

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 493: The Attempted Murder of Olga Rocco

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Right now, I'm listening to the seven husbands of Evelyn Hugo.
The woman who does the performance of the voice is so good.
It makes you feel like you're even more inside of the story.
It's so much fun.
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Hey, weirdos, I'm Ash and I'm Elena and this is Morbid.
Oh my God, we're in a silly goofy mood today.
We are.
It's Monday.
It's Monday.
It's Monday.
Wait, what day is it, though?
It's Monday.
Monday.
Yeah, and usually Mondays, we're feeling a little like, whirr, whirr, because it's the start of the week, you know, that always sucks for everybody.
Yeah.
But today, I'm feeling goofy.
You are.
You are.
You are.
Don't make me laugh because I'm sick and I will start, like, I will start, like, mucusing everywhere.
I won't do that.
I'll be very serious.
This is a wild case, though, that I'm going to tell you today.
Oh.
It's.
What else is new?
It's wild.
It's got twisties.
It's got turnies.
It's got not Sarah Turnies, but we love Sarah Turnies.
We love Sarah Turnies.
You should listen to her podcast.
You should listen to her podcast.
Voices for Justice and also Disappeared is her new podcast.
You should go listen to it.
Disappeared is a really good one.
Yeah.

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I mean, they're both fantastic.
Shout out to Sarah Turnies.
We love her.
Sarah.
But there is some twisties and turnies in this one.
It's like a lifetime movie.
It's a whirlwind.
It is like this.
This is a movie.
Like this entire thing is a movie.
It's from the 40s.
Oh, baby.
Yeah.
So swanky.
Exactly.
Where?
You know me.
I do.
I know me.
You know me my whole life.
I'm like, anything past 1950.
I don't know her.
I don't know her.
This is a good one.
See, I'm 1970 and.
And above.
And above, mostly.
But actually.
We cover all things.
I have a couple old ones coming up on the roster.
You know, it's spooky season.
It feels like old timey makes sense.
Correct.
But yeah, this is from the 40s.
It's very 40s.
It's got some really inept detectives in it.
Yeah, that's very 40s.
Which is always fun and very 40s of us.
And it's in New York.
Oh, oh my God.
I'm working on a New York one right now too.
Look at that.
East coast.
What's up?

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So again, this is a story about lies, some stalking and attempted murder.
Oh, and there's tons of twists.
Oh, but attempted.
So does nobody, nobody die?
Someone dies.
Oh, you said that interestingly.
I did.
You said that with a little twist in your eye.
I tried to.
All right, I'll let you just go girl.
Go, go, go, go.
So I was literally hoping you would do that.
I'm going to let you go.
Go, go, go.
Go, go, go.
Go.
The girls that get it.
Get it.
I'm going to say, I don't even know if I should, I should explain that one.
You shouldn't.
It's all you need to know is VPR.
Ick yick.
Ick yick.
Okay.
I just lost my tab.
Okay.
So we're going to talk first of all about the person that's kind of, there's two people
at the center of this story.
There's a woman named Olga and a woman named Pearl.
I love the name Pearl.
And they were both put into situations that are unthinkable, to be quite honest.
So let's start by talking about Pearl because we're going to kind of follow her story first
and then we're going to talk about how Olga plays into this.
So in the fall of 1946, 19 year old recent high school graduate, Pearl Lusk, left her
father's home in Quaker Town, Pennsylvania for New York City, the Big Apple, where she
was just determined.
She was going to start this whole new life.
She was going to be a big city gal.
She was ready for it.
Go girl.
And of course, and think about like 1940s New York.
Oh, fuck yeah.
That must have been a wild scene.
Everyone was looking all fabulous.

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That's the thing.

No matter what, even though like old timey stuff, you're like, yeah, like the shit that was going down in the day.

We don't want to be around for it.

It was not like a time to be alive, but this fashion, a time to be alive.

Why don't we dress like that?

Yeah, like men wearing three piece suits, you know, women wearing like these really cool, just like hats and the layers.

I love a layering moment.

I feel like it was a lot of cool layers.

There was and the jackets that women used to wear.

I immediately thought of the jacket.

The jacket of it all.

Yeah.

And the hairstyles.

Yeah.

It gives me, I mean, I reference this all the time, but it gives me, I think of Peaky Blinders and how everyone looks fucking amazing in Peaky Blinders and I'm like, I want to look like that.

I want to go to that.

I want to go to there.

But yeah.

So 1946, she's off to New York City to start a new life.

And of course she didn't really have a ton of tour name at this point.

She's 19 years old.

I was going to say, yeah.

She just graduated high school.

So she spent the first month or so living with her mother and stepfather in their apartment in Brooklyn.

Cool.

She was just kind of staying there to get herself on her feet, find a job.

And it wasn't long until she did find a job as a sales girl at the Oppenheim Collins department store in Manhattan.

Oh, sounds cool.

And luckily this was what gave her the ability to get her own furnished room in a building on the city's Upper West Side.

Okay.

So now she has a job.

She's got some income.

She's got a cool place to live.

She's feeling like the move was worth it.

She's on her way.

She's like, let's go, big city.

She's like, life is just beginning.

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Let's go.

But now with some cash, money flowing in, she's also able to decorate her apartment to her liking, make it like her personality, but she's also able to kind of upgrade her own look.

She ended up trading in, she had like a very girlish aesthetic, like young girlish aesthetic at first.

She was a high school student after all.

Makes sense.

But now she's 19, she's moving into her 20s.

She's like, I want to be like a little more mature in my style.

She got a new hairdo.

She was just ready to go.

A woman that changes her hair is about to change her life.

There you go.

I chopped my hair recently.

I hope you don't change your life too much.

Hopefully it's like an, like a, just an addition to my life.

Yeah.

New book.

New hair.

New hair, new book.

Let's go.

Now also Pearl's job at the department store gave her a lot of social opportunities because now she's around people her age.

She's meeting all these people.

And soon she's taking lunches with friends and coworkers and she's having dinner dates at the cafeteria with men she met working at the store.

She's like-

It's like sex in the city.

I was just going to say she is sex in the city and like, let's go.

I wonder who she is.

She was thriving.

I wonder which one.

Thriving.

It sounds like she is and I'm so worried for her because I hate when everything starts off so happy.

Yeah.

It's not going to keep that way.

She was doing the damn thing.

She was on a path that everyone hopes to be on when they move to the big city, to be honest.

You got, you had somewhere to stay to get on your feet.

You got on your feet.

Things are going well.

You're meeting new people.

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You're going on dates.

Everything's great.

Yeah.

And on Thanksgiving day that year, she was approached by a stranger while riding the subway on the way to visit her mother for Thanksgiving day.

Right, right.

She was a little busy.

She got stuff.

Her social calendar is full.

It's fucking Thanksgiving.

She's busy.

She's got shit to do.

She's on her way to see her mom.

So she was not really in the space to like appreciate that somebody was like, you know, hitting on her essentially.

Okay.

And like, good for her.

She was like, I'm just not, I don't have time.

Well, you don't have to appreciate every man or woman that hits on you.

No, of course you don't.

And that's the thing.

And she also just was like, you know what, because here's the thing.

She was a little interested.

She said the man who introduced himself as Alan LaRue was polite.

He was charming.

He said he was among the most handsome men she had ever seen.

So it wasn't that she wasn't interested.

She just was like, you know what, I got a lot going on.

I don't have the, I don't have the spate, the bandwidth to like accept this right now.

Okay.

So she just kind of was like, you know, I got a lot of stuff going anyways.

I'm going on a lot of dates.

I'm hanging out with a lot of people.

I got a life.

I'm working.

And she was like, you know what, I'm not really desperate to expert, I'm not going to accept a date from a stranger when I don't have to, that was her feeling about the whole thing.

Good for her.

She was like, I already got some lined up, but like whatever.

So she didn't even, she wouldn't give her address and she wouldn't give her name when she was asked.

She was just like, oh yeah.

So Pearl was just-

She said, let's play a long game.

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Yeah.

She said whatever.

But she was like, oh, you were good to look at.

So thank you for that.

Yeah.

Thanks for the advice.

You know?

So she leaves, she has a great time at Thanksgiving, you know, I imagine.

And then, uh-oh, because just one month later, Pearl's entire confidence and happiness was shaken a little bit because after just three happy months working at the department store, she and a ton of other sales girls were laid off when the holiday season ended.

So now she has no job, no income, no social opportunities, they're kind of dwindling down because she's not around these people anymore.

So she's very much in a more vulnerable state at this point.

And that's when she ran into Alan Leroux again.

She ran into him.

How strange in the big city, she meets him on the subway by happenstance.

And then she meets him a month later on the train back from Brooklyn the day after Christmas.

So-

Oh, and weird that it was like both holidays.

Yeah.

Exactly.

Now, she's feeling down at this point.

She's had to run a bad luck, like this isn't a good time.

Like I said, she's feeling vulnerable.

She's feeling like she's desperate to get some income.

And so she, you know, at this point, she's like, my social calendar is not full anymore.

I'm not working.

You're still hot.

You're still good looking.

So she's like, you know what?

Sure.

She agrees to join him for a drink at a bar in Times Square.

Because he approached her again.

Yeah.

He approached her again and she was like, I'll go out with you.

Times Square.

It's busy.

Yeah.

Lots of people.

Now during their mini date, he was very sympathetic to what she was saying.

He listened to everything and he was like, oh my God, that sucks.

Like I know how that feels.

And later she told the assistant district attorney, he seemed interested in me like any other man

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at first.

But the more I talked, the more I felt like he had some different kind of interest in me.

Huh.

So it turned out that Pearl, her intuition was right on.

Listen to your gut, baby.

Alan did, did think she was beautiful.

He did like her, find her charming.

But he also had something else in mind for her because after they talked some more, he said, you know what?

It's kind of like, you know, it's serendipitous that we would run into each other now again.

Because he said, you're down on your luck.

You're looking for income.

And he's like, as it turns out, I have a job that needs to be done and it's yours if you want it.

And she was like, wow, this is very fortuitous.

You don't even know my fucking credentials, buddy.

That's right.

But you know, they've talked on the state.

So he's like, you seem, you seem chill.

I'm going to take a chance on you.

Wow.

When it comes to doing things around the house these days, we can be slackers.

I feel that way big time.

When given a choice between doing something fun or cleaning the litter box, we're doing something fun 10 out of 10 times.

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I never run out.

I don't have huge kitty litter bags taking up space because really, who wants that?

And even better, I don't have to lug those huge tubs from a store to my car, into my house, down the basement stairs, and then go back up again.

Oh, that'd be terrible.

I hate that.

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I am obsessed with Pretty Litter.

I just think the cats like it better.

They don't seem like they're sneezing as much because again, it's no dust.

And I think your cats and you are going to love it too because Pretty Litter has the best litter I've ever used.

You'll love it too, like I said.

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Do you ever find that just as you're falling asleep, your brain suddenly will not stop talking, your thoughts just start racing right before bed, or do they start racing at other inopportune moments?

That is literally the worst.

All I want to do when I lay down in bed is cozy up and go to sleep.

But then sometimes I start thinking about random crap I did in seventh grade and I'm like, wow, that's so embarrassing.

And then it leads me to think about other stuff that's also so embarrassing.

And then before you know it, it's midnight and I haven't gotten any sleep.

But it turns out one great way to make those racing thoughts go away is to just talk them through and therapy gives you a place to do that so you can get out of your negative thought cycles and find some mental and emotional peace.

I have had this exact discussion with my therapist before like, hello, I literally can't fall asleep at night because I'm just thinking about everything wrong that I've ever done in my life or everything wrong that's ever happened to me in my life.

And then we start talking about all those things and I realize they're not that big of a deal.

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So he explained to her, he said, I'm a private detective and I work for an insurance company.

And this insurance company specializes in ensuring jewelry, which is all, it seems pretty valid of something to, you know, this isn't too far-fetched at this point.

And he said he, his job was the guy, basically they relied on him to investigate and find any stolen jewelry.

And he's like, so when somebody steals jewelry, I have to do the whole investigation.

I have to find a way to get it back so the insurance company doesn't lose out.

So according to Alan, he said that there's this young woman named Olga.

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And she worked as a secretary for the Croydon Hat Company.
And she had stolen some jewelry from a client of their insurance company.
And he had reason to believe that Olga still had the jewelry and was holding it, like carrying it on her person, like it was wearing the jewelry.
Now here's the rub though.
Olga had figured out who Alan was and that he was following her.
So she would immediately recognize him if she saw him again and she would just take off with the loot.
So he said the other issue here is I can't go right to the police with this because I haven't technically proven her guilt.
This is what I'm supposed to do is investigate this stuff.
And he's like, so I can't go to the police yet with this.
I have to like prove the guilt first.
So this is why he needed a random, very unassuming person like Pearl, who could go close enough to Olga to obtain irrefutable evidence of her sticky finger guilt.
Now as a lover of detective stories and dime store novels at the time, Pearl thought this sounded great.
She's like in her hair.
She gets to be, she's like, I get to be part of like an investigation, like a detective thing, a private eye, like this is exciting.
Like this is what I moved to New York City for, like this kind of fun stuff.
And it's not something that where it's like they're investigating like this heavy case of craziness.
It's a jewelry thief.
It literally sounds like a detective story or dime store novel, like it literally does.
So detective LaRue, L-O-L.
There you go.
So not to mention, this was also going to help with her loss of income at this point.
He was like, I'll pay you.
Like absolutely.
Like you'll be on the payroll.
Okay.
So she was like, hell yeah, I will absolutely help with this.
So he was like, this is great.
You're going to be great.
She's not going to suspect a thing.
You know, she's like, you're a woman.
She's not going to be scared of a woman or like feel like you're following her for some nefarious reason.
Sure.
This morning, Pearl met Alan outside a building on West 39th Street.
And it was there that he explained, okay, this is the first phase of the plan.
He said, you're going to go into the offices of the Croydon Hat Company where Olga works as like one of the secretaries.

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And what she was going to do was she was going to go up to the secretary and hopefully it was Pearl.

Or Olga.

Or excuse me, Olga, you thank you.

And asked to speak with another secretary who goes by the name of Sadie White.

Okay.

And he said, there actually isn't anyone working there named Sadie White, but you're going to go up there and you're going to get a good look at Olga because you're going to talk to her.

You're going to be right there in front of her face.

And he said, while you're talking to the receptionist, you'll get that chance because that's going to be Olga.

Right.

So he said, I need you to know her when you see her.

You need to be very clear of what she looks like.

So he gave Pearl a photo of Olga and he said, make sure you find her, that secretary.

And he's like, go study her, make sure you're able to recognize her.

And he was adamant that she recognized her even in a crowd, like in a subway crowd.

Like, I want you to be able to point her out because I don't want you to be obvious about you trying to see if she has the jewelry.

So Pearl did it.

She, she went in, she talked to Olga and she returned back to Alan and she said, Oh, I've memorized her.

Like I memorized her face.

I know her clothing.

I could pick her out.

And Alan told Pearl to take the rest of the morning off and then to meet him at his apartment on East 17th street later that afternoon, and they would go into phase two of the plan.

Okay.

And he's like, take this time.

Keep looking at that photo.

Get to know her.

This is so bizarre.

I have no idea where we're heading.

That's the thing.

Like you cannot have any idea where this is headed.

You really can.

No.

Now Pearl just kind of spent the time, like she looked at the photo.

She knew who it was.

Like she was like, I was standing right in front of her.

I don't need to look at this.

So she went to see a movie and she talked on the phone with some friends before meeting Alan at his apartment at around 3.30pm.

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When she went in the apartment, he was holding what he said was an X-ray camera. And this was the key to catching Olga and retrieving those jewels. According to Pearl, the camera looked like just an ordinary shoe box wrapped in brown paper like you would carry out of a department store. But she said on one end, there was a hole in what looked like a camera aperture. And on the other end, there was a short piece of wire loop that hung out of the bottom of the box.

OK.

So you would like pull that.

It would take the photo.

Remember we're in the 40s.

Of course.

It's not like.

And so this is what didn't seem like totally out of the ordinary here.

And he explained to her, all you do is point this at her and pull the wire.

And he said the X-ray photo would capture if she was wearing the jewelry hidden somewhere.

OK.

And he was very serious when saying, and he said, this is what this is what we need in order to go to the police and say, look, she has the jewelry.

Sure.

And he was very serious saying, but don't snap the picture where she can see you do it.

Take it when she gets off the train in Brooklyn.

That's where she lives.

You want to be right behind her when you follow her out of the train so you can take it at close range.

You want to be only two or three feet away from her when you snap the photo.

OK.

And she was like, all right.

Now Pearl left Allen's apartment.

She went back to the Croydon Hat Company building and she waited for Olga to come out. She finally saw Olga come out of the building after work and begin her commute home. So Olga came out a little after five and she made her way towards the Times Square station and caught a train to Brooklyn.

Pearl followed her onto the train, not too close, but she did sit across from Olga on the train.

OK.

And again, she looks like she's just holding a package.

Right.

It's like wrapped in brown paper.

Pearl then aimed the camera at Olga and pulled the wire.

And she was like, I think I got a good photo.

Like that's it.

So she got off the train.

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She went to the bar in Times Square where she met Allen again and she was like, every thing went awesome.

Like Allen was like, shit, like how close were you to her?

Like, you know, had she noticed you were following her?

Like did anything go wrong?

Did she seem suspicious?

And Pearl explained that Olga had only been a few feet away from her and she took the picture.

She didn't seem to notice her.

Everything seemed like it went great.

So Allen was like, that's amazing.

I'm going to get the picture developed tonight and I'll meet you next tomorrow morning and I'll let you know how it turned out.

Yeah.

Now, when they met the following day, he was like, bad news.

The picture wasn't good.

Why did I suspect that?

So he told Pearl that he believed it was the camera to blame.

He was like, it's not you.

You did great.

Like, good job.

But he was like, you know what?

I'm going to get us a better one.

Like that was kind of like not, not great anyways, like I'm going to make sure we get a better one.

Like give me a few days and I'll be able to get a better one.

Okay.

So she's like, all right.

So a few days later on December 31st, 1946, New Year's Eve, New Year's Eve, they love holidays.

They really do.

You're right.

So they called Alan at his apartment and he said he was able to get a new x-ray camera and he said, meet me at the laundry mat near Union Square, which she did a little after eight a.m.

Now, Pearl said when he handed this camera to her, it was much, it was different.

It was bigger.

It was heavier and it wasn't wrapped in brown paper now.

It was wrapped in Christmas paper to make it look like a Christmas present.

Yeah.

And conspicuous.

Yeah.

And Alan explained, Pearl was to take the camera, go to the train station in Brooklyn, follow Olga from there.

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Once they were on the train, get close to Olga, not too close, take that picture just like you did before.
Same old things.
Keep the same chilled way you did it.
But he added, remember to aim it low at her waist.
Okay.
And she was like, why?
And he was like, I think that's where she's probably carrying the jewels pinned inside her dress at her waist.
That's what we've gotten information that that's what she does.
Why would anyone keep jewels pinned to their waist?
I'm not real sure.
But Pearl did exactly what Alan told her to do.
She caught the seat opposite Olga on the train and they began de-boarding the train.
She decided to wait until they were getting off the train because he had told her to do that initially and she didn't do it the first time.
So they began getting off the train and Pearl was standing a few feet behind Olga and she aimed the camera at Olga's lower body, pulled the wire to take the picture and she said the camera jerked in her hands and made a loud explosion happen.
This caused immediate confusion and panic and chaos everywhere.
And when Pearl looked up, cause she was just stunned at like what the fuck just happened.
Like she's like, did this camera just blow up?
What the hell happened?
Pearl looked up, Olga was laying on her back on the platform holding her leg and her leg looked as though it was nearly blown off.
Oh my God.
Just shattered, completely ruined.
Seconds later, a security guard rushed over to Pearl because Pearl was splattered in Olga's blood and holding that box.
And the security guard was like, what the fuck?
What the fuck?
Yeah.
And I guess Pearl answered, I just took a woman's picture and somebody shot her.
And Pearl told the security guard before she was grabbed by police, she was like, I just took her picture.
She was like, I don't, who shot her?
Like she had no idea.
Like what happened?
What the fuck?
So police officers took her, they ripped open the parcel that she was holding.
That's not a camera, baby.
The other side was a sawed off shotgun, 12 gauge shotgun mounted between two cream cheese boxes.
What?

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Yes.

And if you look it up, it is the most wild picture when you see what it actually looked like.

Let me see.

Like, oh my God.

I'll just look up Pearl Lusk guys, like we'll post some of these photos so you can see.

But the actual photo of the sawed off 12 gauge shotgun, what the fuck?

I'm at a loss.

No, like truly at a loss.

I'm at a true loss for, like that, that must have been a heavy package.

So this motherfucker, like, just made like, and the cream cheese boxes are wooden, by the way.

Yeah.

They're not like Philadelphia cream cheese box.

Immediately what I pictured.

You are not alone.

I'm here with you because I also had thought of the Philadelphia cream cheese cardboard box.

I was like, wow, that, why would they be between that?

But that must have been really heavy.

And she said that it was heavier than the last time.

She said it was much heavier and much bigger.

So I wonder what he had done in that first box.

Yeah, I know, like, because it was smaller.

She said it was like a shoe box.

I'm like, did you just put a handgun in there and it just didn't work?

Or was he just trying to like, was there nothing in there?

Like really?

Yeah, I don't know.

And he was just trying to see if like, she followed protocol.

That's what I wondered initially was, is he testing her to see if there was action?

But then I'm like, I don't know.

But it makes sense though, like that he was testing her because when she came back to meet him, he was like, how'd it go?

Did she suspect you?

Did you get close to her?

Right.

What did you do?

He had a lot of questions.

He wanted to see like, did you do it right?

Can I trust you to actually do it this time?

Yeah.

Kind of thing.

I could see that being the case.

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We will never know.

My God.

Pearl looked down at Olga and then looked at the gun in her hands at this point and she was like, holy shit, I'm the one who shot her.

Like she had no idea.

And as she was being pulled away by the police officer, she looked down at Olga and was starting to cry her eyes out and she said, I'm awfully sorry I shot you.

There was a new job you see.

And I thought I was taking your picture with an x-ray camera.

Oh, sweet pearl.

Like she started just trying to explain it to this woman who's leg is blown off.

I know, like bad timing, Pearl, but I get it.

But like I get you're trying to be like, I did not mean to shoot you.

Oh my God.

And I guess Olga looked at Pearl and then looked away and said, this time he got me.

He can have me now if he wants me.

I'm a cripple.

What happened to the police?

I called them, but he was too smart for them.

Oh no.

So she knew.

Oh no.

Like exactly what had happened here.

So what the fuck is happening right now?

I'm about to tell you.

So Pearl was immediately taken into custody where she explained her side of the story and said she was an avid reader of detective and confession stories, quote unquote.

Right.

And that was one of her, the reasons that she was helping this man, Alan LaRue.

So when detectives showed Pearl a photo of Olga and her husband, Alfons Al Rocco, taken several months earlier in a New York City nightclub, she said, that man's Alan LaRue.

Oh my God.

So this was Olga's ex-husband?

Yes.

What?

And she said, that's the man who hired me to shoot Olga.

What?

And she said, he even has the same clothes on.

Oh my God.

Like that was him.

That's creepy.

So detectives questioned Pearl and a separate set of investigators were at the hospital taking a statement from Olga and she explained that the male pearl thought, man pearl thought to be Alan LaRue was in all likelihood her ex-husband, Al Rocco.

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And she said they had been married in May 1945 and divorced a year later.

Oh wow.

So that was a bad marriage.

So let's talk about them.

Yeah.

So Olga Trapani met Al Rocco in the spring of 1944.

And after one year of dating, they married in May 1945.

Okay.

Now, despite their daughter having dated him for a year before getting married, Olga's parents told reporters that they really didn't know Al.

Like even though they like were around him, they met him, they spent time with him, they were like, he was a mystery.

Like we still don't really know him.

That must have creeped them out.

Yeah.

And by the winter of 1947, the most they knew about him was that he was of Italian ancestry and of average height and weight.

That's what they could say about him.

They didn't even know like what he did for work or anything.

They didn't know anything about him.

A reporter for the New York Times wrote that they knew nothing of his work.

Sometimes he disappeared for months.

Occasionally he returned with lots of money and just as often with none.

Why?

Yeah.

Okay.

He's a sketchy fucking character.

Yeah.

And others who knew Rocco seemed to know just as little about him, like his landlord.

He was like, he was a quiet guy.

Like that's all I know.

Like I don't know.

I guess he was Italian is all I could say, like other than that, I don't know.

And although they didn't know a lot of details about him, Olga's family did not like him.

Well, yeah, I'm sure that probably like not knowing anything about the guy that your daughter is going to marry.

You're not going to like that.

Yeah.

They all got a vibe that he was a bad person.

Like hiding something.

All of them were like something's off here.

And after their divorce a few months before Olga was shot, they saw him get even worse.

They saw a very bad side of him.

So according to Olga's mother, once the marriage was annulled in early November 1946, so the

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only months before Al became very verbally abusive.

And she said, quote, had constantly annoyed her daughter, threatening to kill her ever since their separation.

Oh my God.

Well, it's official.

Fall is here.

Oh, love it.

If you're like me, that means you're probably settling back into busier routines with the kids at school and spare time filled with soccer practices and seasonal activities.

Your home may be sitting empty and vulnerable.

That is exactly why I recommend Simply Safe Home Security and their revolutionary home monitoring innovation 24 seven live guard protection.

It's designed to help stop crime in real time.

Now if an intruder breaks into your home, Simply Safe professional monitoring agents can actually see, speak to and deter them through Simply Safe's new smart alarm wireless indoor camera.

I'm obsessed with that.

That's one of the many reasons that I love Simply Safe.

But another reason that I love Simply Safe is because I'm a forgetful girly.

So sometimes I'll be like, oh crap, I left and I did not set the alarm and you can just do everything right from the app on your phone.

It's super easy 24 seven live guard protection is made possible by the new smart alarm wireless indoor camera available with a fast protect monitoring plan.

The new smart alarm indoor camera is the only indoor security camera that can trigger the alarm and instantly deter intruders with a built in siren.

That's pretty cool.

It has a physical privacy shutter to provide protection when you need it and privacy when you want it 24 seven live guard protection and the new smart alarm indoor camera works seamlessly as part of the Simply Safe system to keep your whole home safe from break ins fires floods and more install it your way do it yourself in about 30 minutes or have a Simply Safe expert set it up for you either way it is easy to protect your home for a limited time get 20% off your new system when you sign up for fast protect monitoring visit simplysafe.com/slash/morbid that's simplysafe.com/slash/morbid there's no safe like simply safe are your subscriptions draining your wallet the average person has around 12 paid subscriptions and they might not even remember subscribing to half of those I am one of those people if you have no idea just how much you're spending each month you need rocket money it's this great app that tracks all your expenses so you know exactly where your money is going rocket money is a personal finance app that finds and cancels your unwanted subscriptions monitors your spending and helps you lower your bills all in one place most people think that they're spending about \$80 on their subscriptions when in reality the number is closer to 200 when that's coming out every month that's a lot of money and when you're signed up for so many things like streaming services you use to watch one show one time or free trials for a delivery that you don't use it's so easy to lose track of what you're paying for but with rocket money or as I like to call it my personal

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hero you can easily cancel the ones you don't want with just the press of a button no more long hold times are annoying emails with customer service rocket money does all the work for you rocket money can even negotiate to lower your bills for you by up to 20% all you have to do is take a picture of your bill and rocket money takes care of the rest I'm obsessed with rocket money it has saved me so much money and the amount of subscriptions I had that I didn't know about I was like it's almost like somebody else bought these for me but it was really me and now I don't have them anymore because I don't need them and I'm saving money and that's one of my favorite things to do so stop wasting money on things you don't use cancel your unwanted subscriptions and manage your money the easy way by going to rocket money dot com slash morbid that's rocket money dot com slash morbid rocket money dot com slash morbid so it didn't take long for long for detectives to learn not only had the couple had an abusive relationship and a very very aggressive and hostile separation but this was not the first time that Al had tried to kill Olga what on one occasion this is where the detectives and police in this case failed fucking miserably like shame on this one shame well that's that makes sense because she said like he finally got me he finally got me and he was like too smart for the police and it's true yeah he got away with so much when you hear all the shit he did that everyone just ignored oh 40s on one occasion in mid-october after the couple had separated already like they were separated not divorced Al confronted Olga at the train station in Times Square he took out a switchblade knife forced her into his car and drove her to a motel in Poughkeepsie once they were there he forced Olga to undress hid her clothes threatened to kill her and said if you don't come back to me I'm gonna murder you what so she spent two days in that motel room being terrorized by him well he was trying to force her at knife point to come back to him somehow she managed to convince Al to bring her back to New York and once there she fled she ran away from him back to her parents home in Brooklyn and a few weeks later on november first just before the couple's marriage was annulled Al then shot at Olga through an open window in her mother's kitchen Jesus Christ two of the bullets struck her in the right thigh and left her with a 45 caliber slug in her thigh and a permanent limp oh my god now you would think after those two incidences of kidnapping murder assault and attempted murder you just those few things maybe you should be arrested or talked to perhaps scolded they were both reported to the police both those incidents and Olga made thorough statements but from the looks of things nothing was done to follow up or arrest Rocco yes he just terrorized her with no consequences and like the way that he terrorized her he literally kidnapped her and held her hostage and then shot her in the leg and they're like yeah and actually a few weeks later Olga went back to work and she got a threatening call from Al immediately her old she told detectives he said he was watching me he knew everything he knew when I went to work and that he did not aim the right he did not aim right the first time but that when he would aim again he would kill me so he literally was like I didn't aim for your leg I just aimed wrong I meant to kill you oh my god so Olga reported it to the police who told her don't worry don't worry don't worry about it I have a permanent limp and a slug in my leg yeah fuck right off with that now in this case it's unclear whether they followed up on anything but I couldn't find anything to say that they did or didn't sounds like they did not in the days that followed that threatening phone call don't worry Olga received daily threatening calls from Al Rocco and regularly saw him in the crowd at the train station and on city streets following her oh my god

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in each time every day she reported the incident to detectives at the 66th precinct and they didn't do shit all about it nothing one day just after Christmas she was going this is even this is the saddest one I think oh she was entering the time square station and she saw Al following her very closely behind her terrified so she panicked and she paid for her train fare and then she went up to the subway guard on the stairway leading to the platform and she said I'm being followed by my ex-husband

he's very dangerous he's threatening me I'm very scared can I just stand with you until he's gone and the guard said no you can't what he said she could not stay there because of the people that were going down the steps at that time so he was like tough what a fucking asshole lady like like she's telling and can you imagine the panic in her voice when she's saying this piece of shit subway guard was like no stand with me no you can't stand with me oh my god like good luck out there I guess poor Olga now the last time that Olga had heard from Al was three days before the shooting on the train so three days before he shot her when he came to her family's home to confront her and the family members were like what the fuck and they heard him shout I'll kill you and kill myself and Olga reported the incident to the police like she had all the fucking others of them and on the evening of December 30th detectives did come to her house to finally take a statement and Olga told the detectives that after everything she'd been through with Al over the past few months she was afraid she was like he's gonna kill me like it's very clear he's trying to kill me she said they told me that I should not be frightened and that they were going to protect me and that they would guard me when I went to work so it's like okay he's already shot her and she shouldn't be frightened well and it's like okay like cool they're saying they're gonna protect you and like escort you to work and yeah like clearly they didn't and she gave the statement from their hospital bed after being shot um when she left for work the next morning on the 31st she said there was no detectives anywhere and the only escort she had to the train station was her sister so bravo detectives bravo these people are fucked and you know they're not making any like written reports of this because at this point this guy would have had a stack like yeah three inches thick yeah they're just the the amount that they did is zilch zero goose egg zero now when Olga and her sister got to the platform at the station in brooklyn she said she noticed the woman carrying what appeared to be a medium-sized christmas present because she probably I wonder if she saw her before she might have and she said she was carrying a box a rather large box and it was wrapped and it had something that protruded protruded at one end of the box and I'm assuming that is the handle of the sawdough shotgun which I'm still a little confused by yeah because but did pearl like pull a string or did she pulled a wire of some kind that that trigger that pull the trigger okay but I'm wondering how the the part of like because it was a sawdough

shotgun so shorter but I'm like that handle like not the barrel but the handle of the shotgun that's like on the other side was that wrapped too because you can't it's hard to tell in the picture it looks like it might have been right it's hard because it's all unwrapped and like dissembled you know yeah um now despite the bizarre details of what pearl was saying happened that

day like you know that does sound insane like that sounds wild uh detectives said they were inclined to accept as truth a story too fantastic to be fiction which like I guess like someone making that up is pretty wild and Olga's statement like on the scene I'm sure it really helps yeah now after taking statements from Olga pearl and Olga's family members investigators said that it was very

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clear that once his wife was not going to come back to him Al Rocco had concocted an elaborate scheme to kill her because if he couldn't have her no one else was going to have her either now while Olga is laying in Roosevelt hospital in critical condition with a literal quote mangled left thigh detective started finally searching for Al Rocco now on January 1st the day after the shooting investigators learned that quote an unidentified man had called twice at pearl's rooming house asking to speak with her what so they were hoping they could intercept him

because they were assuming he would call for another time when he couldn't get a hold of her so they brought pearl back to the rooming house and had her sit there with them a little after five p.m. they waited for several hours but he didn't call back damn it so detectives continued their interview with pearl lusk and other investigators began looking for Al Rocco like through his background basically um what they learned they learned a lot about him but they learned that the 28 year old by the way he's 28 years old yeah he had served a year in the Bronx county jail a few years earlier for auto theft and he had a bunch of arrests for disorderly conduct car theft all kinds of stuff like that things they should have known when he was doing this to Olga exactly but the thing is when they were looking at his criminal record they were like none of it detectives were calling him a diabolical genius and they were like when you look at his record you're like nothing really lends itself to that he's just a car thief yeah and you know like that's it and like disorderly conduct you know but and in fact an evaluation conducted at Bellevue hospital in 1938 of Rocco labeled him as a man of average intelligence okay you know he's not normal not below not above but they had opened up tips to tips from the public at this point and the first tip came in around 11 a.m. on the morning of January 1st that's when a Brooklyn resident saw a man on Brighton Beach who disrobed completely and just entered the water okay according to the witness he said they said the man quote shed a gray tweed overcoat a brown suit a blue tie and a white shirt then wearing gloves underwear shoes and socks he plunged into the icy surf headed out to sea and disappeared I was wearing gloves oh like is he the Loch Ness monster like what's going on here he just headed out to sea like just what do you mean police police searched the water for hours and they couldn't find anybody in there and they showed the clothing that they did find they showed it to Olga for identification and she said no like that's not his so it was just a random unrelated incident and this just goes away and I'm like where's that man that just went out to sea and they don't know like we all just forgetting that that happened or like did that even happen or did the guy yeah like what that's such a strange story to tell very strange but and and I mean it did happen because there was clothing found yeah they found the guy's clothing like the same clothing that this man had described weird now on January 3rd Olga's condition took a turn for the worst oh no she had actually had to have her like amputated and it left her and what doctors said was a fight for her life oh no um that same morning pearl lusk appeared in general sessions court which was a court mostly for misdemeanors at the time um she was sobbing like beside herself because she's like how the fuck did I find myself in this situation yeah and she was explaining to them I was just a pawn in Al Rocco's plan and she's like I genuinely believed his story about being a private investigator in pursuit of a jewel thief yeah I literally did and the assistant district attorney Jacob Grimmett noted that investigators did believe pearl was telling the truth that none of them believe she was lying but they said they wanted her held as a material witness because when they captured Rocco hopefully um who he referred to as an

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archfiend

an archfiend yeah they wanted her to be there as a material witness so the judge agreed okay it's like yeah and set pearls bear bail at ten thousand dollars and then remanded her into the custody of the Florence Crittenden Crittenden home which was a home for unwed mothers interesting but I think

that's just where they were like because they were like we got to keep track of you because I could see why they would want to keep her because she would want to get as far away from this as possible

and you want to hear exactly what this guy told you right tell me more tell me more yeah did you get very far like what happened here and so detectives finally figured out what their job title was at this point and they started working to find Al Rocco so imagine that good job fantastic because now they that you know he actually almost killed Olga now's the time to do their job I think yeah once somebody is almost dead yeah they questioned several people and they all said like acquaintances people they thought might have seen him and they all said they had not seen or heard from Al Rocco in weeks I bet now the big break came on January 6th when a neighbor and this is this story is a little hard to follow okay so I'll do my best Al is a little hard to follow I guess truly so a neighbor of Al Rocco's first cousin so his cousin's neighbor yes reported his car had been stolen by a man who introduced himself as Alan Lamonte okay according to the neighbor Dominic Rizzo the man introduced her himself as a friend of Mrs Rizzo's brother James Cappasoli I think it is Cappasoli so he's saying he knows this guy Dominic's wife's brother got it and her sister's cousin's best friend's brother twice removed exactly now Alan Lamonte explained he had recently come into possession of a large number of tools with instructions to give them to James Cappasoli okay both the tools were in Cairo which is a small town in the Catskills I know I thought Egypt I was like he's going all the way to Egypt now I also thought that right your face I was like you thought the same thing I think I sure did I was like this motherfucker's borrowing your car don't go to Egypt this is just a small town in the Catskills so and he said his car had broken down so he had no way of getting there so I need your help so Mrs Rizzo Dominic's wife called her brother James who said quote he'd be delighted to have the tools although he did not remember Lamonte he was like sounds awesome I don't know this guy but like I'll take the tools and despite her brother having no memory of the man claiming to be Alan Lamonte the Rizzo's Dominic and his wife invited him to dinner and then the next morning they drove him out to Cairo um so they all got there a little after 12 30 p.m and they stopped for lunch at a local diner and Alan Lamonte finished first so he told the couple the tools were just a few blocks away and he's like why don't you finish your coffee and I'll just take the car to go get the tools come on and they were like absolutely wow Alan Lamonte go right ahead being that yeah just take my vehicle imagine that pure take my whole ass vehicle yes go right ahead when two hours passed and there was still no sign of Alan Lamonte they waited two hours Dominic Rizzo called the state police and reported the car stolen I can't believe it took them two hours and this is when they figured out that the driver was not Alan Lamonte it was in fact Al Rocco whoa and it was because Mrs. Rizzo identified him from a smug shot

you guys I literally almost shot my pants the other day because my Buffy sheets came in the mail and I was so excited not Buffy the vampire slayer Buffy the softest sheets on the planet no joke Buffy has earth softest bedding the breeze sheets set by Buffy are quite literally the softest sheets you'll ever try it's woven from eucalyptus making it softer than cotton or

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linen and also if you are like a really really hot sleeper or you sleep next to somebody that is don't even worry about it because with these sheets you will sleep cooler the fabric like I said is made from eucalyptus so it's naturally cool to the touch and it's researched back to be more breathable than cotton or linen and perfect for hot sleepers it's with natural botanic dyes that are skin safe and better for the planet let's take care of the planet y'all Buffy is really awarded and recognized Buffy products are consistently on best of lists architectural digest and glamour named the Buffy Bree sheet set the best bed sheets of 2023 see for yourself why Buffy has over 50,000 five-star reviews shipping is free and if you don't love your Buffy sheets there's a 50 night return policy on all orders with free shipping on returns and no return fees upgrade your bedding with the breeze sheet set by Buffy go to Buffy.co and use code morbid for 25 percent off your first order that's Buffy.co promo code morbid for 25 off

now a short time later state police picked up Rocco's trail as he passed through Pratt's ville and they began to chase him leading in the direction of a town called Onianta yes correct I did it right now more than 50 state troopers and two new york city detectives were pursuing Rocco that evening and eventually they ran him into the woods near Gilboa okay it was there that he abandoned Rizzo's car along the side of the road and they also found out that earlier that evening he had actually forced his way into a home a home of mister and mrs. Leroy Lewis and he held the couple at gunpoint Jesus and demanded they feed him and they told him and apparently he told them he planned to quote remain there indefinitely oh sure which is not something you want to hear from someone holding you at gunpoint you want to be like no I'd like you to leave as quickly as possible yeah like leave yesterday thank you and he told the couple I've got to stay I was framed I'd be like you've got to go now despite saying he was going to stay there indefinitely and that he had to stay after just a few hours he just changed his mind and fled into the woods they were like godspeed they were like I'm gonna contact someone I'm gonna call someone so state troopers

reached their farmhouse this couple about a half hour after he had left and the couple said he went that way he went to that way following his trail into the woods they did eventually find Al Rocco he was sleeping he was hiding in a sleeping bag near a large tree pretty near the farmhouse and they ordered him to surrender okay when he immediately refused immediately fought back so he refuses to surrender and a trooper fires a warning shot and then demanded him come out and they shouted come on out you skunk that's what they yelled at him in craible and instead of being the skunk that he was in coming out he drew his gun and he fired four times in the direction of the troopers this ballsy motherfucker you know that's not going to go over well so the troopers returned fire and what the new york new york times described as a heavy barrage so I don't think Al's coming out of this one spoiler alert he's gonna say bye bye Al

so the shooting lasted nearly two minutes and when it finally came to an end Al Rocco was dead one bullet had passed through his head another through his chest

he hadn't even made it yeah he played stupid games so Rocco hadn't even made it completely out of his sleeping bag wow and when detectives searched his body they found 62 dollars and 93 cents on him in cash and in change it's a good amount of money for and they found two photographs one of his x y folga yeah and the other of a girl that state police inspector Charles LaForge refused to identify because quote he did not wish to hurt this girl what I have so many questions here are my questions one who didn't wish to hurt this girl the state trooper didn't want to hurt her by releasing her identity or two you are somehow implying or inferring that

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Al didn't want to hurt this girl how the fuck do you know that he tried to kill his ex-wife on 65 different occasions the way I take that is that the state trooper didn't want to hurt her like didn't want to upset her yeah but who the fuck is that like I need what two photographs on him and you're not going to tell me who that other photograph also she should probably know do you think it was pearl I hope she knows I don't think so he probably wouldn't have a photo of her I mean he's a stalker he might but like cameras were like oh yeah I know we're not easy so like who's this other girl and what was the plan there that's freaky deaky I don't know but we'll never know uh but later that day detectives informed Olga of Al Rocco's death in the Catskills and she said RID she began to laugh heartily laugh good for Olga honestly after everything she'd fucking been through oh yeah she deserved to laugh she did and then she began to sob and she said at last I'll be able to get a good night's rest yeah which I don't blame her and when Olga's family heard the news they were also pretty pleased with the outcome Olga's brother Salvatore said I heard the wonderful news just as I was leaving the hospital I never felt better than I do now because my family and I as well as Olga have been worried sick about her safety as long as he was walking around yeah and it's true no one was doing anything yeah terrorized that family and the police did fucking nothing because that's the thing he also shot into their home he could have hurt anyone he could have killed anybody in that you don't know if this kid's in that home or what like no idea anybody truly he's that he was so far beyond like and then and then to involve this poor young girl to kill someone to try to kill someone he's sick like he's a sick fuck yeah bye Al rest in distress now days after the shooting Al's body was claimed from the Bundy funeral home in upstate New York by his uncle Philip Rocco who returned the body to Brooklyn and after his death Judge James Wallace ordered that pearl be released from custody after a grand jury declined to charge her in relation to the shooting good as she left the criminal courts building Pearl told reporters I want to forget it all I don't blame her now according to Pearl's mother Stella they were going to retrieve some of Pearl's belongings from her room at the boarding house and then she was going to leave the city she was like I'm taking her home now after several weeks of recovery following having her leg amputated on her way home from work Olga was discharged from Roosevelt Hospital and in February she filed a claim against the neat city of New York demanded \$200,000 it alleged that New York police failed to protect her quote at a time when the police knew she was in imminent danger of death at the hands of her criminal husband yep in a statement to the press her lawyer Samuel Douglas said the city having accepted her as a passenger on its transit facilities owed her a duty to transport her safely to her destination and to protect her from any danger that was known by it to exist with respect to her the city failed and refused to provide her with such protection and required her to use the city subway system at a time when she was likely to be killed by her husband the city owes her a moral obligation to compensate her for the serious injury resulting directly from its neglect to provide her with protection while she was on its subway system now the city refused to pay the pay the claim because they're assholes and Olga filed a suit against them eventually taking the case to the state supreme court finally in april 1953 the state supreme court ruled in favor of the city i did not see that one coming i didn't think you would they said it is most unfortunate that some redress cannot be made but ultimately they freed the city of any

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liability to the shooting that's a bunch of bullshit the court said they were sympathetic to what had happened no you're not the justices defended their decision though saying there's no basis for holding that the city should have anticipated that she would be shot other than the fact that um he previously tried to shoot her in that city he kidnapped her and tortured her in that city uh there's also the fact that she literally walked up to one of your subway guards and asked for protection and they said no thank you ma'am good luck correct so there's that like blatant city should have protected her didn't that subway guard literally said get off there's a whole laundry list of ways that they didn't protect her now luckily in the years that followed pearl and Olga became friends i wanted to hear that so bad they would get together whenever they could oh and after leaving the city pearl married and eventually had children Olga stayed in the city she made a nice living for herself designing and selling costume jewelry hell yeah and al Rocco is still dead that's that's good so didn't rise i'm glad that pearl he did not rise but pearl and Olga came together and Olga was like girl it's okay like we both met this asshole we both believed what he said holy shit you know like like and Olga i'm like what a bad bitch just kept on going and that she was like you know what girl i know that like he's a dick he's a manipulative dick and i know he manipulated you into thinking that you weren't doing what you were doing i also kind of loved the irony that she became a jewelry maker that is kind of fun that's fun that is fun also imagine if your mom was pearl lusk she just whips that one out at the dinner table like and she's like i shot a lady by accident carrying a christmas package one time i got tricked into becoming an assassin you want to hear that one kids you want to hear that story i'd be like yeah i do she's like you ever heard about pearl truth's in alive like hell yeah i do damn it's it's a wild wild tale that's a doozy i was so glad i'm so glad Olga didn't die like it's horrible that she had to have her leg amputated like to have that taken away from you was awful but could you imagine one she died would be tragic in and of itself yeah and then pearl has to live with that for the rest of her life like i'm so glad that didn't happen exactly and uh dav had noted when he was looking up stuff about this that he found this photo of when pearl was initially taken into custody like right after the incident yeah there's this like kind of famous photo of her and the detective and they're like smiling at the camera and it looks a lot like a wedding photo it's like the strangest you have it i don't have it up right now but i will post it because it's just like a strange my god very strange photo very strange situation what a time to be alive truly it's this story i just cannot i cannot fathom it no i i never expected any of the things that came from this story and it's so sad because olga's like this beautiful gal yeah she had her whole life ahead of her and she still did but it's like now she's got to deal with the aftermath of this because of some asshole seriously for a day to for a year and because in new york city it had literally nothing to help her nothing wow absolutely nothing holy shit there's also a really great photo of um olga being brought out of the hospital and she's cheesing for the camera her hair is done her makeup is done she looks like a 40s goddess like it is it's a great one and she's got like flowers on her lap it's just a cool picture there's also one of her later where she's like all dolled up um and she's got like fancy like shoes and stuff on she looks great oh yeah she's she's a bad bitch holy and holy forever i'm looking at this pearl lusk oh my god why is she cheesing right it's just a very strange she's in fucking shock yeah i think she just had no fucking glue wow yeah it's literally like yes we'll post one of these because it's just i don't even know how to just like they're both literally in the back of the car the detective and pearl and they're both just looking at the camera like they just

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got married like if you told me this is a right after they got married photo i'd be like yes what an adorable couple wow it looks so happy together wow this is i've never heard a story quite like this it's a really wild one that's wild for sure truly wild oh my gosh olga is a fucking queen look at that hey are she truly is wow she's gorgeous queen even the guy that's wheeling her out is just like everyone's happy you know everyone's just happy to be here unreal but that is the truly wild story of the attempted murder of olga rocko it sure was so we hope that you keep listening and we hope you keep it weird but that's so weird that you carry anything uh for anyone especially if it's a christmas package just so you know never carry anything for anyone don't that has always been my stance it remains my stance just sort of do it especially like when don't it's some guy named alan lou has to do it don't do it

hey weirdos i'm alina oh my god

per quoi i literally you just sat there went

i was waiting for i was like is there a queue i didn't know we were doing a bit i just want to be you 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/survey hey morbid podcast network listeners if you're a fan of the morbid podcast then i know you'll also be a fan of my show the mr ballon podcast each week i mr ballon tell you true strange dark and mysterious stories with unexpected plot twists at the end the subjects we cover include inexplicable encounters shocking disappearances haunting true crime and mind-boggling mysteries while the show has over 100 episodes for you to go listen to right now a good starting point for new listeners would be episode number 17 titled this island has a dark secret it is one of our shortest episodes but has arguably the biggest plot twist we have ever covered you can find the mr ballon podcast strange dark and mysterious stories exclusively on amazon music which coincidentally is also where prime members can listen to morbid and all of the other morbid network podcasts one week early and ad free download the amazon music app today