

[Transcript] Suspicion | The Billionaire Murders: The hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman / S2 The Billionaire Murders | E4 King and Queen

I don't think any person can be a happy person if he's successful in life and doesn't give back to the communities.

That's Barry Sherman. He's sitting beside Honey. They're both on high-backed director's chairs. This was filmed October 11th, 2017, two months before the murders.

It was part of a plan to honor the Sherman's philanthropy, including the millions they poured into the Sherman campus,

a community and sports complex in the north end of Toronto.

The screen behind them is brilliant white. It's like the Shermans are floating.

Here's Honey, the child of Holocaust survivors, explaining how she sees their position in the community.

No matter how much any individual does, no matter how significant or not it may be, each individual is a thicker or a thinner thread, but nonetheless only a thread in the greater landscape.

And so we are thrilled. We're very fortunate to be part of the great landscape that Toronto provides us,

that Jewish Toronto provides us. We're very lucky.

It's a nice moment for a couple that didn't have many public moments like this.

Honey reaches over from time to time, straightening Barry's tie, tucking it neatly inside the brown suit he wears to most events.

After Barry finishes the story, she gives him a playful nudge.

Now you've got to sit up straight and you've got to pull down your jacket pack.

Honey's impromptu remarks draw chuckles from the film crew.

Barry laughs too, a deep laugh, and you can tell they're having fun talking about their passion, charity.

For decades, Honey and I have both felt the commitment to do what we could for the community.

We decided to divide up the responsibility. She does all the community service, she's been a sheriff just about everything.

And my time is better spent doing what I can to try to earn money so I can write the checks.

So that's how we've divided it.

Fair and equitable.

Fair and equitable.

The video would be shown at a United Jewish Appeal event after their deaths to honour the couple referred to as the King and Queen of Jewish Philanthropy in Toronto.

From the Toronto Star, I'm Kevin Donovan.

And this is The Billionaire Murders, the hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman.

Episode 4, King and Queen.

Having seen the crime scene photos, I find it disconcerting to watch their faces in this video.

So animated, so full of life.

Honey's wearing a crisp white shirt with a big collar, a black jacket and a pearl choker around her neck.

I can't help but imagine the terror they went through in their final moments.

Their friends say they think Honey would have fought like hell.

Harry Rudomsky, Barry's lawyer, said he probably would have told his attacker if he had the chance.

[Transcript] Suspicion | The Billionaire Murders: The hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman / S2 The Billionaire Murders | E4 King and Queen

What you're doing is illogical.

It makes no sense.

The difference in their personality was spelled out by their son Jonathan at the funeral.

Holy, balanced and exceptional.

One may have been soft, calm, brilliantly logical, staunchly atheist and unconditionally loving and proud.

While the other may have been firm, intensely energetic, brilliantly gregarious, silently spiritual and unconditionally honest and caring.

But together they were everything and perfect.

You were like a lock and a key, each pretty useless on your own.

But together you unlocked the whole world for yourselves and for us and for so many others.

In a later episode, I'll tell you about my interview with Jonathan in his freezing cold garage.

But for now, I do want to take issue with Jonathan's comment that his parents were useless on their own.

I've spent a lot of time with friends of Barry and Honey and from what they tell me, both were formidable in their own right,

though it may not have seemed that way in the early days.

But people didn't notice him, he was physically slow, sluggish was the word, one of the teachers called him Butterball.

And in those days, and probably the same now, the younger the grades, the more of being playing the game gets you better marks or whatever.

He wasn't that, he never did that.

So the higher he went in education, the higher he rose.

That's Joel Alster, Barry's oldest and best friend.

Joel is tall, wiry, thick gray hair and a neatly trimmed beard.

He's 80 years old now, but stays in shape cycling and being active, traveling the world with his husband Michael in search of good theater.

He was Barry's first business partner and they laid the plans for their future while in high school at Forest Hill Collegiate in Toronto in the 1950s.

The neighborhood they grew up in is near where Barry and Honey were going to build their mansion decades later.

We sit in class, we made up names for companies, Joe by enterprises, we wanted to be in business together, we both wanted to be in business.

Barry's father, Herbert, ran a zipper manufacturing firm and he had a small piece of the ownership. Herbert sometimes brought young Bernard, he wouldn't pick up the nickname Barry until he was older, to the plant and put him to work, filling boxes with zippers.

Barry was twice as fast as the adult employees.

His father would sometimes check the count and this upset Barry, he didn't like his work question. When Barry was 10, Herbert died suddenly in his office of a massive heart attack.

Sarah, Barry's mother, went to work as an occupational therapist and took in boarders to support Barry and his sister Sandra.

It could get chaotic at home, so Barry spent a lot of time at Joel Ulster's place, even joining them on family trips.

[Transcript] Suspicion | The Billionaire Murders: The hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman / S2 The Billionaire Murders | E4 King and Queen

Joel noticed something about his friend that he believes set Barry apart from other people. Nobody knew how smart he was, he was the smartest person I ever met in my life. You know, he could go through layers and layers and layers and keep focused on it, which I could never do.

There were no sports in Barry's life and at that time, no girls.

He finished high school with the highest marks of anyone in Ontario, but he almost didn't graduate due to a failing mark in gym class.

Joel, ever the loyal friend, found a grade book and changed Barry's score to a passing mark.

Freed from high school, Barry and Joel enrolled at the University of Toronto.

In those days, students had to play a sport. Joel and Barry hit on ping pong.

As to academics, Joel pursued law first, then accounting, looking for something to click.

Barry chose engineering science and graduated top of his class.

Next step would be MIT in Massachusetts.

Barry was planning to be a rocket scientist for NASA, but during the summer, he worked for his uncle Lou Winter, his mother's brother.

Lou was a pioneer in the generic pharmaceutical business.

This would both start Barry on the journey of his life and plant the seeds of a vicious battle that would end just a week before the murders.

Meanwhile, in another part of Toronto, his future life partner was beginning her own journey.

And just like Barry, Honey was a slow starter.

We were very close girlfriends. We used to go out a lot together.

Bryna Steiner, at the time, Bryna Fishman, met Honey when they were in their teens.

They went to Teachers College together on double dates and took trips.

Honey was a night owl, not a morning person.

So if I picked her up on a, for instance, a Saturday at noon, she'd just gotten up.

And then I had to sit there and wait while she had a cup of tea for breakfast and two turtles.

It was always the same breakfast.

A cup of tea.

It was like the candy.

She always had on a Saturday morning, if I picked her up, a cup of tea and two turtles.

And she was very precise.

She'd take her tea bag and swirl it around.

Always.

It always amazed me.

No toast, nothing.

A cup of tea and two turtles.

The stories of Sherman dietary habits are legion.

Barry and his Swiss chalet rotisserie chicken crackers and processed cheese.

Honey with her diet coke and turtles.

Peacans and caramel dipped in chocolate.

What Bryna really liked and admired about Honey was how bold she was.

And then when we went to New York, and this is where Honey was fearless, we met somebody, some guys in the lobby who invited us to a party in the hotel.

[Transcript] Suspicion | The Billionaire Murders: The hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman / S2 The Billionaire Murders | E4 King and Queen

I said, I'm not going.
We don't know who they are.
We could wind up dent.
We're going.
I said, no, I'm not going.
She forced me when we lived to tell the tale.
But in a million years on my own, I would have gone.
She was not afraid of anything.
They could have been mass murderers and she would go.
Honey was down for anything.
I said, honey, we don't know who they are.
Doesn't matter.
We're going.
I was probably shaking in my shoes, but she dragged me.
Once Honey got going, she was unstoppable.
It was Honey who pulled them out of one teacher's college
and got them into another she thought was better.
Now, all of Honey's friends told me she had a big personality.
She could be abrasive, controlling.
She'd snap at waiters, order people around.
I think her upbringing had a lot to do with that.
Her home life wasn't easy.
Quiet father and a mother who some describe as a tyrant, nasty at times,
usually to Honey's younger sister, Mary.
Honey would stick up for her sister, intervene, shoulder the verbal abuse.
Given what their parents, Naftuli and Helen Reich, endured,
this behavior is understandable.
Both were in Nazi slave camps during the war.
After liberation, they were moved to a displaced persons camp in Austria,
where Honey was born.
In the UJA video, Honey tells the story of how they ended up in Toronto.
My parents were actually supposed to get off the train
once they landed in Halifax and put on a train.
They were supposed to actually go to Winnipeg.
And thanks to what was the precursor to Jaius,
the Jewish immigrant aid service,
someone who spoke Yiddish and Polish came on the train and said,
Get off here. We will give you a job.
We will give you a home and we will take care of you.
Honey's parents opened a small shoe store in the west end of Toronto.
Mary recalled the tough times at a cramped house when she spoke at the funeral.
When we were really young, Honey and I didn't know we were poor.
When we got rich, our parents bought a house

[Transcript] Suspicion | The Billionaire Murders: The hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman / S2 The Billionaire Murders | E4 King and Queen

and rented out every square inch of it.
Our house, there was a front room, there was a piano in it.
We didn't realize it was really a hall.
Then there was a kitchen, like people have kitchens,
and then there was our bedroom.
But we didn't know it was a hallway with two folds of cots.
And we never forgot that.
It was a chance encounter that brought Honey and Barry together.
Barry's best friend Joel Ulster was married with children by the early 1970s.
Joel would eventually leave Cindy for Michael,
remarry and start a new life.
But back then, he was living busy days,
little kids running around and working with Barry, a hard taskmaster.
Cindy, Joel's wife, was a nurse,
and she met a candy striper volunteer at her Toronto hospital, Honey Reich.
An introduction was made, and Barry and Honey started dating.
Here's Mary at the funeral.
I remember when I first met Barry, and he was standing in our kitchen.
And I looked at him and he ignored me,
and there he was reading the paper, like I wasn't there being Barry.
And all I could think of was, my sister's going out with this.
Like, what's the deal?
And then over time, I saw that he was this brilliant, wonderful, kind man.
Barry would do a master's and a PhD at MIT in record time.
His focus was on satellite technology.
But a cascade of family health issues would wrench him away from a planned job
in NASA and back to Toronto.
First, it was his Aunt Beverly, Lou Winter's wife.
She was diagnosed with leukemia.
To pay for school, Barry had been working the summers at Lou's company, Empire Labs.
Generic drugs, cheaper versions of drugs originally formulated by big pharma companies,
were just starting to take hold in the market.
When Uncle Lou took Beverly to Bermuda to Convalesce,
Barry had a chance to flex his business muscles during a summer stint,
negotiating a key contract to supply the active ingredient for the generic version of aspirin.
He also figured out a way to boost production.
Here's how Barry described this in his unpublished memoir, A Legacy of Thoughts.
Uncle Lou was very pleased with what I had done.
Although I did not know it at the time,
these summers at Empire Laboratories would later prove to be of critical importance to my future
career.
Back at school the next year, Barry received devastating news.
Uncle Lou had died suddenly.

[Transcript] Suspicion | The Billionaire Murders: The hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman / S2 The Billionaire Murders | E4 King and Queen

While at his office, an aneurysm in his brain had burst.
First, his father, now Uncle Lou,
confirming for Barry what he had always heard about his extended family.
The men die young.
Shortly after that, Aunt Beverly died.
Barry juggled his studies and with best friend Joel Ulster set about buying Empire Labs.
He planned to take the generic drug world by storm.
Government and private insurance plans loved generics.
Cheaper drugs meant cheaper payouts.
But there would be bumps in the road.
We'll be right back.
We'll be right back.
He was up and down always with the business with him in the beginning too.
He'd say we're going to be millionaires and then the next day he'd say we're going to go bankrupt.
It's funny hearing Joel speak about Barry's approach to business.
He took bigger and bigger risks as the years went by.
Betting he could defeat a drug patent and flood the market with his own product.
When? He'd be up hundreds of millions of dollars.
Lose and he might be down half a billion.
But when it came to other risks, well, here's his good friend Fred Steiner.
We went to Vegas once, Brian and Honey and another couple.
Fred had married Brian around the same time that Barry and Honey married.
The couple spent a lot of time together.
I said, Barry, come here, I'm going to show you.
You know, do you know Blackjack?
Well, of course you know.
I said, come here, come to the table.
I said, take out some money.
We're going to, you know, I buy some chips.
Barry takes out a \$10 bill, gets a chip, puts it down at \$5 to \$5, put \$10 down, loses.
He said, okay, that's it.
We were there three days.
He never gambled again.
He said, gamble every day in business.
What do I need this for?
Barry Sherman often said the best investment he ever made was in Fred's business.
By the early 1970s, Barry and Joel had sold empire labs at a profit and were on the verge of launching Apotex.
Fred was from Detroit looking to start a business in Toronto.
Barry gave him free office space and said, go find a company.
I'll invest.
Fred landed on a coffee service for downtown businesses.
This was long before Keurig and Nespresso.

[Transcript] Suspicion | The Billionaire Murders: The hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman / S2 The Billionaire Murders | E4 King and Queen

And Barry was true to his word.

Years later, Barry would gift his part of the company to Fred's son, just one of many examples of quiet behind the scenes generosity.

Fred also had a front row seat at what he believes was the start of Barry Sherman's philanthropy. And I remember once, and I don't know the exact, I couldn't give you the details, but it just always stuck in my mind.

A rabbi called him.

Just to set the scene, Barry and Joel had built a small factory with office space in the north end of Toronto.

There wasn't a lot of privacy.

The rabbi calls him, somebody that knew him, and he says, excuse me, I've got to take that.

Yeah, I said, you want me to leave?

No, no, no, he's got to get rid of this rabbi.

He wants money, I'm sure.

He gets on the phone, he's talking, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, back and forth.

I can see him thinking and then, yeah, well, I don't know.

And then the conversation is going on for 10 minutes or so.

He says, all right, how much is it?

He must have been told.

He says, all right, he says, I'll give it to you about in one condition.

Don't tell anybody that I gave it to you.

Don't tell anybody where you got it.

It was for fixing a school bus for handicapped kids to repair it.

It stuck with me all that time.

That was the first time I saw anything in terms of his, and he said, he didn't want credit.

He didn't want anybody to know that he gave the money.

While Barry worked long hours getting apotex rolling, Honey taught elementary school.

She'd often drive to apotex after work, and they'd share a takeout chicken dinner.

The Shermans wanted to start a family, but a series of miscarriages delayed those plans.

Eventually, Lauren was born in 1976.

But when more miscarriages followed, the Shermans turned to surrogacy, welcoming Jonathan, Alexandra, and Kaelin between 1983 and 1990.

When the kids were little, Barry spent a lot of time at work.

Here's Jonathan's description at the funeral.

Our father was an amazing dad.

We clearly knew why our dad wasn't always present.

He was a pretty busy guy.

But I can remember literally every single individual occurrence when my dad did father stuff with me.

He would come watch me play hockey or baseball once every season or two.

But those few games were my Stanley Cups and my World Series.

With Barry a confirmed workaholic, it was left to Honey to organize daily life.

Here's Jonathan again.

[Transcript] Suspicion | The Billionaire Murders: The hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman / S2 The Billionaire Murders | E4 King and Queen

Our mom was an amazing mother.

Every important detail of our early lives was so well managed and with so much care and confidence.

From carpools to medical appointments to after-school activities every single day of the week, to summer camp and parent-teacher interviews and on and on.

Our mother always had everything taken care of.

It was Honey who went on trips with the children, joining girlfriends and their kids.

On trips like that, her friends got a real sense of how Honey's upbringing and the deprivation her parents suffered shaped her world outlook.

She was a millionaire on the way to being a billionaire, but nothing could go to waste.

On a Colorado ski trip, Honey had filled a shopping cart with 10 cartons of Tropicana orange juice, a product that at the time was not available in Canada.

She'd also bought too much bread and too many cheese slices.

Here's her friend Dahlia Solomon.

Now, the next day we are leaving for Denver because we have to drive to get the plane and we have some orange juice left, some craft cheese slices and some white bread.

She wouldn't leave it there. She took it.

The kids ate it. This is what she made.

She sandwiches and that's what we ate.

So what I'm trying to say to you is there was never waste.

Dahlia and the late Anita Franklin spent a lot of time with Honey.

They're the golf girls who were on a driving trip with Honey shortly before the murders.

What Anita told me was that all jokes aside about the over-purchasing of orange juice, which apparently gave everyone cankersores, Honey was an unusually powerful personality.

She was, she was the life. I don't even know how to describe her.

She was a force that she walked into the room and she was a force.

And I had to be quieter and I just, hello, hello, I'm Honey Sherman.

And she had a wicked sense of humor.

On that Colorado trip, they took a break from the slopes to go horseback riding.

Here's Dahlia.

So we go and there's this really, you know, one of these crappy places that you get on these horses.

And they were, it was spring and it was mud because we went spring skiing.

And they were pretty hairy looking beasts because they'd been out with their winter coats.

Honey's on a course.

And so she looks at the guide and she says, what's the horse's name?

So the guide says Adolf.

So Honey looks and she goes, you think he's going to ask for my papers?

For many people, Barry Sherman's name conjures up images of a hard-nosed, nasty businessman.

The most litigious man in Canada. I've heard that a lot.

Some people theorize that's why he's dead, that big farmer rubbed him out.

But the thing about the generic pharmaceutical business is that since the early 1990s, you had to go to court if you wanted to try and defeat a brand named drug patent.

That's the law.

[Transcript] Suspicion | The Billionaire Murders: The hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman / S2 The Billionaire Murders | E4 King and Queen

Apotex, being the biggest generic company in Canada, was by definition the most litigious. Basically the company was a litigation firm that happened to sell pharmaceuticals. And that was Barry's expertise. He understood the nuances of the law. That's Aubrey Dan. Aubrey's father is Leslie Dan, Barry's arch rival. Aubrey's company was Nova Farm, the other big Canadian generic. Aubrey worked at Nova Farm and in later years became close with Barry. They were actually working on developing a marijuana pill when Barry was murdered. He was smarter than most. He was smarter than most lawyers. And he would push her to the edge. Those who work in pharmaceuticals dismiss the notion that one of the big companies killed Barry and Honey. We sue, they told me. We don't murder. Still, Barry was not known for giving up and there's no doubt he sometimes went too far. Barry Fishman was an executive at two of the big firms, including Teva, the Israeli firm that bought rival Nova Farm. Fishman often went head to head with Apotex. Barry was a master at asking for the stars. Hutzpah. That's maybe the best word that I have to describe Barry. He had tremendous Hutzpah. And, you know, he would sort of like, if you think he was going to come back to you with an offer of X dollars, he'd come back and say, I don't want X dollars. I want 10 X dollars. He had such amazing ability to just, with a straight face, throw out a number that was so far from reality. And at first it was shocking for me. Then after I got to know him, I kind of figured out his negotiation strategy. And I figured there was kind of like a game of chess for him. You know, he was playing, he was trying to determine three moves ahead, and he was trying to, you know, kind of, at the end of the day, he wanted to win. He wanted to leave a transaction as the winner. One thing about the Shermans, everyone who knew them had a story. There's Frugal Barry. Here's his lawyer, Harry Radomsky, speaking about a time before email when he sent legal bills by mail. He called me up one time and he said, you know, I got a complaint. I said, what's that? He said, well, you sent me these 10 accounts and 10 different envelopes. You send them in one, you can save some stamp costs, seriously. It's the only time he's ever complained, ever complained about a bill. There's Persistent Honey. She and a group of friends traveled to India. Each one had a sort of code name for what they brought to the trip. One was the negotiator, one was quality control. Honey was a drug dealer because she brought Apotec supplies in case anyone got sick. One day in the northern city of Varanasi, which is regarded as the spiritual capital of India,

[Transcript] Suspicion | The Billionaire Murders: The hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman / S2 The Billionaire Murders | E4 King and Queen

Honey told the guide they wanted to go to the Ganges River at night when families of deceased loved ones burned the bodies. The guide told them, don't be ridiculous. You couldn't handle it. Honey pushed back. Judy Gottlieb, a friend in the Shermans Other Realtor, picks up the story. And this guide said, well, you might, you might like it. It's not for you. And he sees six women and she says, no, we really want to go tonight. If you can't take us, we're going to find somebody to take us. And as it turns out, that was probably the most spiritual thing we've done. And she was the one that insisted. There's argumentative Barry. Here's Fred Steiner explaining what happened if he brought up sports and Toronto's hockey team, the Maple Leafs. Barry would get pretty wound up. If I said sports, he said, that's the stupidest thing I ever heard. He said, they're not Toronto Maple Leafs. He said, there are a bunch of people from here, here, here, and here. Why are you rooting for Toronto Maple Leafs? He said, there are a bunch of people from different cities. They're not from Toronto. And he said, what makes you want to root for this team over there? We'd argue. There's supportive Barry, who went to the wall for his friends and employees. He personally headhunted Jeremy Desai to be the Apatec CEO years ago, pulling him from a great job and life in England. Jeremy, like Barry, was a scientist which enhanced their bond. Over time, his new CEO got a chance to see how different the real Barry Sherman was from the caricature. It is such a big help. People misunderstood him as a litigious, hard-nosed, stubborn, aggressive businessman. He was the most humble, big-hearted, generous, thoughtful, caring person. That was all behind the facade that people who didn't know him thought totally opposite of. But before Jeremy could even begin at Apatec's, his mother was diagnosed with colon cancer. Jeremy, with no Canadian health insurance, told Barry he couldn't take the job. Barry said, come, bring your mother, wife and kids, and he'd ensure she got the best treatment and he'd cover all medical expenses. Jeremy's mom lived only six weeks after they arrived in Canada, but Barry's gesture forged a bond of loyalty between the two men. So if you think about it, that took year of 2003, new job, new country, bereavement. It was a tough year, but I have to say Barry made it very... He, where there were pinch points or pain points, he took them away from me. Whatever you have to do, do what you have to do, Jeremy. I don't think there's anyone who, on a day-to-day basis, for almost 40 years, spent more time with Barry Sherman than Jack K, his second-in-command at Apatec's.

[Transcript] Suspicion | The Billionaire Murders: The hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman / S2 The Billionaire Murders | E4 King and Queen

The door between their offices was rarely closed.
So I sat there, Barry sat there, and how did we communicate?
Screaming at each other. How'd that?
No, just, actually, when you lowered your voice, and he would come over,
he gave her what I was saying, and I did the same thing.
Jack's not very tall. He's close to his 80s, but he's powerful.
Works out with weights early every morning.
Whenever we get together, I tense up, preparing for that powerful handshake.
He was very different than Barry in so many ways, but they were like brothers.
Jack still tears up five years later thinking about his friend,
recalling how in 1983, Barry tracked him down to Montreal
and convinced him to leave a very good job for Apatec's, then a struggling firm.
I was living in a townhouse in Montreal. He came to the townhouse.
We talked for two hours. We shook hands, didn't discuss money,
and Barry said, Jack, come work with me.
We'll build Apatec's, and we'll make a bit of money and have fun.
But it was something Barry would often say to Jack
that when the murder-suicide theory was floated, stuck in his head.
He was grateful that he got into a business and he could make a difference.
I mean, he used to kibitz and say, I can't die, Jack.
The world can't get along without me. I have to live forever.
You've heard how the police misidentified the manner of death as murder-suicide,
despite forensic evidence and the statements of people like Jack K.
My question, what else did they get wrong?
Next time on The Billionaire Murders.
So you had a dream?
Not many dreams about my father and Barry.
I said, Barry, what are you doing here? I want to talk to you. I go, Barry.
What the fuck happened to you?
Don't ask me. I go, Barry, what happened to you?
For the family, the most perplexing and upsetting aspect of the investigation
was the failure to recognize the obvious, that the bodies of Barry and Honey Sherman
were staged post-mortem in a very deliberate manner.
They go, in my 1-1 call, that's what they said, a medic came from my house.
The Billionaire Murders, the hunt for the killers of Honey and Barry Sherman,
is written and narrated by me, Kevin Donovan.
It was produced by Sean Pattenden, Raju Mudar, Alexis Green and JP Fozo.
Additional production from Brian Bradley and Crawford Blair.
Sound and music was created by Sean Pattenden.
Look out for my book, The Billionaire Murders,
and coming later this year, The Craved Documentary by the same name.
Music