

Episode 144: Jane was stabbed 27 times

Hey, this is Scott, and you're listening to What Was That Like.

But this is not a regular episode of What Was That Like. I've got a really cool BONUS episode for you today. What you're about to hear is the first episode in a new podcast series called Dark Valley.

This series is investigation-oriented, and it's about as True-Crime as you can get. You're gonna learn about America's "unknown serial killer" – or by the name given to him by law enforcement and the media: The Connecticut River Valley Killer. And it's all laid out from the perspective of that murderer's only *surviving* victim, Jane Boroski.

Can you imagine being attacked by a serial killer? And this was not a routine attack. Jane was stabbed 27 times by this man, whom she had never met. Oh, and when it happened, Jane was 7 months pregnant.

In this first episode of the series, Jane talks about what happened. And I also had a conversation with Jane, and asked her a few questions of my own about this whole experience. You'll hear that right after this episode plays, and of course we'll have this week's Listener Story as we do on every episode.

The Dark Valley podcast series is produced by Crawlspace Media, and if you like this first episode, you can go and listen to the next one on Apple, Spotify, or whatever app you're listening on right now.

So I hope you enjoy this first episode of Dark Valley, followed by my conversation with Jane Boroski.

Jennifer

It's August 6th, 1988 and this is the night it all ended. It's getting late and all Jane Boroski wants is a cold drink. Yet the vendors at the Cheshire Fairground had closed for the evening. Jane was only 22 years old but 7 months pregnant and uncomfortable in the sticky heat of late summer. She finds her car parked in a field, a white Pontiac Firebird. Her boyfriend, Dennis, had bought it for her, and Jane loves her car. She thinks it's the best present anyone's ever given her.

As she drives from Keene towards Swanzey in central New Hampshire, Jane turns up the radio. Jane spots the fluorescent glow of Gomarlow's Market. The store is closed, but Jane knows there's a vending machine outside, so she pulls into the parking lot, digs around for some change, and purchases a soda. As she settles back into her Firebird and takes a sip, Jane notices a pair of headlights cut through the night. An older model Jeep Wagoneer pulls into Gomarlow's parking lot and parks right next to Jane on her passenger side. She pays it little mind. Strangely, the man gets out of his truck and, instead of walking toward the vending machine or payphone, crosses behind Jane's car, comes to her window and leans down. "Is the payphone working?" He asks. But before Jane can answer, he opens her car door. He tries to pull her out. Jane struggles fiercely against him and somehow kicks upward as hard as she can. Her windshield shatters. The man leans into the car and presses a knife against her throat. It's blade cool against her skin.

Jane eases herself out of her car. "You beat up my girlfriend!" He says. Bizarrely, Jane is confused. She never beats up anyone's girlfriend and says as much, "Aren't these Massachusetts plates?" He asks. Jane

shakes her head as he walks to the back of her car and looks at the New Hampshire plates. Then, he turns back to his own car. Jane can't believe it. Relief floods through her. But then, she looks at her prized Firebird. Here's the thing you need to know about Jane Boroski. She's a fighter and she's not going to take anyone's bullshit. "Hey, asshole!" She calls to him. What about my windshield? The man stalks back to Jane and threatens her with a knife again.

Miraculously, Jane sees another car coming down the road and sees her chance. She breaks away, running toward the road, screaming wildly for help, but the car doesn't stop, doesn't see her, doesn't hear her, and then Jane is hit like a truck from behind as the man takes her to the ground. He straddles Jane and her pregnant belly and sinks the knife into her body over and over again, and Jane fights not just for her own life, but for the life of her unborn baby. Just as suddenly as it all started, he stops. The man calmly gets up and walks back to his truck. He pulls up to where Jane still lays on the ground from the driver's window. He stares down on the woman he had just stabbed 27 times as the blood begins to pull around her body. It is a long cold stare. There is no expression, no feeling at all for what he had just done. Then he guns the car out of the parking lot, leaving Jane Boroski to die alone clutching her pregnant belly.

Jane

My name is Jane Boroski. I survived and I remember everything.

Jennifer

You are listening to Dark Valley, an investigative series from Crawlspace Media and Glass Box Media. I'm your host, Jennifer Amell. This is episode one. Dark Valley is possible because you listen. Be an advocate for these cases by rating and reviewing Dark Valley. It really does make a difference. Episodes are released weekly, but if you want to binge the first seven episodes, sign up for a subscription show on Apple Podcasts and get exclusive access to bonus content.

I had no idea what to expect from Jane Boroski. I knew that her story of survival was incredible, miraculous. Even her survival made her powerful, somehow stronger than the rest of us, larger than life itself. Jane and I finally meet in a rundown motel in Keene, New Hampshire, just miles from Gomarlow's store where she was almost murdered 34 years ago. It's summer in New England and the room is stuffy.

All right. Tell me your favorite joke.

Jane

My favorite joke is we set up a microphone on an iron board.

Jennifer

We are in a beautiful Days Inn.

Jane

With bedspreads that say, "Welcome sunshine."

Jennifer

It's such a happy place. Okay. The levels are good. Unfortunately, we're going to have to—

Jane is, of course, a survivor, but she's also warm and quick to laugh. She lives modestly and gives freely. She loves her family. She's also a spitfire and sassy as hell. She smokes cigarettes with her arms crossed and blows smoke from the corner of her mouth. But more than anything, Jane is honest. She would say

it took a lot to be so open, that she had to go through many dark years overshadowed by that night in August of 1988, but here she is in this shitty motel room wearing a hot pink T-shirt and smiling so wide that it makes her eyes even bluer.

Jane

You got that smile on your face.

Jennifer

Oh I'm smiling because I'm excited to ask this question.

Jane

Oh, what's that?

Jennifer

I want to know about your childhood.

Jane

Oh, my childhood. Well, my parents divorced when I was very young. We lived in Massachusetts. My dad lived in Hinsdale, New Hampshire, where I live now, and I see my dad probably two or three times a year. We'd come up for school vacations and spend the week with him. My mom moved us around a lot. When I turned 18, I decided to go to Hinsdale to visit my dad and spend more time with my dad. I had some really good friends that lived in Hinsdale because I saw them every summer and just always stayed friends with them. So I stayed with one of my good friends. That summer, I ended up meeting Dennis, so my visit turned into— I still live in Hinsdale 36 years later.

Jennifer

I don't blame you. It's beautiful here.

Jane

Yeah, it is.

Male 1

A playground where steep mountains stand on end beside roads that are ideal for writing, where golf courses are surrounded by a countryside famed in song and story. Recreated—

Jennifer

The truth is, the Connecticut River Valley is beautiful. If it weren't for the tragedies that happened here, I'd say this place is almost idyllic. We're technically in the upper valley, the borderland between New Hampshire and Vermont, which is bisected by the Connecticut River. The river is wide and blue, and there are so many bridges that stretch across to connect the small towns between the states in the summer. The valley is so lush that I have a hard time registering that many shades of green. In fact, this land is the northeast's most productive farmland. Jane's husband, Dennis, comes from a farming family himself, and now they live together on that land that they've worked for generations. Winters, on the other hand, are harsh, but the people here take pride in weathering the cold. It kind of makes them who they are.

Jane

As I look over there I can see Mount Monadnock.

Jennifer

Have you been to the top of that mountain?

Jane

I have twice. It was hard. It's intense. It was hard. It was, like, a 3-hour hike up. The Connecticut Valley pretty much separates Vermont, New Hampshire. It goes right up the border of Vermont, New Hampshire. When you get a fishing license, I think the Connecticut River is the only river you can fish with a Vermont or a New Hampshire license. Even if you're on the Vermont side of the river, I believe you can still fish with a New Hampshire license because the river totally borders New Hampshire and Vermont.

Jennifer

The roads that weave through the valley are full of potholes from harsh winters and, sometimes, unpaved, the further you get from the interstate. Before the 1970s, country life moved at an expected pace, measured out by the growing seasons and the snow seasons, planting rye or tapping the maples to sugar before the construction of interstate highways. The valley was isolated. By 1978, Interstate 91 was completed and the Connecticut River Valley changed forever. The highway made it easier to get to the valley and it, of course, sparked the valley's tourism economy, but also brought new types of people and, with them, new types of crime. In fact, there is a definitive date you can point to when the valley became and pardoned the cheap illusion darker.

Catherine or Cathy was only 26 in 1978. She was an avid birder, meaning someone who enjoys nature by dining a pair of wellingtons and binoculars, and going out to observe and catalog different species of birds. Cathy had long auburn hair with pale skin and a thin face. In the only picture that exists of her on the internet, Cathy is dressed in this super 60s floral print that looks vaguely inspired by Renaissance fashion. She is shoulder to shoulder with what looks to be a man in a brown corduroy jacket, but the rest of him is cut off and she's holding a tall, tapered white candle. The photo has an eerie effect.

Cathy worked for a local publishing company in Wilmot, New Hampshire, which is about 45 minutes east of the Connecticut River. On October 24th, 1978, Cathy ventured out to the Chandler Brook Wetland Preserve in nearby New London. She had gone to photograph birds in the nature preserve. As Cathy was innocently scanning the skies and treetops, someone was also watching her. Cathy never made it home that evening. The next day, her body was discovered only yards from where she had been photographing. She had been stabbed over 20 times with wounds to her upper chest and neck. It was a vicious attack, but sloppy. The assailant did not take any pains to hide or remove the body. It seems Cathy was left where she was killed.

On August 28th, 1979, a 13-year-old girl named Sherry Nastasia disappeared from Springfield. After a witness reported seeing her getting into a dark green vehicle with an unknown man, her skeletal remains were found 3 months later by a trucker near a rest stop in Rockingham. She had likely been stabbed to death.

And then, on August 31st, 1981, 12-year-old Theresa Fenton was abducted while riding her bike in Springfield. Authorities managed to find her in a wooded area along the banks of the Connecticut River, half buried and left to die after being viciously beaten. She later died from her injuries at the Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital in Hanover, New Hampshire.

And then, again, on April 9th, 1983, a little girl named Katy Richards was abducted while walking with her friend Rachel on a road in Springfield. Her body was also found in the woods. She had been sexually assaulted and beaten to death.

They didn't have a word for it yet but, by this point, the police realized that these child murders were connected and were likely perpetrated by the same assailant. The term serial killer was just coming into the public consciousness with the media frenzy over the crimes of Ted Bundy, Larry Eyler, Joseph Christopher, and Richard Ramirez, the Night Stalker. But that's what the valley had - a serial killer.

Authorities need to act quickly if they're going to catch the person who murdered Kathy, Sherry, Theresa, and Katy, and before he kills again. Also new in the evolution of investigatory technique was the field of criminal profiling. In 1986, Douglas and Burgess published in the FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin that the criminal profiling process is defined by the FBI as a technique used to identify the perpetrator of a violent crime by identifying the personality and behavioral characteristics of the offender based upon an analysis of the crime committed. Enter Dr. John Filling, a man I have come to deeply respect. John is a psychologist and was instrumental in developing the profile of the man who committed these child murders in the valley in the 1970s. John is protective of Jane and deeply distrustful of true crime, especially as entertainment. So I've made it my mission to try and earn John's trust.

Digital voice

This meeting is being recorded.

Jennifer

All right, John. I'd love if you would introduce yourself.

John

My name is John Filling.

Jennifer

I'm feeling like it's taken several lifetimes to get to this point where you're here on the Zoom talking to me. What made you decide to go on the record?

John

Well, the main thing is there are many more cases that remain cold cases. In one of our conversations, it was pretty clear to me that your intent was to get some information out that might provoke some responses of information that would contribute to various investigations. First of all, I want to say that, from day one, I have loathed the title of profiler. I don't think that's what I do at all. The FBI essentially took off from that concept and marketed the word. I was starting my work right about the same time they were. That was when I decided that I had to come up with my own approach. A game that I used to play with my office manager— she would be reading some newspaper article of some atrocity and I would tell her, “If they catch this guy, this is what he is going to be like.” But she would write down what I said and kind of tuck it away. Then, if the guy was caught, she'd whip it back out and we'd look at it and, more often than not, I was right on the money.

Then, right about that time, we had a local murder. My office was in Springfield, Vermont. We had a local murder, Theresa Fenton. It was a brutal homicide, but my office manager's reaction was, “How can

these things happen around here?" Which is a common enough reaction. Things like this can't happen here. Well, we've all learned the lesson that they can and they do, and often repeatedly,

Jennifer

Just after the death of Katy Richards in 1983, a Springfield local came forward with a story. He said he was driving to church and saw two girls walking along the road who matched the description of Katy and her friend Rachel. It was the same day he met a new churchgoer, a man by the name of Gary Schaefer. Gary left the service early that day, claiming to be ill. Gary also looked a lot like the man Rachel had described, the one who abducted Katy.

Police quickly caught up to Gary and he said he had gone to Rutland, Vermont with a friend. But upon talking to Gary's mother and the friend, it turned out that Gary's alibi for that day didn't check out. He had lied. Police arrested him on the charge of Katy Richards murder. Gary later confessed to the murder of Katy and, later, he was charged with the murder of Theresa Fenton. He also pled guilty to the kidnapping of another girl, Deana Buxton, who managed to escape the terrifying ordeal with her life.

While no charges were ever filed against Gary Schaefer for the murder of Sherry Nastasia, it is strongly believed by law enforcement that he's responsible for her death as well. Dr. Fillings' earlier profile of the killer was eerily spot on. His crimes were motivated by sexual predation of adolescent girls. Gary Schaefer is serving a 30 years to life sentence, plus 15-20 years for second-degree murder, kidnapping, and sexual assault. As of this recording, Gary Schaefer is still in custody.

But what about Cathy Millican, the 26-year-old who was brutally stabbed to death in the wetland preserve? Schaefer never confessed to her murder. She was too old to be the type of victim Gary sought after. To authorities at the time, it seemed as if Cathy Millican was a tragic murder but, nonetheless, an anomaly unconnected to Gary Schaefer's reign of terror against the Valley's children. So you might be wondering what all this has to do with Jane and her attack in 1988. Here she is.

Jane

I had just gotten out of the hospital. When I was in the hospital, they didn't want me to see the news because I was on the news. They didn't want the newspapers to be brought into my room because they didn't want me to read the newspaper.

Jennifer

So, back in 1988, weeks after her attack, Jane finally gets her hands on a local paper.

Jane

I happened to be reading the newspaper and I saw that it was an article about me. I think the headline was something like, "Stabbing victim released from hospital."

Jennifer

I have to interrupt Jane here for a little sidebar story. One day, Jane and I ventured to the library to do some archival research together, but they didn't take long.

Jane

Oh yeah, this is the one. I think this was the very first article I read. Yep. This was when I was released. That's the one I saw.

Jennifer

Okay. Can you read the title?

Jane

It says, "Stabbing victim is released from Keene Hospital." So I started reading it. It had said something about, maybe, connected to the Connecticut River Valley Serial Killer, and I was like, "Connecticut River Valley Serial Killer?" Then I started reading and they had a brief description of each victim, and I just couldn't believe my eyes. I was like, "Are you kidding me?!" I had a hard time processing this. I was reading the paper. Ellen Fried, she went missing this date and then they found her remains on this date and, each one I read, none of them were survivors. They were all murdered.

Jennifer

Jane's attacker didn't start with her. Jane is thought to be the only survivor of a serial killer who prowled the Connecticut River Valley between 1978 and 1988 and killed at least 8 other women. He is known as the Valley Killer, and up until this point, the women he killed have only been known by their brutal deaths. The Valley killer has never been caught and Jane's attack along with the murders of these 8 women remain unsolved to this day. No, Jane's attacker didn't start with her, but he certainly ended with her since August of 1988. No other murder or attack in this area has been linked to the same male by the mid-80s. Dr. Filling was invited into the investigation by the New Hampshire and Vermont State Police, and his process is a little different than most.

John

I was suspending my own senses of logic, morality, and bringing him into my mind and being him as often as I needed to be.

Jennifer

And then in 1988, when Jane was released from the hospital, the New Hampshire State Police decided to have Dr. Filling clinically hypnotize her in hopes of recovering more details of her attack. There was only one time that I confronted that. It was pretty terrifying, but I was aware of what had happened. I had been filled in on all the details because there was a feeling that Jane's case might be tied to some of the other cases that had been happening in the valley.

When Jane came in, she was nervous, of course. It was something she agreed to do but, at the same time, it was a little scary, I assume. When she came to the office the first time, she was a very sweet person as you all know. She came in, was a little nervous, sat down and we just chatted at first. The main thing I wanted to do was a reassurance kind of thing so that she could feel like it was okay to be where she was. I explained the process to her.

Somewhere along the way there, I noticed the scars on her throat and I remember thinking, "How did this nice young woman get those horrible scars on her throat?" And what hit me was "I did it". The little bit that I had spent thinking about the case involved, bringing the perp into my head— I think, by that time, I'd already been down to the market one time and scared the crap out of somebody who was getting a soda at midnight. But that was what hit me - "I did it". It was like I had to snap out of believing that I had done it. That whole week until I saw her again, I had nightmares, disturbed sleep, and headaches. It was probably the most profound negative reaction that I had in all the years that I was doing this, and it was mainly because I was me and I wanted to help, but I was also the bad guy. And that was one of the liabilities that I learned at that time of bringing this fellow - whoever he happened to

be, whatever case that happened to be - inside me instead of pretending that I was inside his head, and it was a pretty horrible experience.

Jennifer

So here's what we know. The Valley Killers victims are believed to be connected by a few salient characteristics. The murders before Jane escalated in the 1980s and were relegated to the upper Connecticut River Valley along the I-91 corridor with core cases situated near the town of Claremont, New Hampshire on Route 12. Each young woman killed was in a vulnerable situation. Those whose remains were found early enough had been killed by a frenzied and vicious attack. They were stabbed with a knife in a V-shaped pattern in their chests and abdomens, and nearly all suffered a severed jugular vein in their necks. Whether or not there is only one valley killer, two or several valley killers is hotly debated among original and current law enforcement, Dr. Philbin, the original profiler, locals to the area, and the victims' families alike.

Jane

The detectives absolutely believe that whoever attacked me is the one that killed them.

Jennifer

It's hard to know what happens here, but yeah, definitely. Hers had blood spray and it sounded like Jane's stabs that went for the throat.

Male

But they were not forthcoming at all with us and the family. And like I said, the former police chief at the time believed that she had just taken off.

Jennifer

Jane herself is not even wholly convinced that her attack is connected to those women killed in Claremont, a mere 40 miles up the road. She strongly believes that it is, but it's important to say explicitly that it is not confirmed that all these cases were perpetrated by the same individual. In order to make any headway in this investigation, you have to keep an open mind. I began this project with all the gusto and enthusiasm of any true crime podcaster or investigative journalist. I wanted answers. I wanted to know who did it. I wanted justice for Jane and for all of the other women. But in getting to know Jane, I realized that this story is about something much more important than all that. In fact, there was this incredible moment in the library in Claremont when Jane and I were reading through the archives. That became something of a touchstone for me. We were going on hour 3 in the stacks when the librarian came over to check on us.

Librarian

So have you solved the murder here?

Jennifer

Pretty much.

Jane

Not doing it to solve it.

Jennifer

You can probably hear my nervous laughter and I think it's because I was just reminded of why we're doing all this in the first place. It's not necessarily to punish someone or to seek vengeance. It's not even for some vague sense of justice. It's so that these women - these 8 women - are remembered beyond the facts of their horrific deaths. That may sound trite, but it's my earnest conviction and I have Jane to thank for the constant reminders and bringing me back to center. So will we solve a serial killer case? I don't know. Maybe we will, but maybe it's not the most important thing.

I wanted to record why you decided to do this. Like, why now? Why did you say yes to me?

Jane

Because you asked.

Jennifer

Is it just because I asked?

Jane

No, it's because nobody has really told the real story of the Connecticut River Valley murders. Nobody has told my story in a correct way.

Jennifer

Jane, what's your mission with this? I

Jane

I was thinking about that the other night and I was thinking what do I expect to come out of this? I mean, the fact of the matter is maybe we'll find answers to some unanswered questions that I have. We may find more questions and I have a lot of questions. I want to be a voice for those victims. If I could talk to them today, I would tell them how sorry I am. I'm sorry that they passed away so young. I'm sorry that they had to experience such fear and terror before they passed. I'm sorry that monster's face is the last face they had to see before they passed away. And I'm sorry that their families have to endure so much pain with their loss. Sometimes, it's hard for me to think that, "My God, I survived what they also endured." And it's hard sometimes. I ask myself all the time, "Why did I survive and they didn't?" They call it survivor's guilt and it is a very real thing. I don't know who these women were, but I know that they were doing the exact same thing I was doing before they were murdered. They were just living their lives

Jennifer

And what compelled you to want to find out about these other women?

Jane

For myself, personally, I wanted to know what was the connection between them and me - their case and my case. I just felt like I just needed to know more about what happened to them. And I just wanted to know how were they picked up, how were they abducted, when did they go missing, where did they go missing from, and where were they found? For some reason, I just wanted to know what happened to them and how was it connected to what happened to me. I guess I needed to confirm. I needed to confirm exactly the comparison between me and them - their case and my case.

Jennifer

Do you think, to better understand what happened to you?

Jane

I don't know. I have so many questions still. I mean, it's been 33 years and I still have so many questions. I know that there are questions I probably will never get answered. Somebody had asked me one time, "If they ever found out who did this to you, would you want to talk to him?" Absolutely. Absolutely. I would love to sit down and ask him so many questions. Why did you do this to me? Did you follow me? Was I just a victim of opportunity? What happened to you in your life where you would want to go out and kill women? Why? What happened to you in your life? Why you would want to stab, attack and stab a pregnant woman knowing she's pregnant? What did you do after? Did you drive home and eat supper? Did you drive home and take a shower? Because I know you had blood on you. Were you scared that you were going to get caught? Were you watching the news after my attack? And were you aware at that time that I was still alive? Were you thinking about coming back and attacking me? Did you see me after that without me knowing? I mean, I have so many questions. I would love to sit and talk face-to-face with him.

Jennifer

Stories are important. Stories can change minds, culture, policy, and can change lives. So I think what Jane is communicating is that through telling her own story and the stories of the other women, she wants some kind of change to occur, but it's a jumbled, confusing story, a 40-plus-year investigation that is carried on and fits and starts over time. These cases have been shuffled from generation to generation of investigators, from agency to agency. Memories have faded, people have died, and the wilderness has reclaimed these soiled sites along the Connecticut River like it would any other dead thing. These women were strangers in life who, in death, are connected in some kind of perverse galaxy. Jane speaks like a woman possessed, trying to strain her ear beyond the veil and hear these women speaking - Cathy, Betsy, Bernice, Eva, Ellen, Lynda, Heidi, and Barbara.

Jane and I traveled the roads these women were taken from, tripped and crawled through the dense wilds where their bodies were abandoned, tried to see these places through these women's eyes, tried to imagine the fear and the fight. I have spoken to the families and friends of these women and learned that there are more ways to grieve than I ever imagined. Where do we even start? If we did have to choose a beginning, it would be a couple of years before Gary Schaefer was caught.

Cathy Millican's 1978 murder had receded in public consciousness like a fading nightmare. That was until the late summer of 1981 when the body of a missing woman turned up in the woods of Unity, New Hampshire. With hindsight, we know it could not have been Gary Schaeffer. It wasn't his MO. She was, again, too old, too far removed from his hunting grounds. And when authorities finally caught up with Schaefer, he never confessed to the murder of any adult women. Who was this woman? Who had killed her? The Connecticut River Valley now had to reckon with not one, but two serial killers. So let's begin.

Next time on Dark Valley, Jane and I venture into the woods to investigate the Valley killer's first potential victim and one small detail might break these cases wide open. Dark Valley is produced, written and edited by me, Jennifer Amell. It's also made possible by executive producers with Crawlspace Media, Tim Pilleri and Lance Reenstierna. Follow us on social at Dark Valley Show. Production assistants include Amanda Bedard and Maryann Stone White. Show art by Pamela Robinson. Original theme song by Jennifer Pague. Please see the show notes for additional music credits courtesy of Pixabay.

And if you have a tip for any of these cases, please call the New Hampshire State Police Cold Case Unit at 6032712663 or the Vermont State Police Major Crimes Unit at 8022448781. Or you can write to us at Dark Valley show@gmail.com. Until next time.

Scott

Jane, thanks for coming on the show.

Jane

Hi. Thanks for having me.

Scott

We've just heard that first episode of Dark Valley and my listeners have gotten a little glimpse into the horrific attack that you went through. This question kept coming back to my mind. Have you ever thought about how things might have turned out differently if you hadn't called out to him about your broken windshield?

Jane

Oh gosh. In reality, those will haunt me for the rest of my, for my whole life - they have for years. There are very few things that I regret doing during that whole episode, during the whole interaction with him before my attack, and that is probably one of the things that I regret the most. I don't know though. I know he was there for a purpose and I truly believe he was there to take me with him. I'm not sure if he went back to his car to distract me and make me feel like, "Oh, okay, this is all a misunderstanding." I don't know. That's kind of the frustrating part is - you'll never know. I won't ever know. I regret those words a lot but, over the years, I realized everything happens for a reason. Yes, he did come back to me and yes, he did attack me. I can't change that. All I can do is be grateful that I survived. As he was

Scott

As he was repeatedly stabbing you, what thoughts were going through your mind?

Jane

Oh gosh. It was kind of disbelief. Before that, I would've never imagined he was going to do that to me. So when he started stabbing me, I just couldn't believe it. It was almost like an outer-body experience. My whole thought was, "I need to protect my baby." A lot of my stab wounds were defensive wounds on my hands and my legs. But I was in disbelief. I couldn't believe he was doing that to me. I was only 22 and I've never experienced any kind of violence at that level, whether I've heard of it or even experienced it personally. So it was just total disbelief. I couldn't believe he was doing that to me. But then, it was like he wasn't stopping. All I kept thinking about was "Protect my baby" and "When is he going to stop?" It was terrifying. Was

Scott

If something continues like that, it seems obvious that the intention was to kill.

Jane

Oh yeah. Oh yeah. I was stabbed 27 times. That wasn't to just harm me. That was to kill me.

Scott

Absolutely. And he killed eight other women. Why do you think he stopped with you?

Jane

I don't know. There's been a lot of speculation about that. Maybe I scared him and knew that I could identify him. So he was afraid that, maybe, if he attacked another woman or tried to kill another woman, they would survive too. He may have moved away and started doing this somewhere else. He could have been incarcerated or he could have died. He might be dead or he might have died. I don't know. There's a lot of speculation.

Scott

Are there any investigators working on this still as a cold case?

Jane

We're not sure. Every few years, I contact them and they tell me my case is active, but I'm not quite sure how much they're really investigating it. I mean, I have people come knocking on my door periodically over the years and they're like, "Oh, I have information. I know who did this," because everybody out there wants to solve this. So, these people will do their own investigations or they'll see somebody or somebody in their family and they'll all of a sudden feel suspicious of them, and they come knocking on my door with this information and I'm like, "You need to bring it to Concord, New Hampshire up to the cold case unit and give it to the detectives up there because I can't investigate it." And the reaction I get from them is, "I already have, and I'm not getting any response from them. I don't know if they're investigating this." And I don't think they've questioned the person that I think it is. I have hope that they still are investigating these cases and my case, but I question whether they're really investigating all the information that they get over the years.

We're actually doing a march in August up to Concord because I'm not the only one that feels like they may not be doing the job that they're supposed to be doing. There are other families out there that. They question the same thing. Are our loved one's cases being investigated? And so, I'm collaborating with these other families and we're going to do a march to the AG office and see if we can get some answers and some resolution to these problems. I mean, I still don't even know who is really investigating my case. Is it state police? Is it in the AG office? Is it in the cold case unit? So when people come to me, I don't even know where to send them anymore because I really don't know who technically is actively investigating these cases. State police told me AG Office. AG office tells me county down here where I live, which they're like, "Absolutely not. That was a high-profile case. That is up in the AG office."

Scott

It's always easy for one agency to kind of push it off on another agency and nobody wants to take responsibility, but yeah. This podcast and the podcast series are going to be heard by a lot of people. Maybe this is the incentive. They need to maybe take some action on it or at least follow up on some of the leads that people are providing them with anyway.

Jane

Yeah, we're hoping Jen from Dark Valley— she's amazing. She's an amazing investigative reporter and she gets into this and really talks a lot about the lack of investigative work that they're doing in this state.

Scott

So she's going to expose some of this stuff?

Jane

Oh, she's going to expose them. Yeah.

Scott

Good. I'd love to hear that. We're just speculating that he could be dead, he could be in jail, but he could still be alive. Do you ever think about him coming after you again?

Jane

I used to think about that. I don't anymore. To me, it's been 35 years. He's had plenty of opportunities. If I calculate his age correctly, he would be, like, late sixties, early seventies. So I used to be worried about it and wary about it. Now it's like, if he's in his seventies, I can take you. I'm not afraid anymore. I have thought over the years, is he alive? Is he watching me? Does he know where I am? Because when my attack happened, my name was out there. Thankfully, they don't do that to victims anymore because had they not thrown my name out there, him watching the news, he probably would've never known my name or where I lived or anything like that. But in the 80s, when they did rape victims or anything like that, their names were always out there. Now, they don't do that. I used to be afraid and used to think about it a lot. I was very cautious and paranoid. I'd

Scott

I'd say that's justified paranoia when you go through something like that. Yeah. It's obviously a very sad situation for those 8 women who were murdered - obviously for their families - but I'm glad you survived. Thanks for sharing your story with us. So this is the Dark Valley podcast series created by Crawlspace, and you have your own podcast called Invisible Tears. Can you just talk for a minute about that as well?

Jane

I am the host. I also have a co-host, Amanda, and her husband Drew, and we have a podcast called Invisible Tears. I tell my story after my attack. A lot of people think that after something traumatic like this happens, you just get over it and move on, and that doesn't happen. You don't have that power for you to just get over it and move on. It affects your life for a long time in so many dimensions - financially, mentally. We talk a lot about PTSD because, after 20 years, I was diagnosed with PTSD. We talk about everything about what my life was days, months, and years after my attack - a lot of things that people don't realize what victims go through. I got hate letters in the mail. People actually sat down and wrote me hate letters telling me I needed to stop playing the victim card and I needed to take responsibility for my actions and it was just crazy. I talk a lot about my addiction. I became a serious compulsive gambler which, in itself, I made a lot of bad choices that I took full responsibility for. But since I've received my counseling - I did about 7 years of counseling - I turned my life around and now I'm advocating for other victims. So my podcast just talks a lot about the life of a victim after a horrific event like this. We started this podcast so I could hopefully help that one person with PTSD that's gone through something traumatic.

Scott

That's a lot of what we do here as well. A lot of my guests can identify with having PTSD because of traumatic experiences - not the same as yours, but something similar. So, yeah that's a great thing to have out there.

Jane

It's actually been great healing for myself.

Scott

So the series is Dark Valley and your podcast is Invisible Tears. We're going to have contact links for those podcasts, your social media, everything. That'll be in the show notes for this episode so people can go and check all that out. And Jane, thanks again for sharing.

Jane

Thank you very much.

Scott

Like every episode, you can get a full transcription of this one at WhatWasThatLike.com/144.

If listen to the Dark Valley series, I'd love to hear what you think of it. We'll be talking about it of course in the Facebook group, at WhatWasThatLike.com/facebook.

Full episode transcription was created by James Lai.

Now I have a question for you. Why haven't you sent in your Listener Story yet? You know you have one. Everybody has one. Just ask yourself – what's the weirdest thing that's ever happened to you? What's the biggest surprise you ever got? Any question like that will always lead to a story, and then you just need to record it on your phone, maybe 5-10 minutes long, and email it to me. Do it today, we're all waiting to hear it!

This week's Listener Story is about April Fool's Day.

Stay safe, and I'll see you in a week with one of the wildest stories you've ever heard.

(Listener Story)

Hi, Scott. I am a recent listener of your show. I discovered it maybe, like, two months ago. I absolutely love it. I've been bingeing it. I was recently listening to the episode about Adam who fell off the cliff and one of the things that he said was that his incident happened on April 1st. That reminded me of this story when I was really little. I wasn't old enough to remember it, but my dad took lots of videos, so I've seen it.

On April 1st, my mom was on the phone with my dad who was at work and she, all of a sudden, exclaimed, "Oh my God! My mother's car just blew up!" My dad was like, "What honey?! What?!" My mom had already hung up the phone and she was in the process of calling 911 at the time. My grandmother's car was in our driveway about maybe eight feet from our garage and house, so it was pretty close. My dad was just at work in his office just wondering what the hell just happened. He set the phone down, hung it up, looked at his coworker and he said, "My wife just told me that her mother's car blew up in front of her right at our house. It's April Fool's Day. If she calls and tells me 'April Fools', tell her I'm going to kill her when I get home." It was not a prank, but my dad was very well known for making lots of April Fool's Day pranks, so he thought it was.

When he got to the house, he saw that the car was in fact on fire. There were several fire trucks there already. He had just gotten his brand-new camera at the time, so he took it out. He started filming. He filmed the fire department putting out the fire. My grandmother had just gotten a full tank of gas, so there was a lot of fire that had to burn out naturally and everything. He got a lot of footage of it and, eventually, the fire department contacted him and asked for the footage for training. So, April Fool's day. It wasn't a joke.