

## **Episode 126: Hayley witnessed two murders**

The concept of guilt is an interesting thing to ponder.

Sometimes it's justified and rational to feel guilty. If a young child breaks a rule but doesn't want to admit it and get in trouble, the look of guilt might be all over their face and easy for a parent to read. They did something wrong, and they know it.

Adults are often the same way. If you do something to offend someone, or you knowingly break the law, you feel guilty. Because you are guilty.

But sometimes we feel that way, even if we HAVEN'T done anything wrong.

This is often the case with veterans who have been in war. They're fighting shoulder to shoulder, on the front lines, and one day their buddy right next to them gets shot. One person dies, and the one who gets to go home feels intense guilt about that.

Or it might be a case where a person is drowning, and a stranger jumps in the water and saves their life, but the stranger ends up drowning. The person who was saved is left to wonder how to deal with the fact that they're alive because someone else died.

My guest today is Hayley. When she was a teenager, she found herself in a dangerous situation. In the end, she was the only witness to two people getting murdered, right in front of her. And those two people were killed while they were trying to help keep her safe.

---

### **Scott**

You were a teenager when this happened. Were you kind of a rules-follower or were you more of, like, a rebellious teenager?

### **Hayley**

Short answer - I was pretty rebellious at that time. To be honest with you, I hated my teenage years. I absolutely hated it. The only thing that really helped, I feel, at that time was just partying and drinking. That's the only way that I could really have any kind of enjoyment.

### **Scott**

How old were you when this happened?

### **Hayley**

I was 17.

### **Scott**

I know there were multiple people involved in the situation. Who was there or who was part of this?

### **Hayley**

It was my sister, Holly, and her fiance, Johnny. They had 2 roommates, Robert and Robin.

**Scott**

So there were 4 people living in the house...

**Hayley**

Correct.

**Scott**

And then there were a few other people that came into the story a little later. We got Virgil, who's a friend of Robert, and Forrest, who's Virgil's cousin. Then, Gary was a neighbor. So, a lot of names to keep track of here - we'll mention them as they come in as part of the story. So, Holly and Johnny - your sister and her fiance - were having a 4th of July party at their house, but it really started, kind of, the day before.

**Hayley**

Correct.

**Scott**

What happened on July 3?

**Hayley**

Well, I had gone over there and ended up staying the night. It's the typical 4th of July celebration. You start shooting fireworks on the 3rd and it carries on through that weekend. Usually, I would be over at their house just partying and drinking.

**Scott**

And so the next morning - late morning or midday - the group started drinking again?

**Hayley**

Yeah, almost as soon as everybody had gotten up and was getting around eating breakfast, out came the beer. At that time, it was just 2-point beers, so it was like water, or we were drinking it like water. Then, Virgil and Forrest showed up probably between 10 and noon.

**Scott**

Again, Virgil is a friend of one of the roommates, Robert. So they were just coming over to join the party?

**Hayley**

Correct. I think Robert had a friend who lived in some apartments that invited us over to go swimming. However, we were told to leave by the management because Virgil was so belligerent. He was throwing lawn chairs into the swimming pool and just causing all kinds of chaos. We were trying to calm him down. So he was the one that really made me the most uneasy at that time.

**Scott**

So you're in a group. Obviously, you know your sister and her fiance. How well did you know these other people?

**Hayley**

Well, I didn't know Robert for that long. I had gone out with Robin on a date that was kind of set up by Johnny. I believe they work together at a glass company. I probably knew them for a couple of months.

**Scott**

So not close friends, but sort of acquaintances.

**Hayley**

Right. We went back to the house. They were sitting around the dining room table playing cards and drinking beer for a little while. Later that evening, we had made plans to go down to Riverside Drive which runs alongside the Arkansas in Tulsa. We were going to watch the fireworks show from there. My mom had dropped my brother off - he was 6 years old at that time, so we were babysitting him. We ate dinner. At some point, we were going to watch a firework show that they have, like, every year. I remember we were fighting to find a place to park. We ended up standing on a sidewalk along some apartments. There were just so many people down there to watch the firework show. Forrest had picked up my brother at one time and put him up on his shoulders. Even as we were leaving the event, I remember him carrying my brother on his shoulders.

**Scott**

When your mom dropped your little brother off - like you said, he was only 6 years old - do you think she had any concerns about the group that she was kind of entrusting your little brother to - with the drinking, drugs, and stuff like that that was going on at that time? Or did she know about it?

**Hayley**

I think she knew that we had been drinking beer. She didn't think that I was, of course. She probably knew but I was trying to hide it because I was underage. I think my sister convinced her that everything was okay there. I think there might have been some fireworks that we shot off there for a little bit. But for the most part, everybody was kind of winding down. We had been drinking since noon, so everybody was getting kind of tired. Somewhere between 11 and midnight, Gary showed up at some point after we had gotten back from the firework show.

**Scott**

And he's a nearby neighbor?

**Hayley**

Yeah, he lived up the street at some apartments. We talked for a little bit. Then, I agreed to run up to the corner store with him and get some more beer. So we bought beer. Instead of going back to my sister's house, we went to his apartment. We ended up just sitting around talking at his apartment for a little bit. Then, I told him, "I'm getting kind of tired. I wanted to go back to my sister's house and make sure everything was okay." For some reason I felt responsible for anything that might have happened if they went to bed or whatever.

**Scott**

Was your little brother still there?

**Hayley**

No. Sorry. We dropped him off at my mom's house on the way back to my sister's house - Holly's house.

**Scott**

Yeah, pretty late night for a 6-year-old.

**Hayley**

Yeah. By the time we got out of the traffic and everything, it was pretty close to midnight. So we had dropped him off already. We went back to the house. Whenever I walked in, I noticed that Robert was asleep on the couch right next to the front door and Forrest was sitting up. There was no sign of his cousin, Virgil. Someone asked, like, "Where's Virgil?" He said, "He took off. He was tired." I thought he was kind of odd that he would stick around after— I mean, him not really meeting everybody for the first day although we did spend, like, the entire day with him. I was like, "You don't really know anybody here."

**Scott**

His connection to the group had left. Yeah, that does seem a little awkward.

**Hayley**

Yeah. But I think you're just kind of trusting that he's not shady. Me, Gary, and Forrest sat over the dining room table, which was just after the living room, of course. We sat there talking. At one point, Robert got up from the couch and went to his room. We were laughing loud because I know Johnny asked us to keep it down at one point. Gary, at some point, mentioned going to Keystone lake and I thought, "This is not a good time to be in Keystone Lake in the middle of the morning."

**Scott**

How far away was Keystone Lake and why would he want to go there?

**Hayley**

It was in West Tulsa, so it was probably a good 30-minute drive out, if not more, from where we were. Again, I thought it was kind of odd that he would mention that. Hindsight, I believe that he was trying to get us out without causing too much suspicion because, through the conversation that we were having, I didn't think anything of it at that time, but Forrest would kind of separate me from Gary and he would say stuff like, "I feel really close to you. I feel like we're connecting. You're like a sister to me." I just figured, "Okay, you're drunk. Go home now." I would just, kind of, "Yeah, yeah," and try to walk away real smooth. He tried to kiss me a few times and I turned my head or, kind of, leaned back away from him - not allowing that connection. As it got later and later, I knew that Gary was picking up on his odd behavior. He kind of waited for Forrest to walk away and he said, "I really think that you need to come to my apartment and stay because I don't feel you're safe with him here."

**Scott**

Right. Because Gary was probably thinking about leaving anyway - right? He lived nearby.

**Hayley**

Yeah. I mean, the sun was coming up at this time. We'd been up all night. He had kind of quit drinking throughout the conversation. I was tired. I'd been up all night. I was really tired. I thought, "Well, okay, if this solves the problem and gets me some sleep, well, do it."

**Scott**

Were you comfortable with Gary going and sleeping at his house? Are there any implications in that offer?

**Hayley**

He said that I could crash on his bed and that he would sleep on the couch. There was nothing that he expected out of this. Again, he just reassured me. He said, "I really don't feel safe leaving you here with this guy because of his odd behavior." So I felt safer with him with the fact that he was looking out for me than what I would have staying there.

**Scott**

Yeah, you're both kind of creeped out by this third guy.

**Hayley**

Yeah. I mean, we were having a good time and then, all of a sudden, it just started getting weird. As we were getting ready to leave, I was facing Gary. Gary's back was against the front door, and all I noticed was Forrest coming up behind him. Then, all of a sudden, he swung his arm up over his head. I thought, "What has he got?" About the time I was thinking this, he was bringing this hammer down on the back of Gary's head.

**Scott**

Then, just really quickly, he just threw it down on the table, grabbed a hold of me by the neck, and took me around the corner into a very small kitchen. I mean, my mind just disconnected. As soon as he hit Gary and Gary just crumbled to the floor, I couldn't think. I don't think I had a thought. My mind just went blank. I just kept on saying, "You hurt Gary. We need to check on Gary." as he was taking me around the corner. At that point, I thought, "I've got to get away from this." I thought if I could get him to focus on Gary, he would let me go for some strange reason. Not thinking logically, I thought that he would care. Now, I thought that he would want to check on Gary.

**Scott**

Well, it seems like it's something that just happened so quickly and unexpectedly that you didn't have time to process everything.

**Hayley**

Yeah. I think I was just kind of detached at that point. I must have been yelling. He punched me a few times on the left side of my face. He had me pressed up against his counter and he held this knife up to my face, which he got out of a butcher block that was right next to us. He pulled this knife out, held it up to my face, and said, "I want you." Then, he set it down on the counter and just slugged me a few times in the face. I was yelling at that point. I remember saying something. The words were incoherent - like my brain and my mouth wasn't connecting. Right as he started to take his third swing, Johnny walked around the corner and I thought, "Okay, everything's okay." He grabbed Forrest by the arm and the last words that Johnny spoke was, "Hey man, be cool."

As he was grabbing his arm, Forrest brought his hand down, grabbed the knife, and then just stabbed Johnny in one motion, and it went in so deep that I couldn't even see the blade anymore - all I saw was the handle. I really didn't know the extent because it didn't make sense - what I was seeing. Then, he just slid it across his midsection. At that point, Johnny jerked his hand, pushed Forrest, and then he just grabbed his stomach and went out the kitchen door. At

that point, my mind was like, "Get away." So, I guess, with the adrenaline and everything that I had, I pushed Forrest off of me.

**Scott**

How big of a guy was Forrest?

**Hayley**

Forest was over 6 foot and close to 300 pounds, if not 300 pounds. I mean he was a big guy. I think it was desperation. I knew that Gary and Johnny were hurt. I just followed the path that I figured Johnny went. Whenever I ran out of the kitchen, I ran directly into the front room past Robert. Robert was standing outside his bedroom door at that time because of the commotion. I saw Johnny laying on Robert's bed. So I grabbed Johnny by his hand and yanked him into the bathroom which was joined between the two bedrooms - Johnny and Holly's bedroom on one side and then Robert's on the other end. I locked both bathroom doors with these little hooks, propped Johnny up on the toilet, and just cradled his head in my hand saying, "It's going to be okay. You're going to be okay." I kept assuring him - I think I was trying to assure myself too - that everything was going to be okay. I can remember looking down at his stomach and his intestines were out of his stomach. I thought if I could just push them back in, that would make him better.

**Scott**

It sounds like - after all that happened - you sort of had a continued sense of denial, like, "If we just do this, it's all going to be okay."

**Hayley**

Yes, I was in complete shock. Yeah. I was trying to minimize everything that happened. My mind was, I think, trying to reason but, at the same time, like, minimizing what was going on so that I can make sense of it, I guess.

**Scott**

So you're trying to hold his intestines in...

**Hayley**

Yes. I was trying to push them back into his stomach. Then, my sister came and knocked at her side of the bathroom. She was in her room. She knocked at the door and she said something to me. I said, "Forrest is still out there." We were whispering through the door. She said, "No, he's gone." So I let her in and I went out. At that time, my dog started following me around the house. I picked up the hammer. I was angry and I was also afraid that Forrest was still around.

I know Robert had been on the phone calling the police. I went out on the front porch and I was looking. I could hear the sirens but there was no sign. There were people walking up the sidewalk. I was like, "Where's the police? Where's the police?" They just looked at me like, "We don't know." They had no clue what just happened in that house. So I went back in and checked the back door to see if I could see Forrest. The back door had been opened while the inside door was standing open. The screen door looked like it had been hit or something - it was cracked. I went back to the house. The police finally arrived. Whenever they came in, they said, "Ma'am, you're gonna have to put the hammer down." So I remember putting the hammer down.

I went over and shook Gary. I was like, "Gary, Gary. Get up." The policeman that was standing beside him said, "Ma'am you can't do anything to help him." I know that Gary was on his side whenever I shook him. He just kind of rolled over to his back and his eyes went up to the back of his head. I remember seeing the puddle of blood that was beside his head as I got up but, again, it wasn't alarming. I mean, at that time, I think I had been detached from all our feelings and all emotions. I was freaking out. I was mad. I was raging, but I hadn't had a really good time processing it.

The police said, "Ma'am, you're gonna have to pick your dog up" because every time I was pacing back and forth and went by one of the police officers, my dog would growl at him and stay right by my side. So I put him off in Holly's room. They told my sister, "You're going to have to calm her down." So she got me and she said, "We need to come over here and sit down for a minute." I was just really upset - cringing almost, if that makes sense.

The police wanted to take us downtown to get statements. So Robert, Holly, and myself were loaded up in the police car. While we were sitting in the police car, they brought Johnny out and loaded him up in the ambulance, but they had to get him stable before they could move him. I don't know what that meant at the time because I don't think he was ever stable. He went to Hillcrest hospital and we went downtown to give police reports. I was the main witness that saw everything. I was involved in everything. I kept on getting Gary's name wrong. I kept on calling him Cary - maybe, that's what they heard because, again, I was so hysterical.

### **Scott**

I can't imagine your state of mind at that time. I mean, you were running on adrenaline. I'm sure that, for a certain amount of time, you had no sleep at all that night. Now, you've got to try to remember everything for a police statement. That's just got to be so stressful.

### **Hayley**

Right. Again, the only way I can describe it is that I detached - my mind quit working. So it just felt like I was just one step behind everything. It came out later, like, from the police station. They took us home and I got a little bit of sleep. My sister woke me up to go and see Johnny in the hospital. When we were sitting in the hospital, we were kind of talking over a little bit of what happened. She had made a comment to me and we were getting a lot of the information of what was going on with Johnny secondhand - like, they would tell his mom, and then she would tell us. By the time we had gotten there, he had already been through surgery. In fact, I think he was still in surgery. My sister had made a comment. She said, "Well, if you hadn't moved him off of the bed, he wouldn't have lost as much blood." So that kind of stuck with me. It was my fault that he was losing blood.

We started comparing what had taken place. When I ran out of the kitchen, I ran past my sister. She was standing right at the doorway. I said, "I didn't see you." I don't remember running past her. She said, "I was standing right there. Then, Forrest came to the doorway and still had the knife in his hand. He was talking to the knife. He said, 'I told you not to mess with me.' And he just turned around and went out the back door." Honestly, I vaguely remember running past Robert. So, I feel like, at that time, my mind just could not catch up with everything that had taken place. Everything was so surreal. It seemed like I was in a haze for the next week just trying to make this a reality.

### **Scott**

Garry died at the scene. Is that right?

**Hayley**  
Correct.

**Scott**  
The other kind of odd aspect of this is that there was still another person in the house, which is the other roommate, Robin. He slept through the whole thing. When did he realize? Did he just walk out his door in a house full of police and a crime scene?

**Hayley**  
Yeah. In fact, we had actually forgotten about Robin. I mean, with everything that had gone on, we didn't realize that he was still up there. He lived off of the dining room up some stairs - like a second-floor room. He had his own bathroom up there, I believe. We forgot that he was up there when the police took us. So, from his account, he came down the stairs and opened the door in a house full of policemen and investigators. I remember watching it on the news. He got so upset because the news report was him being brought out of the house, escorted by police, and put into a police car, and it looked like he was the one that did it. I remember him being upset about that.

**Scott**  
What a way to wake up.

**Hayley**  
Yeah.

**Scott**  
One of the things you found out later was that, at the time of the attack, you were pregnant.

**Hayley**  
Yes. I had started having symptoms but couldn't figure out what was going on. I thought somebody - I believe it was my mom - at that time, said something about stress from this incident. So she took me to her doctor and found out then that I was pregnant. I was probably about 3 months, maybe. So, know that Johnny saved this baby and didn't even know it.

**Scott**  
And you didn't even know it at that time.

**Hayley**  
Yeah, I didn't. I just had a brief relationship with this person - his name is David - and I wasn't really crazy about the guy. It was just a fluke thing. But when I found out I was pregnant, I thought that I had to have this baby. I mean, Johnny saved this baby. He saved me. He saved the baby. I mean, that was my mindset at that time. My mom asked me, like, "What are you going to do?" She gave me very little support and no options. So the only thing that I saw doing was, "Well, I need to tell the dad that he's going to be a dad and go from there." I think, at that time, I was dealing with PTSD. Unfortunately, there wasn't a name for it at that time. No one really consulted or talked to me about seeking help. I think any kind of counseling at that time was for people who could afford the out-of-pocket expense because it wasn't really covered by the insurance. I didn't have insurance. I was dealing with a lot of things that no one would really talk to me about.

My mom asked me, at some point, exactly what had happened and I didn't know if I was really ready to talk about it with anybody, but I gave her a kind of summary of what had taken place. Her comment at that time was, "Well, if you came home with me, this would not have taken place. It wouldn't have happened." Then, she just kind of made this motion with her hand and like, "Oh, well what is done is done." It seemed like people wanted to talk about it less and less. Maybe they saw that it upset me somehow. I just didn't get a lot of support.

**Scott**

At a time when I really needed it.

**Hayley**

Yeah.

**Scott**

I mean, you were dealing with a lot of stuff. Not to mention the fact that Forrest was still out there, right? He hadn't been caught right away and you were the only witness that would be able to testify about what he did.

**Hayley**

Correct. I was so hyper-vigilant. It's not even funny. I was afraid to leave my house. If I did, I would constantly check over my shoulder. Not too long after that, I moved out of my mom's house to move in with David. I told him I was pregnant. He assured me, "Well, we'll just have this baby. We'll take good care of it. We'll raise it together. Everything will just be peachy king." This probably wasn't his words, but just I was just following along with ever I could feel good about at that time. I was like, "Okay, that sounds good. We'll have this baby." But it was a very toxic relationship and I think it just heightened the anxiety that I was experiencing at that time. He was not a very compassionate person.

**Scott**

How long before Forrest was actually found?

**Hayley**

It was early 1988. We got word that he had been in jail in Virginia. The funny thing about this was that it had aired on America's Most Wanted. I guess it was probably around the end of '87 because it was still a manhunt for Forrest. So, in early 1988, we got word that he had been found in Virginia and that they were holding him in jail.

**Scott**

So this was two years later.

**Hayley**

Yeah. Two years later, I was a mom and I was trying to figure out how to be a mom and how to deal with PTSD. Again, I didn't know everything that I was going through at the time. The irritation, the irritability, the anger, the rage, the hypervigilance - everything was a symptom of PTSD. The person that I was with was David. He loved to argue - that's why I say it was a very bad toxic relationship. First of all, I don't think I was in the right mindset to have a baby and to try to raise this child in a healthy environment, along with somebody who fought and argued constantly. Two years after, right before my daughter turned two, they subpoenaed me to start these proceedings. They were going to extradite him back sometime in July. So it was most of '88 that was dealing with this rehashing of this event.

**Scott**

Obviously, he was charged with murder.

**Hayley**

Yes, 2 counts of murder.

**Scott**

And how did he plead?

**Hayley**

Well, he pleaded guilty. In fact, one of the news articles of his defense was, "Nobody's saying that he did not do it." He admitted to killing 2 people, but his defense was, first of all, to say it was due to all the drinking, alcohol, and drugs that were involved. I remember them wanting to shut that down really quickly because the prosecuting attorney had said that he had made a bullseye with both victims accurately. I mean, he hit with the hammer and stabbed with a knife - there was contact both times. They also tried to say that he could contribute to society through his art and his poem writing. So those were the two defenses that he was going on.

**Scott**

Both sound pretty weak.

**Hayley**

Yeah.

**Scott**

Did you find yourself in a courtroom with Forrest being in the same room?

**Hayley**

Yes. I think it was the preliminary hearing when they brought him into the courtroom. Me and my sister were sitting side-by-side holding hands. I gripped her hands so hard whenever I saw him. I noticed that he had lost a lot of weight - like, he was down under 200 pounds. It was shocking to see that. That was one of the things the attorney had told me - we're going to have to remind the jurors of his weight loss and how big he was because this little man could not press me up against the counter like that and then proceed to stab somebody too.

**Scott**

Being on the run and looking over your shoulder for 2 years— I'm sure a lot of that weight loss was just from the stress.

**Hayley**

You do lose weight on the run. That's for sure.

**Scott**

You found out more about him, right?

**Hayley**

During the trial, yes. One of the things that they had pictures of was knives that he had put in the furniture. They had a cushion raised up and they had a picture of a knife that he had planted

in the couch, which Robert was sleeping on. There were other knives that they had taken pictures of, strategically placed around the front room.

**Scott**

And this wasn't even his house...

**Hayley**

Right.

**Scott**

Did he do that without anyone noticing?

**Hayley**

I guess when everybody when me and Gary had left to the store, he started doing this as people were going to bed because Holly and Johnny went to bed shortly after. Gary had left to the store to get beers and Robert was passed out on the couch. Robin was upstairs in his room. He had just taken it upon himself.

**Scott**

He certainly can't deny premeditation when he planted knives all around the place.

**Hayley**

Exactly. That was the other thing. With the drugs and alcohol, they were saying that there was no way that he could plan this out and that it could be premeditated.

**Scott**

And he had been in prison before...

**Hayley**

He had. That was the other thing that we found out during the trial. Well, actually, we found that out in the newspaper clippings that he had been in prison for the rape of a woman. He was supposed to be serving a 20-year sentence, but he got out on good behavior.

**Scott**

He was serving a 20-year sentence but how long was he actually in?

**Hayley**

8 years.

**Scott**

How long have you been out when you met him?

**Hayley**

Two. He was out for two years. So when we were doing the trial, the jury was given 2 options or sentencing. They were given life - which I believe would have given him the possibility of parole - and death. So those were the only 2 sentences the judge gave to the jurors there. There was another sentence, which was life without possible parole. They weren't given that because the crime had happened before it had been voted into legislation. The jurors thought that there is no way we can allow this person out on parole again due to his past record because he would just do it again. So, they had to give him death. I had to give my testimony two times - the

preliminary and the actual hearing - in front of the jury and I could not make eye contact at all with Forrest. I had to sit there with my head down. I can't look at him.

**Scott**

So he was sentenced to death...

**Hayley**

Yes. I thought it was the end. I thought I gave Johnny justice and he is going to serve his consequence, and that would be that. From there, I was just trying to get my life back in order in the best that I could. Then, they contacted us again and said that they had ordered a rehearing/retrial because of the sentence that the judge did not give the jury at that time. That was his first appeal. They found that technicality and contacted me. I went down and talked to them. They said, "We just need your testimony. You're the only one that matters." I just couldn't do it. I had another baby, so I was a mom of 2. I was just trying to get my life back into order and I just didn't think that I can remember everything that was crucial at that time. I had started repressing a lot of memories of it.

**Scott**

So you just declined to testify.

**Hayley**

I declined to testify. He did get removed from the death penalty and they gave him life without possible parole.

**Scott**

So he's still in prison today...

**Hayley**

He's still in prison.

**Scott**

Holly commented that Johnny lost more blood because you moved him and your mom reminded you that if you should have gone home with her that night, none of this would have happened. On top of that, what about survivor's guilt? I mean, these two people that were murdered were just trying to help you. All of that guilt must just have been crushing.

**Hayley**

It played a big part in how I moved forward. I carried a very, very heavy load of guilt. Every time, I thought about the fact that he saved this baby without even knowing it - it seems so irrational due to the fact that I just hated life so much at that time. Yet, they saved my life for some reason and I just didn't understand why. I was able to walk away and they weren't.

**Scott**

This was obviously an extremely traumatic event. Did you ever get counseling that helped you process that?

**Hayley**

I did not. I think, whenever I was going through a divorce, I went to counseling for that - because I felt like a lot of what I was dealing with at that time was because of the divorce - and I just briefly mentioned that this is something that happened to me in my past, and my counselor at

the time never touched base on it. So I developed a lot of anxiety, depression, and poor coping skills, which led to bad decisions and everything down the line. I never got counseling for it.

**Scott**

As we speak now, we're toward the end of 2022. How do you feel you're doing now?

**Hayley**

Well, I know that time isn't always a healer. Well, for me...

(Long pause)

not dealing with something is probably just as bad as going through it almost because, whenever it does resurface, it seems like it resurface with a vengeance. There's a lot that I have thought about in the last couple of weeks that I hadn't really thought about in years. I feel like since I was able to forgive Forrest early on— it has helped me move on from trauma. I never reached out to him. I've never personally sent him any acknowledgement of forgiveness. But in my own heart, I know that I can forgive that - not so much that it releases him from any kind of consequence that he has to deal with because it didn't take away his punishment, but it gave me peace. I can only say that I found that because I know that we are in a very broken world and that people come from circumstances that sometimes they have no control over. One of his defenses was that he was abused by his father. I could relate to that. Of course, I never wanted to go out and kill anybody or hurt anybody, but I think we deal with things differently. He had demons that he was fighting just like me. So, I can say that it was more for me. I could justify forgiveness for him.

**Scott**

When the Fourth of July comes around now, everyone thinks of fireworks and celebration. Is that what you think or does it always take you back to that time?

**Hayley**

Wow. That was one of the things that I felt. Yeah, it always brings that around. And if I didn't think about it, I felt bad for not thinking about it because of Gary and Johnny losing their lives. If I didn't think about them, then I wasn't honoring them. I have found more peace with it lately. I still think about it. There were a couple of 4th of July's that went by, but it wasn't until, like, the next day when I was like, "Oh yeah, this marks the anniversary of— you know." I had to do the math when my daughter turned a certain age. It was always, like, "Well, that was one year marking" because she was born directly after it. So I always remember, like, "She turned 35 this year, so it was 36 years ago." So it still comes up as a memory. It doesn't hold as much weight. I stick close to the house. I don't like to go in large crowds. I feel okay celebrating it with my family here, but it does have some bad memories attached.

**Scott**

It's not like you could ever forget it.

**Hayley**

Right. It might be a little bit easier every year, but I still have so many symptoms that are caused by that. I'm working through this PTSD workbook and it just shows me everything that I was going through that I was dealing with at that time. It wasn't because I was a horrible person. It was because I had experienced this trauma, this stress, and I needed help. Everything was a cry for help.

**Scott**

You have mentioned to me that people - if they wish to - can contact you by email. We'll have your email address in the show notes for this episode. Thanks for sharing your story.

**Hayley**

Thank you, Scott. Thanks again for listening.

**Scott**

Hayley was eventually able to meet Gary's sister, and she told her that Gary died trying to protect her.

If you liked this episode, you might like episode 62. In that one, my guest Terri had just moved in to her new place in New Orleans, and had only been there for a couple of hours. Then, something happened in the street right outside her window.

**Terri**

I was sitting next to a window. I was sitting on a chair next to a window. I pulled the curtain back, looked out the window to the side, and I saw this man being assaulted.

**Scott**

That's episode 62, titled "Terri witnessed a murder".

And if you're someone who enjoys actual 911 calls, the newest Raw Audio episode has just been released. This is Raw Audio 29, and in this one you'll hear about a man who gets attacked by his neighbor, because of political differences –

**911 Operator**

911. What's your emergency?

**Male 1**

My neighbor just shot my dad.

**911 Operator**

Your neighbor shot your dad?

**Male 1**

Yes.

**Scott**

A convenience store clerk calls because a man comes in the store with a gun

**Female 1**

He just asked me to call the cops. He's walking around with a gun.

**911 Operator**

Does he know you're calling 911?

**Female 1**

Yeah, he asked me to call. He walked behind the counter and asked me to call.

**911 Operator**

He asked you to call us?

**Female 1**

Yeah.

**Scott**

And a man calls after an early-morning argument with his wife

**911 Operator**

What's going on there?

**Male 2**

A murder has been committed.

**911 Operator**

A murder has been committed? By who?

**Male 2**

By me, ma'am.

**911 Operator**

By you?

**Scott**

You can get Raw Audio 29 – and all OTHER 28 episodes – by becoming a supporter of the podcast at \$5 a month. So if you want to support the show, you can do that at [WhatWasThatLike.com/support](http://WhatWasThatLike.com/support).

At the end of this month, I'll be in Orlando at the Podfest Multimedia Expo. That is January 26-29, so if you're a podcaster, or thinking about a podcast, and you're planning to be there, let me know so we can connect.

And now, we end this episode like we do every episode – with a Listener Story. If you have a story that's interesting, and you can tell it in around 5 minutes, record it on your phone and email it to me at [Scott@WhatWasThatLike.com](mailto:Scott@WhatWasThatLike.com).

This week's story is from someone who was taken to one of those weird wilderness programs for kids.

Stay safe, and I'll see you in just one week – because I've cooked up a BONUS episode for one week from today. See you then –

---

**(Listener story)**

Hi, my name is Sinead. I'm 33 years old. My name is spelled S-I-N-E-A-D. I know it's weird. When I was 17 years old - in about 2007-2008 - I was sent to a wilderness program for juvenile delinquents in Idaho. I was woken up in the middle of the night at about 3 AM prior to strange people I'd never met before in my life. They had handcuffs. They showed me their IDs and they said, "Hey, you need to come with us." They wouldn't tell me where we were going and I didn't know what to do - I really didn't. I asked them where my parents were and they wouldn't tell me. They're just like, "They know we're here. They let us in." I was like, "Alright, whatever."

So I got in the car with them, went to the airport, and flew to Spokane, Washington. From there, we drove to Bonners Ferry, Idaho. Like I said, I had no idea what was going on this whole time. There, I was stripped-searched. I've never been stripped-searched before. I had never been to jail. I didn't even have a felony. So this was all very new to me. I was given a bunch of things like a backpack, hiking boots, water bottle - a bunch of stuff. From there, I was shown the community area. It kind of looks like a clock - I don't really know how else to explain it. At 6 o'clock, you've got the mess hall. At 1 o'clock, you've got the wood-cutting area. At 4 o'clock - whatever. Anyway, there are all these areas around the circle. We sleep in teepees. Yes, actual teepees. One for the boys. One for the girls.

Few of the responsibilities that we were given - we had to clean the outhouse, which was absolutely fucking disgusting. We also had to saw logs. When I say that, I mean we actually saw logs. The boys would carry over these big ass logs from the forest. We didn't chop them down or anything. They would somehow pull them all over to the wood-cutting station. Me and my partner would saw this big log with a giant saw. Also, we did a bunch of, like, self-improvement exercises, getting-to-know-you games, and all that bullshit. Then, we also had to clean up after ourselves after dinner. We had to take the trash to this dumpster that was about a mile away. Me and another person were on each side of this trash can that was, like, 80 pounds of liquid trash. We have to haul it all the way to this dumpster. I can recall many times feeling like my arm was gonna fall off at any point.

Also, in order to graduate, there were a couple of things that we had to do. The first part was we had to do this thing called "ticket to ride". If you're familiar with AA or Recovery or Fourth Step, basically, we just had to write down all the things we've done wrong in our life and then they would mail it to our parents for them to read every single last horrific detail. As soon as that was completed, we were allowed to go on this hike, which was required in order for us to get out. It's this week-long hike through Montana. Aside from the fact that I absolutely hated it, it was beautiful. It was the most beautiful place I've ever seen. At night, they let us sleep burrito-style at one time. We got to see the entire night sky. There was no light pollution out there, so we saw everything - satellites, the Milky Way. You name it, we saw it.

We were traversing across this very steep hill. I was walking across the steep incline and I lost my footing. I rolled all the way down this damn hill. The only thing that stopped me from rolling any further was my face hitting a tree, and I woke up from that. Well, not woke up - I didn't pass out - but I came to from that with blood running down my face thinking, "I'm dead. This is it. This is the end." Sadly, no, it was not the end. After that, I realized I had sprained my ankle. So, I had to basically finish the rest of the hike with a sprained ankle with crusted-out blood on my head. We came back and we were done, basically.

There was only one more thing we had to do. We had to climb this giant tower structure. I was terrified of heights. I refused to do it. I still did it, but I was like, "No, I'm not gonna do it. Fuck this." The thing was, like, 40 or 50 feet high. I'm terrified. That was done. Our parents were

basically there. They showed up, I think, maybe the next day or something like that. Of course, I saw them and I was really glad to see them but, at the same time, I was just like, "Die! Fuck you for doing this to me!" So we got home.

For about 2 weeks - I think, roughly - I was an angel. You know what I mean? I did anything my parents asked me to do. I cleaned my room. I did the dishes, took the trash - just normal shit - and then I'm done. I didn't want to do this anymore, so I left and I ended up getting involved in drugs really badly. Actually, I did heroin for about two and a half years. I was shooting it and snorting it. I did go to rehab. The very last time I used heroin was May 23, 2010. I have not touched it since. I'm extremely fortunate because I stopped using it when the Krokodil and the Carfentanil stuff was coming out and people were dropping like flies. So, needless to say, I'm really grateful to be alive today.

Today, I am a nurse. I have a child of my own. I've done it. I beat the statistics. I don't mean to sound like I have control because I don't. But at the same time, I don't use heroin on a daily basis anymore. I live a good life today. I was angry at my mother and my parents, but we've learned to get through our issues. So I'm really grateful that I got this opportunity to share my story and I'm really glad you all got to hear it. Thanks for sticking along.