's just not in the normal place. Maybe on that jump, your buddy was real close and you wanted to get a high five and freefall just before you turn around, track away, and leave the formation. Maybe you go a little lower than you normally would go. It's this series of bad things that ends up in a situation like that for skydiving, typically.

Scott

All right. Well, I'm glad you were there that day. I'm glad you were able to spot him. I'm sure not everybody would have been able to do that. Congratulations on that. Thanks for sharing your story.

Eric

Yeah, of course. It was fun. Thanks, Scott!

Scott

Hey - you and me, we're friends, right? Of course we are. And I don't know about you, but I like getting emails from my friends. So if you'd like to get an email from me, every new-release Friday, I can make that happen! Just go to the website and click on Email.

And speaking of new releases, I have released episode #5 of the Raw Audio series. These are bonus episodes for patrons, and they are actual 911 call audio. In episode 5 you'll hear:

A woman who hears a noise in her garbage can, and she's surprised by what she finds

911 Operator

Is it alive?

Woman 1

Yes.

911 Operator

Okay, is it breathing?

Woman 1

I think so.

Scott

A restaurant employee who calls 911 after a car drives through the wall into the restaurant dining room.

Woman 2

The car came right through the dining room. I think I have people trapped in that room.

Scott

And a man who calls 911 and he's not quite sure what he needs.

911 Operator

Okay. What kind of medical history do you have, sir?

Man

I don't know. Let them check it out. I'm no fucking doctor.

Scott

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