

CRIMINAL

Listen and/or read the podcast and then answer the following questions for each day.

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Link: Criminal Podcast E 71 "A Bump in the Night" Click here for Transcript	Link: Criminal Podcast E 51 "Money Tree" Click here for Transcript <i>(not edited)</i>	Link: Criminal Podcast E 118 "Stowaway" Click here for Transcript <i>(not edited)</i>	Link: Criminal Podcast E 33 "The Dive" Click here for Transcript <i>(not edited)</i>	Link: Criminal Podcast E 49 "The Editor" Click here for Transcript <i>(not edited)</i>
<p>If you could ask the criminal one question, what might it be?</p> <hr/> <p>Has anything similar to this happened to you (even if it turned out to be nothing)?</p>	<p>How did Pam Elliot's personality assist her with this crime? Do you agree with Axton's assessment?</p> <hr/> <p>How did the music enhance the story?</p> <hr/> <p>How did this crime change Axton?</p>	<p>Paulette was certainly a quick thinker. Describe two scenes and/or instances that prove this quality.</p> <hr/> <p>If Paulette had the opportunity to go on this adventure again, do you think she would? Why or why not?</p>	<p>What did you learn about taking risks from Sgt. David Mascarenas?</p> <hr/> <p>David's wife speaks about experiencing several emotions at once. Can you relate to this statement? Explain.</p>	<p>How did going to prison transform Robin Woods' life?</p> <hr/> <p>In what ways do you think Mark Stevens changed Robin's life?</p> <hr/> <p><i>Additional podcasts if you would like to listen to more:</i> Bully Masterpiece Melinda and Judy* Or search "Criminal Podcasts" <i>*contains violence</i></p>

Criminal Podcast Episode 71 “A Bump in the Night” Transcript

► 00:00:23

Narrator Phoebe Judge: Well, let's just start with you introducing yourself.

Amber: My name is Amber Don and I live with my family in Berwyn, Illinois. I work as an animal trainer at the Shedd Aquarium and that's about it.

N: What kind of animals do train?

A: Mostly penguins and otters but I also work with all of our animals in the Marine Mammal Department.

N: What do you train a penguin to do?

A: Mostly husbandry care so we practice going to the vet with them. We asked them to be calm in our lap and calm with other people. We can teach them to spin and to follow us. Train them, you know, to come to their names. You can teach a penguin almost anything.

N: So do you have like penguin friends, ones that you like more than others?

A: Well, I love all of our penguins but I do have my favorites. I helped hand-raised 11 of them. So um yeah, I mean a penguin chooses you. They choose you to be their person and then every time you come out on to exhibit, they come out of the water and run up to you and do their little flirty behavior. I knew I wanted to work with animals ever since I was a small child so I started working with them years ago.

N: We're here to talk about something that happened longer ago than that. Um, how long ago were you living in that apartment in Washington?

A: 21 years ago.

N: Long before she worked with penguins, Amber Dawn moved to one of the rainiest places in America, the small town of Enumclaw, Washington, to be closer to her brother and sister-in-law.

A: It was gorgeous. I could see Mount Rainier out of my bedroom window of this apartment, like right there. It was gorgeous.

N: She moved into a small apartment building. Her apartment was on the top floor. A one-bedroom with a little dining room, a living room and kitchen, and a balcony on the front. She was 20.

A: The first night I moved in, I know I had, I had been playing music while I was unpacking. And I went to bed that night, and I turned off the music, and I was laying in my bed and I heard footsteps in the attic. And they were very clear footsteps and, um, I wasn't quite sure why I would be hearing that but you know, whenever you move into a new apartment, you know, you start to notice all the little different sounds that that particular space makes. Um, and so I wasn't quite sure what it was but it sounded like footsteps.

N: Had you been told that there was an attic in the apartment or did you have an entrance to the attic in your apartment?

A: There was a crawl space that, um it was just a little push up. I don't even know what you would call it like a-

N: -like a trapdoor in the ceiling kind of.

A: Sort of, yeah, it's like it would push up into the ceiling so it was like a square maybe two and a half by two and a half feet, that push up into the ceiling and that came into my bedroom. Or it was in my bedroom ceiling so I could see it from my bed. And I thought okay you're, you know, that's probably not what it is. You know, you have an act-I like, I know I have an active imagination, so I just, you know, fell asleep anyway. But the next day, I went to the landlord and I told them, you know, I think I heard footsteps up there last night. Is there any way that anybody could be up there? And she told me no. She said it was probably squirrels or raccoon or something. I was like well, that squirrels were in a pretty big set of boots then.

N: We've all had that feeling that something isn't quite right and we're very good at talking ourselves down, going on with our lives, telling ourselves that it's all in our imagination. And most of the time, it is. I'm Phoebe Judge. This is Criminal.

A: I was very meticulous. You know, everything was very organized. I knew what was in my cupboards, and I would buy a six-pack of soda. I would drink one, maybe take one to work with me, and I would come back and there would be three left. And it's like, well did I drink two? That's odd. Or like cans of soup would be missing.

N: What did you do? What did you think was happening?

A: Well, I had moved to Enumclaw to be close to my brother and he lived about three blocks away. He had a key to the apartment. I assumed that he was coming into my apartment and eating my food because that is something he would do. Just come over and grab a can of soda or whatever. So I thought it was him.

N: Did you confront him?

A: Yeah, I called him. I told him, you know, I can't afford to feed you. Don't come over here and eat my food. It wasn't happening all the time, I just went down to say every now and again.

N: Amber wasn't home much. She was working several jobs: processing papers for an accountant, working at the local drugstore, and waitressing at night. So when she noticed that little things in her apartment had been moved, she'd second-guess herself, chalk it up to exhaustion. She was starting to feel at home in Enumclaw. She had her two cats and then she got a puppy.

A: She was a beautiful German Shepherd mix. She was maybe nine or ten weeks old.

N: So really little?

A: Yeah, she was just a baby. So she was learning to be potty trained. So I would come home in between my jobs and walk her. I was kenneling her in the bathroom while she was, you know, learning her manners and learning to be potty trained. I kept her in the bathroom with, you know, newspaper on the floor and water and toys and stuff.

N: One night she was waitressing when she got a call from her landlord saying that her bathroom was flooding.

A: My downstairs neighbor was getting rained on in her bathroom so I came home and we came in and I opened up the bathroom door and my puppy was in the bathroom sink. I asked her, "did you put her in the sink?" She's like, "no we wouldn't open the door because we didn't know how big the dog was. We didn't know if it was people-friendly so this is why you had to come here." That there's no way she could have gotten into that sink. She was a little puppy and the toilet was, you know, far enough away from the sink that she wouldn't have been able to climb.

N: Was there water all over the ground?

A: Uh-huh, it was a big mess.

N: But the puppy was dry, like safe in the sink.

A: Yeah, she was sitting in the sink.

N: But like someone must have put her in the sink, right? There's no way she could have -

A: Yes, someone must have put her in that sink.

N: Enumclaw is a tiny, safe, farming community. Nothing ever went on there so anytime Amber got worried she just reminded herself that her brother and sister-in-law were three blocks away. She kept herself busy. She'd been living in her apartment for about six months when she got sick and called into her jobs. So on this day, for the very first time, she didn't leave her apartment at all.

A: It was around seven o'clock at night. I was on the couch and I was watching my stories, watching my TV, and I heard a loud thump in the bedroom. I just dismissed it because I have animals and they make noise. I just dismissed it and kept on watching television. Later on that evening around 11:00 or so, I turned off all the lights, I drew a bath, I got undressed, and I got into the bathtub. So I'm in the bathtub, I got a candle lit, and I look up and that crawl space door was open. Everything just slowed way down.

N: You're in the bathtub -

A: -I'm in the bathroom-

N: -Naked in the bathtub-

A: -Naked in the bathtub, in the dark. I must have sat in that bathtub for 10 to 15 seconds after seeing that crawl space door open but it felt like five minutes and I put it all together. Like okay, the footsteps the first night, the doors being closed when I had left them open, the missing food, Thea my dog in the sink - there was someone living in my house with me. So I very calmly got out of the tub and got my robe. I put it on. There's only one place he could have been hiding and that was in the bedroom closet. I had to walk by the closet in order to get out and the closet were those mirror doors and that was really scary to see myself, you know, in the dark knowing that he was on the other side of that door.

N: Did you say anything?

A: No, if he would have opened that door, if I would have seen him, I would have lost it. He's been living in my apartment for six months. If he wanted to hurt me... that's not what he wants, he just needs a place to stay. He's probably not a bad guy, like he put Thea in the sink, like he's... I

don't want to freak him out, I don't want to scare him by screaming and yelling because then he might hurt me so that he doesn't get caught. So I very quietly walked past the closet and I didn't go out the door, I went to the phone and under my phone I had a junk drawer and in the junk drawer there was a hammer. So I had the hammer in my hand, claw out, so if anybody came at me they're going to get a face full of hammerclaw. I called my sister-

N: -this was before most of us had cell phones. So Amber had to stay in the apartment and use the landline. She told her sister-in-law that someone was in her house and her sister-in-law told her to get out of there as fast as she could.

A: So I grabbed my puppy and I walked out the door. I walked out the door in my robe with a hammer in one hand and a puppy in the other. I got to the bottom of the stairs and I was looking at the apartment door knob (thinking) please don't come out, please don't come out, please don't come out, because like I said, if I would have seen him I think I would have lost it. She was there within minutes with her two giant German shepherds in the back of her car. We went to her house and we called the police.

N: What did they find out?

A: Well the police came to the apartment but he was gone.

N: In the attic, the police found a little bit of food, a book, and a sleeping bag.

A: I don't know how he was getting the apartment. I mean I left a window open for my cats so he could have gone in and out that way. I had a spare key, he could have taken my spare keys and made a copy too. I mean I don't know. He could have lived there before me and maybe the managers didn't change the locks, I don't know.

N: She filed a police report and while Amber believes it was a man, there's no way to know. Whoever was living up there was never found. We spoke to Amber's brother, Eric Olson, and he remembers just how nervous and scared she was through the whole thing, and how relieved she was to get out of there. We also asked if he remembered Amber accusing him of stealing food from her apartment. He said that sounds about right. It's been more than 20 years and Amber says she still wishes she could find this person and ask them what was going on. (to Amber) Did you stay in the apartment?

A: No, my grandparents came over the next day and we moved out. We moved all my stuff out.

N: You think that if there is a stranger in the house, like the puppy would have been barking.

A: Yeah well, I got her while I lived there so as far as she knew, that's normal. You know, mom goes to work and then-

N:-Dad-

A: -yeah my friend comes down from the attic and hangs out in place with me. So when he came at night, she didn't bark, she just like oh hey.

N: In her next apartment, she made the landlord padlock the attic door. It makes me so nervous now because I lose things and think I've done that, like wait a second, did I drink that? Did I eat that? And I'm like Phoebe, no you're fine, but now I'm really you've given us all reason to be really worried. Like now maybe there is someone in here, you know.

A: Not that I want to make everybody paranoid but I think you just have to listen to your instincts. I think that's what I've learned from this. Like deep down I knew what was going on but I didn't trust myself. You know, I thought I was just imagining it but I think since then I have learned to listen to my instincts and if my instincts are telling me that something is not right, then something's not right.

N: So now do you ever do things like check in the garbage can to count how many soup cans there are or?

A: No, I live with a family. Nothing is ever where it was placed, you know. I have no idea how many cans of soup I have in the cupboard.

Closing statements