

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

Hey Prime members, you can listen to Morbid early and add free on Amazon Music down the app today.

What if you were trafficked into the inner circle of a cult and signed a billion-year contract at 13?

What would you do?

This Is Actually Happening is a weekly podcast from Wonderly that features extraordinary true stories of life-changing events told by the people who lived them.

Follow This Is Actually Happening on Amazon Music or wherever you get your podcasts.

Hey Weirdos, I'm Alina.

I'm Ayash, and this is Morbid.

It is Morbid on a Monday.

Monday morning Morbid.

Monday afternoon, because I was about to tell them about the fucking feast that we have laid before us currently.

We just decided to go full-blown, yummy, picky junk food to set off the week.

We were like, you know what?

Let's just go for it.

Let's do it right.

Let's fucking veg without the veg.

I mean, there's some jalapenos on the nachos, so it works out.

Yeah, there you go.

There's some little peppers.

Oh, little peppers.

Little red pepper, green pepper.

Did I pick them off?

Yeah.

Did I eat them?

No.

I ate them, though.

But that's okay.

So at least one of us did.

Look at you just getting your greens in.

That's right.

I'm all about getting the veggies.

Oh, yeah.

After I eat an entire Snickers bar.

You know, you're not you and you're hungry.

That's very true, actually.

That is true.

I get hangry, you get hangry, yeah.

We get hangry.

We as a unit get hangry.

We hangry.

We do.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

We hangry together.

Today.

No, not today.

Today we are fed.

I hope you are fed.

Me too.

I hope that you're enjoying the week so far.

Exactly.

It's Monday, so let's hope it's going okay.

It'll be Monday when you listen to this, I think.

You know what?

This is going to be a great day for you.

Make it a great day or not.

The choice is yours.

The choice is yours.

At a man.

At that guy.

Yep.

So have a good week, though.

Just manifest it.

We weren't being good at that the last couple of weeks, so we're being good at it now.

No, we were being a little bit negative Nancy-ish, but I did cleanse the studio today with some Hallow Santo.

Don't worry, we got it from an ethical place.

It's all good.

And we cleansed the shit out of this bitch.

Exactly, and I think you should too.

To cleanse your space.

You know, because I feel like everybody's, there's a little bit of toxic yuckiness happening around everybody.

But not anymore.

But not here.

Not here.

No, no.

You know, I get to wear my hair like Pamela Anderson, so what could be negative about that?

And I get to dress as someone.

I think you can say it, because at this point it's going to be over, right?

It's going to be over, yeah.

Yeah, because this isn't coming out today.

It'll come out next week, yeah.

Yeah.

So actually like two weeks from now, the rest of the world will hear it.

So you could definitely say it.

That's how far ahead we are, motherfuckers.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

But yeah, so I dress, I dressed up in the future and in the past as Drusilla from Buffy the Vampire Slayer, and I lived my best life.

I am sure of it.

Oh yeah.

And Mikey made Elena's dress and made the necklace that went with it, and it's literally like spot on.

The exact, say I can't wait for you guys to see it slash, I know you guys loved it when you saw it.

Yeah.

And Mikey's going to be there at the show.

John's brother-in-law, Dave is going to be there at the show.

Yeah.

We're all going to be there.

Yeah, Dave's related to us somehow.

Inside joke insider, because just putting it out there, white is a very common last name.

Just so you know.

Just putting it out there.

And they are Ryan and Matt coming to the show.

I think they are from a black veil.

Yeah, from a black veil.

Maybe Joe will be there.

I think Joe's going to be there.

Who else is coming?

There's a lot of, there's a couple people coming.

John's coming.

Drew's coming.

Yeah.

It's, it, this is a virtual show, but like we're, we're packing the, packing the place.

Yeah.

We need like a little audience.

Full of good vibes, full of family and friends.

Yeah.

You know, it's going to be fun slash it was fun.

It was so much fun.

I loved it.

It was so much fun.

It's fun to live in the future and the past all at once.

Yeah.

It's not fun to live in the future if you have anxiety.

That's called future tripping.

That's true.

And I am not for that.

No.

But in a good way, this is going to be fun.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

And you know what?

If you were like, wow, that's a cool costume.

You should go watch Buffy the Vampire Slayer and you should listen to the rewatch your Buffy the Vampire Slayer because it is just good, clean, not clean.

It's not clean at all.

Good fun.

It's good, dirty fun.

It's good, filthy fun over there.

I felt like Tomater.

Tomater.

We've been watching cars a lot lately.

My name's Myter.

Like Tomater.

Without the to.

But you know what?

Let's get into it.

You're like, let's just talk about the case.

Cause we're really, we're veering off.

Yeah, we are.

I don't know.

It's, it's a manic Monday.

It is.

It's all the way over to New York City, the Big Apple, baby.

The Big Apple.

And I feel like we can all agree that like it's a city where it could be pretty hard for one single person to make their mark.

Yeah, absolutely.

Let alone a mark that lasts for decades after you're gone.

Well, shit.

But that's exactly what happened to Roseanne Quinn.

Oh, we're going to talk about today.

She left her mark on the city on the night of January 2nd in 1973.

It was also the night that she was brutally, brutally murdered in her Manhattan apartment.

Oh God.

This is a really sad case.

And I think the biggest bummer about researching and kind of putting this case together for me was the fact that because Roseanne was like a single woman who like went out at night and met a man and brought him back home, it was like, oh, well, she asked for this.

Yeah.

Cause that's what's going to happen.

I hate that.

It was the 70s.

So, you know, yeah.

The 70s.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

But it's like, don't blame the murderer.

Definitely don't do that.

Yeah.

Never do that.

Yeah.

Blame her.

For sure.

So frustrating.

And at the time of her death, Roseanne was young.

She was a single school teacher and she was working at St. Joseph's School for the Deaf.

So she was like an incredible person.

And she was also pursuing at the same time a graduate degree that was going to help advance her in her career.

Good for her.

In the evening, she would go out to like the neighborhood bars by herself, meet up with some friends.

She'd mingle with the single men at the bar.

She was just having a good time.

From time to time, she would take one of them home, sometimes for like a one night stand, which is what single people do sometimes.

I was going to say, which is well within her rights as a human being.

Yeah.

Something plenty of people have experienced in this day and age.

Yeah.

And definitely back then too.

Yeah.

But no.

No.

What's a one night stand bar?

Oh my God.

Yeah.

That's what they were saying.

Oh God.

And that's the thing.

And in earlier decade, Roseanne's death probably would have gone unnoticed by the public.

But because this was the early 1970s, an American culture was kind of going through, not even kind of, we really were going through a huge period of transformation.

It was like Roseanne's lifestyle and murder was a political talking point for liberals, conservatives, and everything in the middle.

Yeah.

Everybody just wanted to talk about it.

And to some people, she was a modern woman who was unashamed of her interest in sex and just fully capable of taking care of herself without a man.

Get it girl.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

In other words, she represented this reckless foolishness of the women's liberation movement.

Oh yeah.

Because that was huge at the time.

Poo.

So those people saw her as a woman who was so caught up in her own empowerment that she failed to see the apparent danger in her deviant lifestyle.

I hate when I get so fucking caught up in my own empowerment.

I love when I get caught up in my deviant lifestyle.

It's such a flaw.

Such a flaw of ours.

I'd like to live a deviant lifestyle.

Like just have people like, she was a deviant.

She was a deviant.

And no one would ever say that about me though.

No.

I'm too...

You're too sweet.

Aww.

You got that sweet face.

I couldn't come up with that adjective.

Do I have a sweet face?

Oh, 100% everyone listening right now agrees.

They all went, yes, you do, Ash.

They all said that.

I need to work on my RBF a little bit.

You don't need to.

Like he's working on his RBF in the corner.

That was good.

That was really good.

No, you have a sweet face too.

You do.

It's very true.

And smiling.

All right.

So the murder of Roseanne Quinn, it was actually, it would go on to inspire two novels and actually a major Hollywood film that you've probably heard of.

But that film kind of easily slipped into the space between fact and fiction.

It's not really full-blown true, but some just, you know, artistic license.

Yes, exactly.

All of the projects focusing on Roseanne definitely obscured the real-life woman at the heart of the story though.

But people still tell this story because it's representative of a centuries-old story that all too often ends in murder, the murder of yet another innocent person at the hands of a man who wanted to punish her for her perceived sins.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

We hate it.

So Roseanne was born on November 17th, 1944 in the Bronx.

In the Bronx, kid.

And her parents were John and Roseanne Quinn.

We have another Lorelai moment.

We have another Lorelai.

I love a Lorelai moment.

Now, the Quinn's were strict Irish Catholics and they passed their beliefs onto their children and their children carried on a lot of the traditions into their adulthood.

John the father, he was an executive with Bell Laboratories and he ended up moving to Mine Hill Township in 1955 to be closer to his company's headquarters, which were in New Jersey.

But so Roseanne's childhood was interrupted in 1957 though because she actually contracted polio.

Whoa.

Mm-hmm.

She had to have surgery and then obviously recover from that surgery.

So that meant she had to spend almost a year of her life on bed rest.

Holy shit.

Polio is no joke.

I've heard.

I've heard.

Yeah.

Her only time outside was when she was going back and forth to doctor's appointments and hospitals.

So like, it was like a year of her life gone.

And the disease left her with a large scar and a slight but noticeable limp that she was really self-conscious of for the rest of her life.

In reality, the effects of the surgery and the scarring weren't very severe, but Roseanne was never able to shake the feeling that her father couldn't stand the disfigurement that she'd gone through.

And she thought that was why he shunned her all throughout her childhood.

Oh, that makes me so sad.

It's really, really sad.

Ugh.

It's like reading that made my heart hurt.

Yeah.

So after graduating from Morris Catholic High School in 1962, Roseanne enrolled in the New York State Teachers College and there she majored in elementary education.

She wanted to be a teacher from the jump.

She was really excited about it.

And college offered her a path to an independent future and also the chance to get out of her parents' house.

They were, again, very strict Catholics and she loved her parents very much, but their

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

strict Catholic home could really feel oppressive.

Yeah.

Like suffocating.

Yeah.

The church doctor indicted everything between what was and wasn't acceptable behavior, especially when it came to sex.

Oh boy.

And that was like not Roseanne didn't want to be told what she couldn't do.

Not a recipe to make somebody listen.

So like a lot of us, she went off to college, she found a group of like-minded people and they had been drawn to a flourishing counterculture and feminism movements that were happening across the country.

Hell yeah.

It was the 70s.

Peace, love, make love.

Free love, man.

Not war.

It was great.

And she found her people.

Yeah.

And so she was an average student at Newark State, but the school actually allowed her to explore her interests and it helped her develop a passion for teaching that would shape her personal and her professional life.

So after graduating in 1966, she moved into a small apartment in a relatively safe section of Manhattan's east side.

She had two roommates who were also young ladies and she found work as a teacher in the Newark, New Jersey public school system.

So she was really just like off to live in her own life, being independent.

Yeah.

She's got a path.

Find in her path.

But she got her first taste of kind of the real scary fucking world one night when she stayed late after school.

She was just staying late to clean up her classroom, literally.

And she was assaulted in her classroom by a student.

He threatened her with a knife and actually tried to rape her.

Wow.

She was able to escape before he could hurt her.

But the attack by somebody so young, a student, and in a place where she felt safe left her very anxious and very paranoid for a period of time.

So she actually ended up leaving that school and she found a new job teaching in the Bronx.

Yeah.

And I don't need to sit in this classroom every day and be reminded of what could potentially happen to me and what almost did happen to me.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

I'm good.

No.

Because I can never feel comfortable again.

No.

I don't.

I couldn't either.

Yeah.

So at the new school, the students and staff absolutely loved her and she loved them right back.

It was a great fit for her.

Oh, good.

She actually would bring in breakfast for the students she taught, quote, because she had so, excuse me, because she said so many had to ride buses to get to school and had to start out too early to eat breakfast.

So she would just bring it for them.

So she would bring them breakfast.

I love that.

Like what a fucking awesome person.

Now, the religious values instilled in her by her parents were among the reasons actually and factors that drove her to be a teacher.

But at the same time, the religion seemed to have a large effect on her relationship with men.

She didn't seem to love or believe that women were meant to be subservient to men.

Love that.

And in the late 70s, that was forward thinking that limited the dating pool for her.

That's so wild.

Isn't that crazy?

That is really wild.

Like she was like, I don't think I sit beneath you.

I think we're equals.

Yeah.

And they were like, oh, get alone of this crazy girl.

Yeah.

They were like swipe.

What is it?

Swipe left?

Is that the bad one?

Yes.

I did actually do it.

I was like, I don't know.

I've only heard swipe right.

It's been a while.

Yeah.

I think you swipe right when you like someone.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

Cool.

So I said it right.

Yeah.

I wasn't like a big Tinder girlie.

No.

No.

I was a bumble girl, but same motion.

Same kind of deal.

Anyways, those days along gone.

Thank goodness.

It was the 70s.

It limited her dated pool and what also complicated matters for her and her personal opinion were the scar and the limp that she had from when she had polio.

It made herself conscious and she felt like she was unattractive because of it.

She was not.

She was beautiful.

It breaks my heart.

So as a result, though, her relationships with men were really hindered by shame and they tended not to last very long or go too deep.

Yeah.

Really sad.

That's sad.

So instead, she liked to spend nights at home.

She liked to read.

She'd go out with her friends.

She really loved the neighborhood bars, WM Tweeds or the Copper Hatch.

And then again, like I said, she'd bring somebody home for back to her apartment for a little fun every now and again.

So by late 1972, things actually seemed to be going really well for her.

She'd found that new job that she loved.

She was teaching at St. Joseph's School for the Deaf now.

She moved into a new apartment and this new apartment was in a newly converted high rise.

It was in an even safer neighborhood on the Upper West Side, and she had also just started classes at Hunter College where she was going after her graduate degree in Deaf education.

Damn.

I think she was a bad bitch.

She had a lot to look forward to when the school went on vacation in the last week of December.

But unfortunately, as 1972 flipped over to 1973 and Christmas break was winding down, Roseanne Quinn would not live to see more than a couple days after the new year.

Oh, man.

On the evening of January 2nd, 1973, she stopped at Tweeds, which was a neighborhood bar.

It was right across the street from her apartment, so close.

And she just wanted to have a drink and just wanted to wind down after a day.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

She's on vacation, whatever.

Yeah.

So she's sitting alone at one of the tables in Tweeds.

She was like in one of the darker corners having a little Johnny Walker, which I was like, hell yeah.

Get it girl.

And I guess the bartender noticed that she looked a little lonely, looked a little depressed.

So we went over to talk to him, to talk to her, excuse me.

And by that time, she was kind of a regular at Tweeds, so the bartender knew her, made his way over and they just chatted for a little bit.

She seemed to be a little cheered up by the conversation and she actually ended up getting up from the table when she realized that a group of her friends were in the bar now.

So she headed over them to chat with them.

And it was there that an acquaintance of hers introduced her to a man who she only met as John.

Uh-oh.

So John was in town.

He was from out of state and he was visiting a friend.

And Roseanne actually noticed him across the bar earlier that evening.

He was young, he was tall and thin, and she didn't think he was too bad looking.

We love it John.

Yeah, we do usually.

Oh.

And when she'd seen him earlier.

That's sad face.

Sad face.

When she saw him earlier, he was with another man.

But now he was actually alone and it seemed like he'd had a couple of drinks that night.

Okay.

But then again, so had she.

So she was like, you know what?

Let me make conversation.

This show is sponsored by BetterHelp.

Getting to know yourself can be a lifelong process, especially because we're always growing and changing and we're always facing new challenges or even just like new steps in our life.

For example, I'm getting married this year.

And something I've learned about myself is that I am a little more stressed out than I used to be between working all the time and you know, planning my wedding and then I've got family stuff going on.

And when I have too much in my plate, I can be a little bit of a snippy sally and that's not so great.

When I'm in therapy, I'm the best version of myself that I can possibly be.

And I recognize like the moments where I'm about to get snippy and I can course correct

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

before I get snippy.

So you, hey you, if you're thinking of starting therapy, give BetterHelp a try.

It's entirely online.

It's designed to be convenient, flexible and suited to your schedule.

And all you have to do is fill out a brief questionnaire to get matched with a licensed therapist and you can switch therapist anytime for no additional charge.

Discover your potential with BetterHelp.

Visit [betterhelp.com slash morbid](https://betterhelp.com/slash/morbid) today to get 10% off your first month.

That's BetterHelp H-E-L-P dot com slash morbid.

Bring on the chocolate, bring on the sour gummy worms, bring on the non sour gummy worms.

Just essentially give me any kind of candy that you have.

I am a loving native's new limited edition candy shop collection.

Like all native products, they are thoughtfully formulated to keep me feeling and smelling deliciously fresh all day long and sometimes even the day after when I forget to reapply my deodorant.

You know native for their aluminum free deodorant.

Native keeps their ingredients less bare naked with ingredients you actually understand like coconut oil.

I know what that is.

Shea butter.

I know that too.

And hey, baking soda.

Native deodorant checks a lot of boxes, 72 hour odor protection like truly derived ingredients and a smooth residue free application.

When you use native, you will smell amazing all day long.

Thanks to their long lasting sense.

You want to smell spicy and woody, sweeter, clean and fresh.

Native has a scent for absolutely everyone.

And I actually got the chance to try some of those new limited edition ones.

The candy shop collection.

I tried the gummy bears one and then I tried the sour berry belt and I felt like I was walking around wanting to like kind of take a gummy bear on my armpit and just chomp it right off.

It was so good.

It was a great time to make the switch from an antiperspirant to native.

When you visit their site, you can discover all their fresh scents and maybe even try out one of their body washes while you're at it.

I actually use their body wash and I freaking love it.

It smells so good.

I am currently using the eucalyptus and mint scent.

It's so fresh.

Right now go to [natedo.com slash morbid pod](https://natedo.com/slash/morbid/pod) or use promo code morbid pod at checkout to get a sweet 20% off your first order.

It's [natedo.com slash morbid pod](https://natedo.com/slash/morbid/pod) or use promo code morbid pod at checkout for 20%

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

off your first order.

They chatted for a while.

He bought the next round of drinks as they kept chatting.

And to those around them, they both looked like any other couple in the bar.

They were sharing a drink, having a conversation, just shooting the shit.

Yeah.

When they went on, the group actually got bored at Tweeds and somebody suggested that they move across the street to another bar called the Copper Hatch.

So Roseanne and John, or Roseanne kind of looked at John like, hey, you want to go?

And they decided to go.

The conversation continued at Hatch.

So did the drinks.

Everybody was getting a little schwaisty.

It's okay.

And in the days that followed, the bartender at the Hatch, Tom Keating, would tell the police that he had seen the man with Roseanne that night, but he had never seen him before and he couldn't quite recall what he looked like once the police came and knocked him.

Which he feels so bad because I'm like, how often do you remember exactly what someone's looks like when you have no reason to know what they look like?

And you see like so many people throughout the night.

I feel so because he must have been like shit.

Oh yeah.

I used to work as a bar back.

And if anybody ever came to me for information about the people at the bar, I would have been fucked.

Yeah.

You'd be like, I don't know.

Like there's so many of them.

Yeah.

And at some point like they blur together.

They blur together.

And the guy with the blue hat was wearing a plaid shirt.

Or maybe that was the other guy who's bald.

It's just what it is.

Yeah.

Honestly.

But he did remember Roseanne, the bartender, because he knew her.

Yeah.

He said he only remembered that she seemed happy while she was talking to this guy.

So as the hours wore on that night, customers kind of slowly started making their way out of the bar.

People were calling it a night.

And they kind of, Roseanne and John noticed the trend.

So they actually decided to go back to her apartment just to continue their conversation

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

and then get to know each other a little bit more.

Yeah, they seemed to like each other.

Yeah.

But by the next morning, Roseanne Quinn would be dead.

And six months later, her killer would actually take his own life while in police custody.

Oh, wow.

I didn't know that.

So what truly happened after they left the Copper Hatch is anyone's guess, really.

As far as anybody can tell, they were seen together casually talking as they went into Roseanne's building at 253 West and 72nd Street.

John would later claim that they reached her apartment and after some light conversation, they engaged in consensual sex.

But then in another version of this story that he told to his court-appointed lawyer, he claimed that he was unable to get an erection and the sex actually never occurred.

So in one story, they did, and it was consensual, and then another, he couldn't make it happen and it didn't happen.

So early reports indicated that Roseanne had been raped by her assailant.

However, the coroner's report indicated that she had had sex within 24 hours of her death, quote, but that there were none of the external and internal signs of force or brutality that would indicate she had objected to sexual intercourse.

That's so tough.

That's the thing.

That's tough.

It's really hard to say whether or not she was raped because there's obviously hallmarks of it.

And an examination because when you, unfortunately, in trigger warning, because we're just going to get into it for a second, if you are fighting someone off and you do not want it to happen, it is going to hurt you in some way.

They're going to have to force it.

That's the whole point.

And there are going to be consequences biologically and physically from that.

But then again, we've seen cases before where there wasn't super clear physical evidence of it.

But it actually happened.

Exactly.

So it's like, well, I think there's a lot of factors, you know, like we, you know, there's there's a lot of variables at stake that we don't know because it's like, did she pass out?

Right.

She could have.

And she wouldn't be fighting back.

And it wouldn't be as, you know, evident.

Exactly.

I would think.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

Exactly.

And she very well could have.

Yeah.

One, they had a lot to drink that night too.

He did get violent with her at some point.

She out.

That's a really good point.

She could have passed out and he could have done what he wanted to do with her.

Absolutely.

So according to John and his story where they did engage in sexual, in consensual sex, excuse me, once they were done, Roseanne, quote, and this is insane, like this didn't happen.

But he said, she quote, went nuts and started pushing me physically to hurry and get dressed and leave, which also, even if you did have sex with her.

And then she said, okay, like I'm all done, like you need to leave now.

That's her house.

You're in her fucking apartment.

Get out.

Yeah.

It doesn't matter if she went nuts.

And if she did go nuts, you would think that you'd be like, okay, like I got to get out of here.

Well, that's the thing.

You just leave and be like, wow, okay.

That was wild.

I will not hang out with her again.

Like that is that.

Right.

Exactly.

So it's like, okay, that doesn't excuse anything.

Yeah.

His account of the events leading up to her murder are very questionable at best.

Sounds it.

In one version, she went nuts for no reason.

But then in another version of the events, which he gave, he said that she mocked his inability to get an erection and that's when everything started.

No matter what, man, if she made fun of your dick, it's not a reason to kill her.

So definitely not.

I don't care to be honest.

I don't care if you couldn't handle that.

Leave.

Exactly.

And don't talk to her again.

Right.

Like that's what adults do.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

Exactly.

So whatever happened in the moments before Roseanne was attacked, something switched and John and he just went into a full blown rage.

I can't imagine what she saw before her.

Oh God.

Roseanne tried to stand up and this was according to him.

He grabbed her by the throat and began choking and hitting her, claiming that he actually even used her own pants that he grabbed from the floor to continue choking her until she lost consciousness.

Ah.

There you have it.

There you have it.

I didn't want to say it too early.

So once she passed out, John said he went to the kitchen and he grabbed a paring knife and he proceeded to stab her 18 times.

Jesus.

18 times.

This is a stranger, by the way.

Oh my God.

Or potentially somebody that he's just had sex with.

It's insane.

At least one of the stab wounds hit her jugular vein, which then released a torrent of blood that not only covered John's chest, arms and pants, but also splashed a shit ton of blood on the walls, the floors, the windowsill, everywhere.

So when he was fairly certain that she was dead, he grabbed a lard.

This is very graphic, by the way.

You might want to skip forward.

He grabbed a candle and he, quote, stuffed it into her vagina until it broke off in his hand.

Oh my God.

So it's like, if that's the case, how could they say that she wasn't raped?

Like, that is rape.

That is rape.

That's rape.

Yep.

Right?

And you're...

So wait, you're telling me that post-mortem examination showed no physical effects of being forced?

Well, that's the thing.

Because it's like something was rammed in there.

Policy reports indicated that she had been raped, but then they switched up their story and said, and this is quote, none of the external or internal signs or force of brutality that would indicate she had objected to sexual intercourse.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

What about the candle inside of her?

Are you kidding me?

Yeah.

And it's like a candle is going to cause damage.

Mm-hmm.

And he said it was a large red candle.

Yeah.

Any foreign object is going to cause damage.

That's a fucking lie.

Like, what the hell is that about?

I'd be questioning the hell out of that autopsy.

I'd be like, oh, you tell me what you're looking for and what you didn't find.

I think that autopsy speaks to the time and speaks to potential judgment on her for inviting a stranger into her home.

You know?

That's wild.

Isn't that crazy?

That there was a foreign object inserted.

I'm like, yeah, it doesn't seem like she was raped.

Probably post-mortem.

Mm-hmm.

And there was no signs of any brutality.

Oh, and it wasn't even probably post-mortem.

It was post-mortem.

She went on.

She didn't know that until he was sure she was dead.

And then he did that.

That guy needs to be locked away and the key thrown away.

But unfortunately, like we know, he ended it himself, which really, really so frustrating.

Yeah.

So it was nearly 3.30 in the morning by that point.

And he knew that he had to leave before the building started coming alive in the early morning hours.

So before leaving, he started traipsing around the apartment, rifling through drawers and cabinets, stealing what little money she had in the apartment.

To make it look like.

I don't even know if it was to make it look like she had been robbed.

I think he literally just wanted to rob her and maybe the cover-up was the second part of the motive.

But I think the first part was that he needed money.

He's just a dick.

Mm-hmm.

Because he's kind of like a transient, like goes around here and there everywhere.

Once he grabbed everything of value, he then went around the apartment a second time, carefully

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

wiping his fingerprints off anything he thought he had touched, anything he remembered touching, and probably a few more things that he was just like, you know what, let me wipe that down just in case.

So it's like you definitely can't claim that like I snapped and I black like that kind of thing.

No.

Like girl, you cleaned that up.

You thought about it.

Yeah.

Exactly.

And so once he wiped everything away, he went into the bathroom and showered.

Wow.

Yep.

And then he was dressing away copious amounts of blood from his body, redressed himself, and then slipped out in the apartment down the street.

There was a very real possibility that he wasn't going to be caught.

When you find out why he was caught, it really depends on one person.

And thank God that person decided to be a good person.

Oh, damn.

Because he could have gotten away with this and probably never would have seen him again.

Never would have seen him again.

Or if we did see him again, he would have killed at least one other person by that point.

You don't end here.

No.

And I wonder if it started here.

Do you begin here?

Yeah.

Like this is pretty insane.

So staff and administrators, of course, found it weird when Roseanne failed to show up for work on January 2nd.

It was the first day back to school after Christmas break.

She had been there for like over two years at that point.

She'd always been on time or called if she needed a sick day.

So the fact that she didn't show up on the first day back was definitely of some concern.

Oh, man.

So they made phone calls to her apartment, no one was answering.

When she failed to show up the following day, a coworker was actually sent to her apartment, explained the situation to the superintendent of the apartment, and then the superintendent let that coworker in.

The apartment was a fucking wreck.

There had been chairs knocked over, drawers were pulled and just thrown around the whole entire place.

Books were strewn about the room, and Roseanne's absolutely brutalized nude body, by the way, she was completely nude, was discovered on the pullout couch.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

She was barely recognizable through all the blood, the bruises, the stab wounds, everything. That's horrific.

And then like I said, the walls, the couch, the floor, the windows, everything was covered in blood splatter.

And this is so fucking weird.

So for him to say he snapped, I don't think it's true at all.

No.

Her killer left, quote, a hollow, sculptured bust of a woman on Roseanne's face.

Like he was obscuring her humanity.

Yeah.

Like don't come at me and say you snapped.

You took the time to go find a bust of a woman and put it over her face like, how fucking bizarre the hell?

Isn't that so weird?

That's so weird.

And this is so sad.

Roseanne had a cat named Missy, and like so everybody walked in and she started weaving through their legs when they came in for like comfort or to be fed, like, you know, whatever.

Just so sad.

That makes me sad.

So the police were called, obviously.

They arrived a short time later and they sent officers floor to floor canvassing for any kind of lead.

But nobody in the building had seen or heard anything suspicious that night.

At a quick glance, Roseanne's death kind of seemed motivated, at least in part by rape and secondarily by robbery.

But the fact that it was so brutal led the investigators to think something more had happened.

Yeah.

Again, I feel like I've said this a lot with all my cases.

It wasn't a typical robbery.

Yeah.

But still, the apartment had clearly been tossed around.

Roseanne's wallet was found on the floor empty.

So they were like, I don't know.

Yeah.

Like is this?

Is this a robbery?

Is it not?

So the discovery prompted a actually surprisingly large investigation for a single murder in Manhattan.

Officers went through the building in search of leads and then a second team of 10 officers fanned out to Sherman Square, which was a large plaza between Broadway and 72nd Street.

It was commonly referred to as Needle Park, which is like really shitty.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

There was a large number of people who were using drugs while in the park, so it got its nickname like that.

But despite Roseanne having moved to the neighborhood for its safety, it really wasn't as safe as she thought it was.

The area had experienced a relative increase in violent crime, which included the murder of a teacher two years earlier.

And that had occurred just around the corner for Roseanne's apartment.

And then there was a drug-related murder that occurred in the building in her same building six months earlier.

Oh, so yeah, that's a little close.

It wasn't that safe.

So although the canvas of both the building and the nearby park turned up no leads, investigators learned that in 1969, the building where Roseanne had lived had actually been redeveloped from a hotel into an apartment building.

And this remodel included a major overhaul to the building's entrance.

Now there were a ton of security protocols in place that provided on-site doormen and prevented a majority of unwelcomed or unapproved visitors.

So this fact provided the important insight that whoever had murdered Roseanne had likely been let into the building by Roseanne herself.

So the investigators scoured the building, scoured the surrounding area.

And while that was going on, a third team of investigators started kind of digging into Roseanne's personal life.

They were interviewing friends, co-workers.

They figured they could find her killer, quote, somewhere amid the numerous yet fragmented activities of an attractive single woman living in the interracial world of the West Side.

Whoa.

It's like, some awful.

70s was wild.

It was a very wild time.

But she was a crazy cat.

She was a crazy lady.

It's like she was just a teacher that lived in New York and went to the bar sometimes.

They make it seem like she was just running rampant on the streets.

So the detectives were so sure that she had welcomed her killer into her life that they very much limited their investigation to only her personal life, which completely disregarded any possibility that her killer was from work or from a world unknown to her entirely.

Yeah.

I understand you look at it and you look at the evidence and you say, okay, it seems like she let her attack her end because the security has gone up.

But it's like you can't limit your scope to that.

You just focus your scope on that.

Exactly.

You have to still do in the side there looking at all possibilities.

It happens so many times in different cases where they go in with a narrative in mind

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

and they just limit the scope.

Well, and that's exactly what happened here.

Because like you were just saying, it's normal.

We have to dig into the person's personal life to figure out what happened.

And when the evidence is pointing that way, of course you're going to shift focus there.

Right.

Standard practice for sure.

Yeah.

But in this case, there was a very judgmental tone to the narrative and it was taking shape of the entire investigation.

Yeah.

Captain John McMahon told the press, quote, the West Side world she belonged to was not the quiet, peaceful one that some families find here.

It was a friendly, relaxed world of young artists, teachers, professionals, swingers, all of them.

All of them.

Every single one.

Did you find a pineapple on the front door?

Yeah.

John.

Every single one of them.

I can't.

Just swinging.

Like you don't know these people.

What a general, like what a blanket to throw over an entire.

All artists, teachers, and young professionals are swingers.

Swingers.

All of them.

I don't think so.

All right.

I don't think so, but.

Just because I'm good at painting means I switch partners.

What?

Yeah.

That doesn't mean any.

I'm young, so I switch partners.

Like what the fuck?

John, get a grip.

John, get a grip.

Get a fucking grip.

I'm just going to say, I take it back.

I like one John.

You give John a burn arm.

There you go.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

That was pretty good.

If I do social muscle.

So anyways, in the early 1970s, like I said earlier, the US was on the verge of major, major social change.

For sure.

The war in Vietnam was losing support among the American public.

It was kind of shining a spotlight on the stark divide between the young people in the country and the older people in the country, conservatives, liberals, everything in the middle, like I said in the beginning.

And at the same time, groups that had been pretty quiet and underground were actually gaining social capital and political power through the collective action like the Black Power, the feminist movements.

So to conservative and older Americans who were pretty bewildered and frustrated with the rapidly shifting social change, Roseanne Quinn represented the irresponsibility of the supposedly sexually liberated modern woman.

Yeah.

They're like, we don't want this shit.

We want things to stay the same.

They're like, look what will happen to you if you're sexually liberated.

Let's go back to the fifties.

You'll be at home.

You'll be a swinger and you need to be subservient to your man.

And then you won't get murdered because no one got murdered in the fifties.

Never.

Nope.

This is new.

Not by their husbands either.

Absolutely not.

Never happened.

Never, ever.

Things like that.

My life can get a little hectic sometimes.

At this point, I'm hosting like 42 different podcasts, but thankfully Daily Harvest does more so that I, Ashkel, can do so much less.

Think stress-free meals delivered to your doorstep, a.k.a. they've got my back, baby.

Daily Harvest delivers harvest bowls, soups, flatbread snacks, smoothies, lattes, and they never, no, never use artificial preservatives or ingredients.

With nourishing and easy to prep options, I literally never have to think twice about what to eat for my next meal, my next snack, my next dessert.

And everything stays fresh in my freezer until I'm ready to enjoy it, which helps me reduce food waste.

And also it makes my freezer look kind of like the Kardashians organize their pantry.

It makes me feel pretty high-end.

Right now, I'm actually fully obsessed with the tomato and zucchini and minestrone soup.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

I just love a minestrone soup.

But no, no, no.

The Daily Harvest version is way, way better.

You guys should definitely try it.

And Daily Harvest is committed to human and planetary health, which means they do their absolute best to ensure transparency and integrity when it comes to their ingredients, and the humans who grow them.

By supporting farmers who invest in practices that increase biodiversity and improve the health of our soil, and by delivering food and recyclable and compostable packaging where possible, Daily Harvest does the work, I eat and enjoy.

It's a win-win.

Let Daily Harvest do more so that you can do less.

Go to [dailyharvest.com slash morbid](https://dailyharvest.com/slash/morbid) to get up to \$40 off your first box.

That's [dailyharvest.com slash morbid](https://dailyharvest.com/slash/morbid) for up to \$40 off your first box, [dailyharvest.com slash morbid](https://dailyharvest.com/slash/morbid).

Warby Parker was founded with a mission to inspire and impact the world with vision, purpose, and style.

Offering eyeglasses, sunglasses, contact lenses, and eye exams, Warby Parker is committed to providing you with exceptional vision care.

Personally, I had an amazing experience with Warby Parker.

You take a little quiz, you get the home try-on kit.

My glasses, I ended up picking the Simon in like a rose gold color, and I love them.

The quality is so good.

The cool thing was I didn't have to just order these and be like, I hope they work.

That home try-on kit is amazing.

You get to pick between five sets of glasses, and you can wear them about town, just see how they feel, see how many people tell you look fabulous, and then you can pick the one you want and you know you're going to love it.

When I ended up taking advantage of this cool thing, they have blue light filtering lenses. They're huge, especially if you sit in front of a screen a lot, and they can reduce negative effects on sleep.

Add a pair and save.

Get 15% off when you purchase two or more pairs of prescription eyeglasses or sunglasses.

And if you prefer shopping in stores, Warby Parker has over 190 retail locations throughout the US.

Warby Parker offers everything you need for happier eyes, eyeglasses, sunglasses, contact lenses, and eye exams.

And you can shop with them online or, like I said, in store too.

Glasses start at \$95, including prescription lenses.

Try Warby Parker's free home try-on program.

Order five pairs of glasses, try at home for free.

There's no obligation to buy.

Ships free and includes a prepaid return shipping label.

Buy five pairs of glasses at home for free at [warbyparker.com slash morbid](https://warbyparker.com/slash/morbid).

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

So McMahon, he had to open his mouth again, and he said, that's the captain.

He said, quote, this city is dangerous.

If you live on the west side like she did, and you're friendly, affable, mixed with all kinds of people and have a lot of nightlife, well, a lot's open to you.

Oh, if you're friendly and mixed with all kinds of people, that's a long-winded way of saying your fault.

Yeah.

Yeah.

His comments explained why detectives were focused exclusively on her personal life and how a large, diverse social circle can present some kind of complicated challenge when you're trying to identify a suspect.

Like, don't be friends.

But also, if you read between the lines a little more, he was just trying to warn women that being sexually liberated was going to have tragic consequences.

Oh, yeah.

You don't even need to read between the lines.

No, you really don't.

He's like, here it is.

I just said it in a long way.

He's just flipping the bird to any young woman who doesn't have a man and doesn't have one.

Yeah.

He's just like I said it.

Yeah.

And artists too.

Yeah.

Artists and teachers.

Oh, yeah.

You don't want that.

Young people.

No way.

I can't imagine.

I always say I wanted to live during the 70s, but this case made me realize I do not.

Makes you think about it.

I mean, being a woman now is pretty tough, but we won't get into that.

Even though there seemed to be a shaming tone and a judgmental spin on the narrative surrounding Roseanne's murder, the deep dive into her personal life actually did prove to be valuable because it produced the first viable lead.

Investigators had discovered a report that Roseanne filed a year before she had been killed.

And this report explained that a man she had taken home one evening had actually slapped her in the face after they got into an argument and she was able to get him out of her apartment luckily and went right down to the police to report this.

According to the investigator, she had only filed the report quote to frighten him off, but the assault resulted in a conviction and the man ended up spending several months

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

in prison.

Oh.

Which led the detectives to wonder if he had held some kind of grudge against Roseanne and killed her in retaliation.

Yeah.

Because consequences for your actions should definitely be held against the person that you did it to.

Yeah.

Always.

For sure.

I mean, I can understand why they thought that.

I can understand that, but that's, it's just so infuriating that it's like, you did something terrible.

Yeah.

You literally physically assaulted someone and you got a consequence for it.

So now you're like, well, now I have to seek revenge on that person that I hurt.

Right.

Because it's not your fault for hurting them.

Yeah.

No, definitely not.

Ridiculous.

Makes sense.

So while detectives were chasing down that kind of, it was pretty flimsy to be honest.

Yeah.

Flimsy revenge killing motive.

A few of the people who had been at tweeds and golden hatch, they started coming forward with descriptions of the man that they had last seen with Roseanne.

Most of the people who had been there that night could only describe this guy in vague detail.

They couldn't even provide enough information to get a composite sketch.

Oh, wow.

But there was another man who'd been seen with Roseanne's companion earlier that night.

Oh, yeah.

Remember, I said she had seen him with a guy earlier, but then when they started talking, that guy wasn't really around anymore.

But the detectives hoped that they would be able to come up with a composite sketch for this guy so that they could track this guy down and start talking to him.

And they actually were able to.

According to the police, the witness they hoped could identify Roseanne's killer was a white man, 28 to 32 years old, six feet tall, weighing 165 pounds with a fair complexion and short cropped, light brown hair with a wet look.

Ew.

He was doing the Kim K. wet look.

Oh, I know.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

That sounds so foul.

In other words, wash your fucking hair.

Yeah, I was going to say greaseball.

In other other words, lay off the gel.

In other other other words, gross.

Ew.

So the NYPD blew, I had to say it, blew, set up a tip line urging anybody with information to call and leave an anonymous message.

They circulated the composite drawing of the potential witness to the media and they insisted to everybody.

They were like, this guy is not a suspect.

He is going to lead us to our suspect.

So please know that.

There you go.

So nearly a week had passed since the discovery of Roseanne's body, but all the police had to work with were some vague descriptions of generic white men in their early thirties.

That helps.

It doesn't.

I don't narrow it down.

The forensic, that'll narrow it down.

Lots of, lots of generic white men in their early thirties really narrowing the focus.

Yeah.

So the forensic team search of the apartment really didn't turn up anything significant and the man who had assaulted her almost a year earlier that I was talking about, he had a quote unquote, lock tight alibi for the night of her murder.

It basically ruled him out as a suspect.

Oh, bummer.

So under the circumstances, the sketch was their best and really their only chance at catching Roseanne's killer and they were about to get a very lucky break.

Oh, damn.

Yes.

On the morning of January 7th, Geary Geist, no, excuse me, Geary Guest, actually, walked down to the newspaper box on the corner, no, no, no different, very different, man.

Very different.

This is Geary Geist.

Hi, Willie Geist.

Hi, Willie.

I think he listens, right?

I don't know.

Or no, did he like your book?

No.

It wasn't him.

It was him.

It was something else.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

It was somebody else, yeah.

Okay.

Anyways.

I was like, wait, who was it?

We're not talking about Willie.

We're talking about Geary.

I was just saying hi to Willie.

You can always say hi to Gary.

Thank you.

I appreciate that.

To Gary.

To Willie.

There's not even a Gary.

I don't know where we are anymore.

Where do we go from here back to the story?

I was just going to say back to the case.

Oh, good job.

So Geary.

Yeah, Geary.

He walked down to the newspaper box.

Yeah, he did.

Which like, that was a thing.

On the corner and he bought the morning edition of the New York Times.

Oh.

I know somebody who's on the New York Times bestselling offer list.

Oh.

I'm sitting right in front of her.

It was me.

It was William.

It's crazy.

I'm going to tattoo it on my arm.

You should.

I'm not going to, but I would.

If I did that, if I did that shit.

If I did that shit.

If I was out there on the New York Times.

Okay.

So this New York Times written in large print, eight columns across the headline read, police issue a sketch of witness they hope will identify a killer of teacher.

And it included a composite drawing of a potential witness that police hoped would lead the back to the teacher's killer.

Okay.

So to Geary, the sketch looked incredibly generic and probably fit the description of thousands of men in Manhattan alone.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

I'd say so.

Regardless of whether anybody could identify the sketch, he knew the drawing was of him.

Geary.

Geary.

What?

It's him.

A few nights earlier on January 7th, you see Geary had gone out drinking on the Upper West Side with his friend, John.

John Wayne Wilson.

Wait, is his name Geary or Geary?

It's Geary.

Like gear.

Okay.

Yeah.

GE.

A-R-Y.

I wasn't saying that with a weird accent.

I thought you were just saying it with a weird accent.

No, it's since really Geary.

All right, Geary.

But Geary, when you keep saying it, it's silly.

Geary.

But he went drinking with his friend, John.

Oh, shit.

John Wayne Wilson.

And around 10, 30 or 11, he said, you know what?

He, personally, Geary, decided he had had enough to drink.

And he suggested to John that they head back to his apartment where John was staying while he was in town.

Oh, so he was even trying to get John out of there.

But John Wilson, however, had just started talking with a young red-haired woman at the bar and he didn't want to leave.

Oh, no.

So he was like, no, Geary, go on without me.

And the next day, John literally told Geary that he had gone home with the woman.

They smoked some weed.

They started to have sex.

But then she began berating and mocking him when he was unable to get an erection.

The cruelty, he said, caused something in him to snap.

And before he knew it, he was on top of her with his hands around her neck, choking the life out of her.

So he made a full-blown confession.

Geary, Geary, what the fuck?

So from the moment he heard the story, Geary wasn't sure what to make of it.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

He had known John Wayne Wilson for years and he felt like John wasn't the type of person who was capable of flying into a rage and murdering somebody.

But at the same time, he could never dismiss the story in its entirety.

It's like, OK, Geary, so John isn't the kind of guy.

He's not the kind of fella that's going to straight up murder someone.

Is he the kind of fella who normally comes home and says, like, oh, what a crazy night.

I killed somebody.

I just brutally raped and murdered someone.

Does he say that often?

And then he's like, just kidding.

A joke.

Funny jokes.

I'm just a silly, goofy guy.

Prank.

Where's Ashton Kutcher?

Bring him out.

Like, I hate when people do that.

They're like, I just couldn't reconcile it.

And it's like, but do they often tell you that they murder people?

It's like, is that happened before?

Yorkshire Ripper.

Yorkshire Ripper, when the guy was sitting in his passenger seat and he came back with the sock full of rocks, it's like, what did you think, sir?

Like, I know it's hard to reconcile that a human being you know could take another person's life.

Totally.

But if they're telling you who they are, believe them.

Yeah.

I believe that in every sense of the word.

When people show you or tell you who they are, believe those motherfuckers.

Because they're showing you for a god damn reason.

He told you what he did.

You should have gone to the police and let them sort it out.

Totally.

But so he was like, I don't think he's the kind of guy that could do that.

But then he started seeing the reports about the teachers, the teacher who had been murdered.

And he said that he had become, quote, frightened all along about how this whole thing would turn out.

So he said at first he tried to ignore the article and the composite drawing.

But as the day went on and on, he just couldn't shake the urgency of the request for information and the seriousness of the situation, which like, I'm glad he finally came to the conclusion to do the right thing.

I don't think he should have struggled with it that hard, but I've never gone through it.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

But again, it's like he's either the kind of person who would do that, or he's the kind of person who will pretend that he did that.
Either way, you should go tell someone about it.
Yeah, definitely.
Because that's a dangerous person.
Well, and I think what really started to shift his decision making was that he was wondering if he didn't go forward to the police.
Could he be held as an implicate in murder?
So that afternoon, he ended up calling his lawyer and he asked his lawyer to come over to his apartment.
They sat in the living room and Gary explained the entire situation.
And his lawyer explained that he could indeed be indicted for obstruction of justice, destruction of evidence, being an accessory after the fact, being an accomplice to the crime itself.
Like he was, he was facing a lot of shit here.
You got a big storm coming.
Honey, you got a big storm coming.
Gary.
That's what the lawyer said.
He said, as far as I see it, you have three options.
You can go on the run, you could do nothing, or you could go to the police and tell them what you know.
Yeah.
And he said, as your lawyer, I suggest the latter.
Yeah.
I'm going to go ahead and tell you to do that last one.
Yes.
So his lawyer placed it, Gary agreed.
He was like, I think that's what I need to do.
Yeah.
And he, the lawyer called the district attorney's office and explained the situation, careful not to mention any names.
His client had information about the killer, he said, and he would only share that information in exchange for immunity from prosecution.
So he played a bit of a game here.
That's a smart lawyer.
But honestly, I would play the same fucking game.
Hopefully.
Hopefully I never find myself in this situation.
Yeah, no.
I don't think I would, because I don't really have that many friends.
So there you go.
It's perfect.
Especially not ones that pretend to kill people or actually kill people.
I've never had a friend that pretended to kill someone or actually killed anyone.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

I've never had a confession confessed to me that was like just kidding.

I just like to do that sometimes.

No.

And if I did, that person wouldn't remain in my life much longer.

It would be clip, clip, has to render my break.

Clip, clip.

Ah, to render.

To render.

Peace and love to render.

Peace and love to Dorinda.

So a few days later, he sat down with the detectives, Gary, and Gary, it's hard to say.

And he told them everything he knew about the murder.

He said exactly what he knew.

And the level of detail included his description from the early part of the evening at Tweeds to the extent of Rosanne's wounds, and that convinced the investigators he was telling the truth.

He knew literally everything.

Oh yeah.

And since the murder, John Wayne Wilson had returned home to Indiana, huh, so Manhattan detectives had to get a warrant for his arrest, and they booked the first flight they could to Springfield.

Hell yeah.

Where they...

Extradite that motherfucker.

Extradite that man.

They would be actually joined there a short time later by nine other NYPD officers.

Oh damn.

And in the meantime, Captain McMahon, ass hat McGee, called the authorities in Springfield and brought them up to speed on what was happening.

To go back at home with two detectives, Gary actually received a call from Wilson and was able to confirm for the investigators that Wilson would be at his brother's house in Indiana and he knew where that was.

So it's a setup.

It's a walk-off.

It's a walk-off.

Now, in the year that followed, Gary would actually struggle with a lot of guilt and a lot of shame.

He felt like he had betrayed his friend, which I don't think he betrayed his friend in any stretch of the imagination, but I can understand why it might feel that way.

They had been best friends for a long time and now he did the right thing, but he feels like he made a mistake.

Sure.

He didn't, but I can understand why it would feel that way.

I can understand that it sucks to be in that situation.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

Yeah.

But like, you shouldn't feel guilty.

He literally brutally murdered a woman.

Exactly.

But his guilt got so bad that he was having nightmares.

He went to a psychiatrist on multiple occasions and on New Year's Eve in 1973, he actually flew to San Francisco.

He got a large amount of sleeping pills and he took them in a park that night, fully intent on ending his own life.

Oh, wow.

It wasn't successful.

He lived, but it marked a full-blown transformation in him.

He decided to move forward in life, confident that he had done the right thing from that day forward.

Good.

Isn't that amazing?

I mean, I hate that it took that.

Me too.

Like, geez, I hate that it came to that, but like, I'm glad he could finally accept that like, you did nothing wrong, like you did the right thing.

Like, you should have told, you should have told earlier to be quite honest, like.

But I'm, well, and I think maybe that could have been part of it too.

I'm sure that mixed along with it, but it's like, you did the right thing, you told.

You did.

You did.

And I'm happy that he was able to kind of get like a second chance, you know?

Yeah, I'm glad that he was able to move forward and be like, I did the right thing.

With a clear conscience.

Yes.

Because don't let fucking this piece of shit, John, have your, have guilt.

Hell no.

Like, no, he's not worth it.

So on January 9th, Detective John Lafferty and Patrick Toomey arrived in, uh, Indianapolis and they arrived at the home of John Wayne Wilson's brother a little after nine in the morning and they were able to arrest John without incident.

Good.

The investigators spent almost all day talking with him and they learned about the 23 year old's history.

He was only 23.

23.

Jesus.

Yep.

He had inconsistent employment.

He lived everywhere and he had a notable criminal history.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

In May of 1969, he was arrested in Florida for disorderly conduct.

He was convicted and served 10 days in jail.

On June 1st, 1969, so like, pretty much right when he was arrested or right when he got out, he was arrested and charged for larceny in Kansas City and he served two years in jail.

Whoa.

And then in the spring of 1971, he was actually arrested three separate times in the Miami and Fort Lauderdale areas for petty theft of alcohol, small amounts of cash that he had stolen from stores and houses, and he was sentenced to a longer prison sentence. But he actually escaped from jail on July 6th, which was six months before he murdered Roseanne Quinn.

Oh, wow.

So he was on the run when he murdered her.

Wow.

Like, should have been in jail.

That's even worse.

How fucked is that?

A few days before Christmas, Janelle Matthews disappeared from her home.

There were no signs of a struggle, no eyewitnesses, no DNA recovered.

But what if the answer had always been there?

What if a true crime fanatic who'd been talking about the case was more than just an obsessive fan?

The groundbreaking true crime podcast Suspect is back with a new story that attempts to separate fact from fiction and one man's true crime obsession from a motive for murder.

He says, don't fuck with me, Officer Edgerton.

I've buried more people than you'll know.

He's providing information that hadn't even been released to the news yet.

He says it's a good liar that he can convince the juror that he wasn't involved.

Follow Suspect wherever you get your podcasts.

Hey, Prime members, you can binge the entire series ad free on Amazon Music.

Download the Amazon Music app today.

So Lafferty and Toomey, those detectives, they returned to New York with John Wilson the following day a little after 3.30.

And he was taken to the 20th Precinct where he was formally booked for the first degree murder of Rose Anquin.

Once he was booked and photographed, he was taken before a judge in criminal court.

He was indicted and he was ordered held without bail, pending a psychiatric evaluation.

So his arrest generated a ton of curiosity among the press and the public.

For one thing, it was significant for somebody so young that his criminal history consisted mostly of petty theft and nonviolent crime.

To suddenly escalate like this?

Exactly.

Like that's wild.

Family and friends described him as an easygoing and didn't care kind of guy, but they said he was never violent.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

Like this was insane to them.

But that being said, his father told reporters that on two occasions, he and his wife, like so his parents, had actually become concerned enough about his mental health that they took him to the Madison State Hospital for an evaluation two times.

Oh, okay.

But both times he said, quote, nothing was found wrong with the boy.

Oh boy.

Isn't that interesting?

Yeah.

So emotional difficulties and poor interpersonal skills continued for Wilson into his late teens and early 20s.

In 1969, he actually got married to a woman named Kathy and he had two children with her before divorcing.

Oh, this man's a father.

Yep, in 1971.

But he abandoned his children.

Of course he did.

He left them and he married again in March of 1972.

This time to a 17-year-old named Candy, who he was still married to at the time of his arrest.

Oh.

Yeah.

So the absence of a history of violence or aggression in his past actually only served to deepen the mystery and baffle the press in public as to what the fuck could have happened to transform him, this seemingly mild-mannered man, into a rage-fueled killer.

Like they were like, what the fuck?

Like that can just happen.

Now investigators, and this is nuts, they actually developed kind of a fondness for him.

Like they, it reminded me of the case that you just covered, the clutter family murders.

Yeah.

They felt for him.

One detective later said, I guess we all felt a bit protective of him.

I told him he could put his coat up over his head and hide from the photographer.

Guys, we gotta stop doing that.

Like we gotta stop doing that.

He murdered a woman.

And that, I think it speaks so much to the time that they were in.

It was like, yeah, I know you murdered that girl, but it really sucks that you're going on trial for it.

Why don't you hide your face?

But we'll plaster her face in every newspaper and talk about what a crazy little woman of the night she was.

And how she invited this and how it wasn't this poor guy's fault, it was her fault.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

Exactly.

And letting him spin that story about how she sat there and like berated him about not being able to get it up.

Like I don't think she did, dude.

I don't think she did.

And even if she did.

And even if she made like some kind of joke, I'm sure she wasn't berating you about it.

And also get up and walk the fuck out.

No, you don't get to kill someone because they make fun of you.

And so yeah, so he's like the detective told him he could hide.

And Wilson insisted he was going to take it like a man.

He said.

Oh yeah.

Like this isn't some kind of test for your manliness.

You're here because you killed a woman.

Take it like a man.

But still, even the district attorney Frank Hogan, who never, who, excuse me, who made a point of never developing any kind of opinion of the individuals that he was prosecuting, he said Wilson was pleasant enough and very cooperative.

But at the same time, noted that he had no feelings, no remorse.

He didn't care.

He didn't care about anything.

So it's very easy to be pleasant and cooperative when you're a fucking robot like this.

Exactly.

Yeah, of course he was.

He's remorseless and emotionless.

Exactly.

Easy.

It's just bananas.

I love how it's like highlighting his good points.

It's just crazy that they're like, hide your face, sweet boy.

Yeah, we don't want people to be mean to you.

You don't deserve this.

You're on trial for murder.

Of course you do ass hack.

You killed the woman.

So stupid.

So around 9.30 the night that he was extradited, all the interviews were done and administrative requirements were all squared away.

He was taken from the 20th precinct to the Manhattan House of Detention for Men, which is otherwise referred to as the toms.

And he would sit there while he awaited his trial date.

So about one month after his arrest in Indiana, his lawyers, John Lanuzzi and Aaron Hafe, I believe, filed a motion with the Supreme Court Justice, who at the time was Gerald

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

P. Culkin.

And they indicated that they were intending to rely on section 30.05 of the New York Penal Code, which quote, provides that evidence of a mental disease or defect excludes a person from criminal responsibility.

In other words, they were going for the insubmitted defense.

So the pre-trial hearing was set for February 15th, and their client had actually recently undergone a psychiatric evaluation.

And among other things, the psychiatrist actually diagnosed Wilson as schizophrenic, homicidal, and suicidal.

Oh, wow.

And their argument would also be supported by the fact that Wilson was being held on the 10th floor of the toms, which was designated at the time as the psychiatric ward.

So he definitely wasn't mentally well.

His days were filled with a whole lot of nothing.

He just kind of sat in his cell and didn't really talk to anybody, he kept to himself.

Sometimes he would get a call from his mom or a letter from candy, or sometimes old cellmates would write to him.

But he insisted that he didn't want anybody to visit him.

He wouldn't take any visitors.

Wow.

So on Friday, May 4th, he was released after a two-week stay at Bellevue, a hospital where he was being evaluated prior to his mental competency hearing.

But rather than return him to his individual cell on the 10th floor in the psychiatric ward, administrators, they would later claim that the 10th floor was overcrowded.

So the guards returned him to a shared cell on the 4th floor, which housed the general population.

Wilson was given a tray of lunch, which he did not eat.

And then he was sat down on one of the bunk beds, and he wrote a short letter to his wife, Candy.

He said, this is only to let you know that I'm back at the toms.

I don't know why I'm here, but I am.

Love, John Wayne.

The next day, a little afternoon, he actually ended up getting in an argument with the guard on duty when he asked for fresh sheets.

The guard yelled at him for several minutes and then went to get the sheets and threw them at him, I guess, through an opening in the cell.

And the guard walked away.

Wilson started preparing the sheets in a way where he could use them to end his life.

All around him, the other inmates who could see what was going on in the shared cell yelled, cut up, cut up, cut up, which is yelling at the guards about what's happening.

And the two guards on duty, they could hear the inmates yelling, but they took their sweet time to reach the cell.

I think they knew what was happening.

I think that happens a lot.

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

Wilson was actually still alive when they got to the cell and they cut him down.
He had hanged himself.
But by the time he was able to be cut down and they laid him out on the floor, he was dead.
Wow.
So he had successfully ended his life.
And in a room full of people.
In a room full of people.
Like, that's very fucking traumatic for the people that were there.
And back then, they weren't going to have any kind of help after that.
No, of course not.
His suicide actually was the sixth to occur in city jails that year.
So it sparked an administrative firestorm from the district attorney's office and from his own lawyers.
They all accused the New York board of corrections and its chairman, who at the time was William Vander Hubel.
They accused him of ignoring the psychiatric and law enforcement reports that warned of his suicide out, his suicidality.
And they said it allowed Wilson to languish in his cell unattended and untreated, even though it was known that he had mental issues.
So the board of corrections, though, shot back in the form of a 47 page report accusing everyone from the district attorney and even Wilson's own lawyers to admitting and his admitting physicians and psychiatrists and the tombs themselves.
They said they failed to properly identify the risk to the appropriate parties.
Whoa.
They didn't.
They did not.
He was at the 10th floor of the tombs for the recent.
Yeah, that's the psychiatric boy.
Exactly.
But him ending his own life brought the Roseanne Quinn murder case to a very unsatisfying conclusion.
And it simultaneously robbed the Quinn family of justice.
Yeah, absolutely.
His death and the administrative fallout kept the story in papers for a few more weeks.
But eventually the story just faded out of the spotlight and it would stay out of the spotlight for a few years, but then it got revived in an unexpected way.
In the mid 1970s, a woman named Nora Efron, a columnist for Esquire magazine, she was asked by the editors to curate an upcoming edition that was dedicated exclusively to women's issues.
So among those asked to contribute to the issue were a novelist or excuse me, was a novelist Judith Rosner, and she wanted to contribute an article about Roseanne's murder a few years earlier, actually, and she was given the green light to do so.
But when the time came to publish the issue, the editors at Esquire thought that the article

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

was going to result in some kind of legal action being taken against them by the family. So they refused to put it in there, they omitted it completely. But Rosner, she was really, she really wanted to get the story out there. So she decided, yes, persistent. So she decided to actually develop her article into a fictional account of the story, which she later published as the novel Looking for Mr. Goodbar. Oh, that's what this is based on. I've never seen it. Have you? No, I haven't seen it. Have you? None of us have seen it. But like the investigation and press surrounding the case that inspired for it, Looking for Mr. Goodbar presented the story where it's heavily implied that the main character's murder is her own fault. Awesome. Yes. That's what we're looking for. It's a heavily liberated lifestyle, and it could have been avoided if she had used better judgment. Cool. That message was carried into the 1977 film adaptation, which actually stars Diane Keaton and Richard Gere. I was just looking. I'm like, damn. Yeah. In his positive review of the film, Roger Ebert points out that the main character, Terry Dunn, is, quote, looking for a combination of good times, good sex, and a father figure. But she isn't looking for danger, mistreatment, or death. At the same time, though, he was quick to point out that Dunn is at least partially responsible for her own death, saying, promiscuous young women who frequent pickup bars and go home with strangers are likely to get into trouble. Isn't that just so funny that it's like, it's their fault, but it's like, we're definitely not going to look at or try to remedy the man problem there. Like, we're definitely not going to touch that. We're going to say, women who do this are in danger. Yeah. Exactly. It's like, okay, so can we take a little side step over and start talking about the root of that issue, which is the man that is going, it's like, you're walking me into my next sentence. Okay. Because it shocks me that we're not like, maybe we need to start thinking about how we're raising these guys and what's going on and how we're allowing them to add, it's wild

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

to me.

Yeah.

No, it's insane.

We've had investigators before, Rosner, Ebert, and everybody else with similar understandings of her story completely overlooked the fact that Roseanne's murder could have been avoided had John Wayne Wilson not murdered her.

Exactly.

That's all it comes down to.

That's what kills me.

We don't look at that.

We look at what she did to get murdered and it's like, no, no, no, can we just talk about how he probably shouldn't be a murderer?

Yeah.

That would be the thing that would fix all of this?

Exactly.

Because it's easy to dismiss this and I actually am guilty of doing it throughout this episode. We're dismissing the victim blaming and the slut shaming comments as old fashioned and it's such a product of its time.

It's not, though.

But that conversation is still happening to this day.

Oh, yeah.

To this day, we're still victim.

Absolutely.

We are not.

But people still are.

Yeah.

People, it's wild.

Yeah.

It happens everywhere.

It's ridiculous.

It's a persistent narrative.

It's really just so sad.

In 1973, just to like end this, Roseanne Quinn's life held such promise.

She had such a bright future ahead of her.

She found a way into a career that she loved working with deaf children.

She found her way into a great group of friends who appreciated her, accepted her for who she was, and she discovered that she could have an active sex life without the traditional patriarchal structure and she was willing to do so.

But back then and even fucking today, people are still judging her and all of us good time gals like her.

All of us good time gals.

All of us good time gals.

It's a bunch of crap.

It's a bunch of-

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

Is what it is.

Malaki.

It's a bunch of bullshit.

And it really bums me out because she seemed like such a cool girl.

And just to have this be like the mark that she left, I don't think that's what she would have wanted.

No.

And it sucks.

It's just that this is all that gets talked about and that that movie was made that kind of further pushed that narrative.

I know and I love Diane Keaton.

She's my girl.

I do too.

But now I want to watch it just to kind of like see it for myself.

I hate it.

I do too.

It's like really sad.

And it really, it like breaks my heart that her family was never able.

Yeah.

First of all, never able to get any kind of justice and then that movie ended up kind of furthering the narrative that it was her fault.

Exactly.

And that sucks.

Exactly.

It's a really sad case overall.

That's a really sad case.

Yeah.

I feel like she was just brutalized in life and in death.

Yeah.

Truly.

It's like they didn't let her rest.

So stop judging people.

It's the moral of the story.

Yeah.

Don't judge people.

Let good time galves be good time galves and maybe just don't be a murderer.

Yeah.

That's the moral of the story.

That's the moral of the story.

Don't fucking murder people.

That's a great way to avoid this stuff is don't be a murderer because that's the thing that people are missing.

Like you should be able to go out and have a good time and do what you want to do as a liberated free woman and go home and be able to share the story with your girlfriends

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

the next day.

Exactly.

That's the thing.

It's like it doesn't have to do with you being who you are.

It has to do with, you shouldn't have to worry about coming in contact with a murderer.

No.

Like that's not, it shouldn't be like well I can't do what I want to do because that man could murder me.

But sadly it's so true for all of us.

It is.

Have you seen my keys?

Exactly.

I have like a pokey thingy that could stab somebody in the eye.

Her keys are wild.

I have a personal alarm on my keys.

I have mace on my keys and I'm always walking around the target parking lot holding that dagger like fuck with me.

But yeah, at one point I drove Ash's car somewhere.

Oh my God.

And I had to take the key off the big giant chain because I was like I literally can't bring this inside because it's so loud and heavy.

This kicker is so many different jangly large things.

You would have been so protected girl.

I was like this is very loud.

It is pretty loud.

It is coming.

But it's protective.

It is.

I was driving and I accidentally set off the personal alarm and I couldn't figure out how to turn it off.

I thought I was going to fly through a window.

I was like what just happened?

I thought the same.

Yeah.

But necessary because unfortunately people be murdering people.

People are murderers unfortunately.

Unfortunately we are the people that are most often like women are the victims of that crime.

Yeah.

So R.I.P.

Roseanne.

I know.

And guys we hope you keep listening and we hope you keep it weird but not so weird that you blame a girl for her own death when really it was the motherfuckers fault you killed

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 438: The Tragic Murder of Roseann Quinn

her.

Yeah don't do that.

Love you bye.

Bye.

Hey, Prime members, you can listen to Morbid early and ad-free on Amazon Music, download the Amazon Music app today, or you can listen ad-free with Wondery Plus and Apple Podcasts. Before you go, tell us about yourself by completing a short survey at [Wondery.com](https://wondery.com).