

Thinking Sideways Podcast

Episode 6: Kaspar Hauser

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[**Theme song plays**]

Joe: Well, hello. Welcome to the show and tonight we're going to talk about something extremely mysterious, something some of you may have heard about before but probably not. I'm Joe.

Devin: I'm Devin.

Steve: I'm Steve.

Joe: And this is Thinking Sideways. Most of you have probably not heard of the mystery of Kaspar Hauser, which is something that actually occupied a good deal of Germany, even the rest of Europe, in the 19th century. So, let's start from the beginning. From the very beginning, I'll tell you how I heard this story first. Years ago, I read in this book by this guy named Frank Somebody who wrote a lot of lurid books about crap that never really happened. He wrote this very, very lurid account of the whole thing, which is that this boy mysteriously shows up in the town of Hamburg, Germany and he was not able to say anything except, "I want to be a soldier like my father." And then...

[**Suspenseful music begins**]

Joe: ...he sort of just hangs around for several years, picks up a few social skills beyond being able to say, "I want to be a soldier like my father." Then eventually, is murdered. He comes stumbling out of this park in Hamburg with a mortal knife wound in his chest and he dies several days later.

[**Suspenseful music fades out**]

Joe: Most mysteriously about all, this murder takes place in the middle of the winter. There's snow on the ground and there's no footprints but his own in this park.

Devin: Dun dun dun!

Joe: Uh huh, exactly. So that was my fist exposure to Kaspar Hauser's mystery. It's a good way to make a living, though, just thinking of stuff like this and spinning really lurid tales out of it and putting it in these books and selling them and making money.

Steve: Well, that's going to be my next job.

Joe: That's kind of what we're going to do here when we start getting advertisers. So anyway, here's the story as it happened. Briefly, May 1828, a boy of approximately 16 years old appears in the streets of Nuremburg, Germany. He had a letter with him addressed to the captain of the 4th squadron of the 6th cavalry regiment, Captain von Wessenig. He was taken to this captain by a shoemaker who happened to spot him in the streets and apparently, according to legend, Kaspar Hauser was walking unsteadily, almost as if drunk. So, the shoemaker takes an interest in him and when he walks up to him, he hands this letter to him and the letter is addressed to the captain. He is taken by the shoemaker to meet the captain, who is apparently not at home at the moment. So, the servants have them wait out in the garden and they give them some food, which includes sausage and beer, which Kaspar spits out...

Devin: What?

Joe: ...I know, exactly.

Steve: Beer and sausage is awesome!

Joe: ...I know! I know - as if he has never had these things before, but eventually, he does eat some bread and water...

Devin: Hmm...

Joe: ...and eats them as if he's quite hungry. Eventually, when the captain comes home and he gets to read this letter, the letter says, quote: From the Bavarian border, the place is unnamed, the author said the boy was given to his custody as an infant on the 7th of October, 1812. He instructed him in reading, writing, and Christian religion but never let him take, quote, "a single step out of my house," unquote. The letter stated the boy would now like to be a cavalryman like his father was and invited the captain either to take him in or to hang him.

Steve: Oh, that's nice.

Joe: Yeah!

Devin: Fatherly. Really fatherly.

Steve: Yes!

Joe: Yeah, this was actually not the father of the child, this was somebody apparently who supposedly was just a day laborer or something who didn't have a lot of cash laying around. The infant was given to him by supposedly Kaspar's mother and the father had actually, according to her in this letter, been in this cavalry infantry and the intention was is that he should be raised to the age of 17 or 16 or whatever the proper age is and then become a soldier in this cavalry. So he came with two letters. There was this one and there was another one supposedly from his mother to the caretaker who wrote the other letter. It said his name was Kaspar and he was born on April 30th, 1812 and his father, a cavalryman in the 6th regiment, was dead. At this point, he is taken into custody and put in what's called the Vetsner Gate Tower in care of a jailer and he essentially is being watched over by this guy and his family and his kids and he is exhibiting some strange behaviors. Later on, he wound up writing his own autobiography in which he claimed that he had been kept in a hole in the ground, which was about 2 meters wide by a meter and a half wide by a meter and a half tall.

Steve: So, convert that to feet. That's 3 foot by 6 foot?

Joe: Yeah, it's about 6 six feet by about 4-5 feet by about 5 feet tall with a straw mat to sleep on.

Steve: Okay. That's a very small cell...

Joe: Yeah... fed bread and water and the only thing he had to play with was a carved wooden horse.

Devin: Hmm.

Joe: Yes.

Steve: Kids today are way spoiled. All he had was a carved horse and he was happy.

Joe: I know.

Devin: I don't know if happy is the right word.

[**Steve laughs**]

Steve: All right, you've got me there.

Joe: Yeah. So he was mostly in a darkened cell. He would find bread and water next to his bed every morning. Occasionally, the water would taste bitter and drinking it would cause him to sleep more heavily because obviously, he'd been roofied.

[Everybody laughs]

Joe: And on such occasions, when he woke up, he'd find his nails had been trimmed and his hair had been cut and his bed had been changed. So, he was kept alone in this dark, little cell, according to himself, for many, many years and eventually the guy who was keeping him in this cell took him out and they went on a little road trip on foot to Nuremburg, where this guy basically took him to the city limits and then cut him loose and he wandered into the street and the rest is history. So, he's found by the shoemaker, taken to the captain, turned over to the jailer who keeps him in custody for a while, and he went through a period of several years when he was under the care and tutelage of various people and he quickly learned to read and write, in fact, suspiciously so, according to some people because he came in basically being kind of almost a feral child, barely able to speak, unable to eat, read, and write. It probably didn't match in that after the captain took him to the police station, when he was not able to get a coherent answer out of him about anything and one of the police man had this idea to hand him a pen and a piece of paper so he write his name Kaspar Hauser, on that. Other than that, he was not able to say much other than "I don't know," and "I want to be a soldier like my father."

Steve: Wait, so somebody took the time to, though not hang out with him, teach him how to sign his name?

Joe: Yeah, I know. It's a little weird, isn't it?

Steve: That smells a little fishy.

Joe: Yeah, I know. And there's a lot about this and which is one of the things about the story that's one of the most interesting things about this story is that it still captures so many people's imagination.

Steve: Okay, well let's hear what happened because I'm still skeptical.

Joe: Yeah, well, exactly. There's a lot about it that's still a mystery. But we're all about solving mysteries, so all of you out there who have been puzzling for decades over this mystery, we're going to solve it for you tonight. So as I said, and I'm not going to go into great detail about this stuff, about the various people he came under the tutelage of. One of them was an English nobleman named Lord Stanhope, who was a great philanthropist and who actually, once he took him under his wing, paid his living expenses for the rest of his life, which actually didn't go on for very long. I'll run back a little bit. There was an incident where he was cut in the forehead and according to him, somebody - and he said it was the same person who took him to Nuremburg...

Steve: The person who raised him.

Joe: Yeah. The same man showed up, slashed him with a knife on the forehead and basically said if you leave this city, you are a dead man. It's still kind of ambiguous as to whether this actually happened or what if perhaps he inflicted the wound on himself..

Steve: Mhm...

Joe: And so, there was that. Along about 1829 or so, there began to be speculation because word got out about Kaspar and people came from all over the city to see him because he was such a curiosity. And word got out, a rumor started that he was perhaps royalty and that perhaps, he was actually a prince of the House of Baden and I'm not a student of European royalty, but apparently the House of Baden is related to Napoleon, etcetera.

Steve: Oh, okay.

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: Mmm.

Steve: So that's a long lineage or a well-known lineage.

Joe: Yeah. So anyway, apparently, there was a prince born in 1812 who died at the age of about two and a half weeks.

Devin: Hmm...

Joe: Yeah. The story goes that perhaps, there was a competing contingent of the family that because Kaspar, if he was indeed the prince, would have been the last surviving person in that line...

Steve: Mhm.

Joe: ...and therefore would have gone over to the father's brother and his descendants, and so the theory is that if Kaspar had been that baby and if they had say, for example, swapped and found a baby that was already dying of natural causes, do a quick swap, send Kaspar off to the sticks or whatever, who cares, the baby dies, and the kingship passes over to the uncle.

Steve: Mhm.

Joe: Sucks for Kaspar. So, that rumor started about 1829 and it persisted actually for many years. Actually, there were people up in the 20th century doing DNA analysis on what they believe to be

remnants of Kaspar Hauser's hair, for example, to see if perhaps he is related to the House of Baden. Actually, the results were inconclusive. It was like, "Yeah, there's a strong correlation but not quite strong enough to prove anything." So anyway, that's where it's at.

Steve: So, it's a tenuous theory at best.

Joe: Yeah, and it's not supported by some of the other facts, which is that doing a baby swap in a house of royalty is probably not that easy, you know? [laughs]

Steve: I wouldn't think so.

Devin: I would imagine that would be something that they would try to make very hard.

Joe: You would think so, yeah. Okay. But anyway, that was a widely believed theory. So therefore, that kind of lends support to this whole thing, that a guy shows up and threatens him if he ever leaves Nuremburg, his life is forfeit, yadda yadda yadda, slashes him with a knife. And so, a bunch of stuff went by. He was living with and under the tutelage of various people, many of which he seemed to eventually alienate, and then at the very end, he winds up stabbed in the chest, fatally. It took him three days to die.

Steve: Oh. That's not fun.

Joe: No, not really, no. So December 1833 - so this is five years after he was actually found - comes home with a wound in his chest and he claims that he was lured to the Ansbach Court Garden in Nuremburg and that a stranger tried to hand him a purse, and while handing him the purse, stabbed him in the chest. And there was a message in the purse, because the police went to the park and then found it, and the message read: "Hauser will be / able to tell you quite precisely how / I look and from where I am. / To save Hauser the effort, / I will tell you myself from where / I come (blank blank). / I come from (blank blank) / the Bavarian border (blank blank) / On the river (blank blank blank) / I will even tell you the name: M. L. O." So, initials. So, a cryptic message.

Steve: Wait, I'm confused. What's the blanks? Were those dashes in the letter or what's going on there? I'm a little confused because I've seen that, I've seen something on this story, and that's never made sense to me. I am "blank". Is this...?

Devin: Yeah, are you telling us or not?

Joe: I know.

Steve: Is this...? Yeah.

Joe: It's like saying, "The story I will tell you now and now I'm not going to tell you." [laughs]

Devin: "I'll tell you my name is..."

Steve: "I wrote this out ahead of time so that when I got there and could tell the coast was clear I was going to write it in myself."

Joe: I know.

Steve: It seems weird...

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: Super weird.

Steve: ...that there's these pre-made blanks.

Joe: Yeah, and so anyway, again, this depends the mystery because even though there's a lot of absurdities and inconsistencies, people want to believe what they want to believe and so a lot of people after he died were saying he was murdered because he was the rightful prince and yadda yadda.

Steve: Why was he at the park, do we know?

Joe: He later said that he was tricked into going to the park with the promise of information about his mother.

Devin: Ooh.

Joe: But he didn't say who. I mean, obviously he had three days to die so plenty of time to spill the beans about everything but he didn't give out any useful information, apparently. He didn't say, for example, whether he was sent a note or if somebody told him this in person or what. So, he waited by the Artesian well in park. No one came. So he went across to the park where a man was waiting for him. They walked together in the freezing cold. The man made as if to give him a document and suddenly stabbed him in the side, puncturing his lung, piercing his liver, and then ran off. He goes back, he staggers back home, saying, "Man, stab, knife," da-da-da-da-da, "gave purse, go look quickly..." They go and they find this purse and they find this note inside the purse, but this is the thing, is that the note was written in mirror script so essentially you hold a piece of paper up to the mirror and you write backwards.

Steve: Oh, okay. I got it, I got it.

Devin: Oh...

Joe: And it was folded in a way that was apparently characteristic of Kaspar Hauser himself.

Steve: How was it folded?

Joe: It was folded diagonally so instead of folding it like this...

Steve: So a square...

Devin: Instead of hot dog or hamburger...

Joe: Folded corner to corner instead of edge to edge. So you fold it diagonally, basically.

Steve: Got it.

Joe: So it was folded in a manner... And so, this guy, even though he was a clever huckster in my opinion, and a very good conman, was not that bright about covering his tracks when he does things like forge murder notes. So anyway...

Devin: So, I'm sorry - we do or do not know if it was just left blank or they just never released that information or...?

Joe: No, it was left blank.

Devin: It was left blank.

Joe: It was blank, yeah.

Devin: Huh.

Steve: Yeah. And he was stabbed, Joe, you said...

Joe: In the left chest. The left side of the chest.

Steve: The left side of the chest, through the lung and into the liver?

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: Is that a direct or an upward stroke or a downward stroke?

Joe: Well, that's the thing that's kind of mysterious about the whole thing, because if indeed it is true that his liver was punctured, as you know, your liver is on the right side of your chest. It's not all on the right side but in order to stab somebody through the lung and into the liver, you're talking about... at least four or five inches...

Steve: Mhm.

Joe: ...knife, if not longer. And so...

Devin: And is it an easy way to stab yourself?

Joe: Well, that was the thing, is the speculation is that he stabbed himself to get attention.

Devin: Ah.

Joe: And the same thing with the slashing of the forehead incident where this guy threatened if he ever left the city of Nuremburg then his life was forfeit.

Devin: Mhm.

Joe: And that is that he was just trying to keep his little legend alive because he liked the attention. Also, by the way, that kept people coming to him like Lord Stanhope, who were benefactors who would actually pay for his expenses and stuff like that...

Devin: Sure

Joe: ...and keep him going.

Steve: So essentially, he screwed up and the first time he slashed himself it wasn't that deep, so, "Hey, I can do it again. But now I have this knife and - uh-oh. That went way deeper than I expected. And that hurts a lot more."

Joe: Yeah. Well, that's the thing about it that is a little mysterious. Because if you want to stab yourself, driving a knife that deep into your body, even by accident, is pretty difficult. Forensic specialists did actually agree that it's entirely possible that he could have inflicted the wound on himself.

Steve: Mhm.

Joe: But if you think about it, if you're going to puncture your lung and your liver, you've got to drive that knife in pretty damn deep.

Devin: Pretty far...

Joe: Yeah, so maybe somebody did stab him. But, at the same time, there were people around who didn't like Kaspar because apparently, the guy was a really major flaming jerk. And he was widely regarded as a huge liar by the people that knew him very well. So the public who didn't know him well were all enraptured by his story but the people that actually spent a lot of time with him all uniformly seem to come away convinced that the guy was a massive liar.

Steve: Well I can see... Okay. I can see that somebody did it, but I can also see a guy who isn't that smart about things. We've all seen movies where somebody is going to fake that they got beat up so they run their head into the doorframe...

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: ...and then go "Oh, ow that really hurts more than I thought!"

Joe: Yeah!

Steve: And I can just see him going, "I need to jab this in but I know that as soon as I stab myself it's going to hurt, I'm going to pull it out, and it's not going to be credible enough..."

Joe: So he's going to slam himself against the wall.

Steve: Yeah, exactly. "Okay, 1, 2, 3 - oof! Oh... Oh, I shouldn't have used the 18-inch knife. Owww, that hurts more than I expected."

Joe: Yeah...

Devin: Yeah!

Steve: I can see that happening because people have poor judgment and poor pre-planning about these kind of things, as we well know. You see things like that in the news all the time!

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: So, did they ever find the knife?

Joe: No, actually. They didn't. And it's actually one of those things, too, where he was lying on his deathbed, he was probably thinking, "Wow, I really should have sterilized that blade before I ran it through my side."

[**Everybody laughs**]

Devin: Ah, geez.

Joe: Yeah, dumbass. Yeah, no. They did find the purse with the note in it, of course. Getting back to the beginning, the letters he carried with him, one of which was from supposedly his mother, the other was from the guy who raised him in the dark little cell in the ground.

Steve: Yeah.

Joe: They were written in the same handwriting.

Steve: What?

Devin: Hmm.

Steve: Wait, wait, wait... say that again?

Joe: They were written in the same handwriting.

Devin: Wow!

Joe: Yeah...

Steve: Are those notes still... I mean, are they still around at all?

Joe: You know, that's a good question, I don't know... I really don't know.

Steve: Because if Kaspar is so... nefariously devious – he's so nefarious, but so devious about making things for himself, then I would say, well let's compare the "mirror script handwriting letter" to the ones

that say “I want to be in the cavalry” and see if they’re the same handwriting, because that would prove if he did it himself or not.

Joe: Mhm. Yeah. Yeah, in the note in the purse they are not specific about this, but the note that was found had a spelling error and a grammatical error, both of which were fairly typical for him. So, the writing wasn’t necessarily a smoking gun, but apparently those errors were kind of a little bit of a smoking gun. You know, again, it’s hard to say, but it appears to me that the guy was just a fraud. And then made up this weird shtick, that would get him some attention, and would get him taking care of, versus just being this peasant kid, who’s a homeless kid, living in the streets of Germany and whatever and it seemed to work really well for him... except, you know, his like megalomania sort of like took over and eventually killed him. He killed himself with the knife.

Steve: Accidentally.

Joe: Accidentally. Or somebody stabbed him. It could quite be. Maybe somebody just didn’t like him and decided to stab him.

Steve: When was he stabbed?

Joe: December 1833.

Steve: So it’s December in Nuremburg, which means it’s covered in snow.

Joe: Cold and snowy.

Steve: Ok. So they went back to find where he was at and follow his blood trail from where he came from...

Joe: Absolutely, they go to the park. And they found his footprints and no other footprints.

Steve: Was there... paths in the area that were kept up to be clear that he could’ve been walking on, if there was a second person?

Joe: Yeah, exactly. You know, again, the accounts are a little vague on that whole thing. All they say is they found his footprints in the snow and no one else’s, which implies to me, that if the paths had been cleared, they hadn’t been cleared after every snow flurry, and so they were able to find his footprints but nobody else’s, which is why they thought that he stabbed himself.

Steve: Whoa, I’ll play –

Joe: Or like other people like this Frank what's-his-name, that I read years ago...

Steve: Wait, I'll play devil's advocate, let's say that the paths were relatively clear, and you only find one set of footprints and that's because he walked off onto the path, met the person, got stabbed, and walked back. Well, the other person would probably...

Joe: Stay on a path.

Steve: ...look for a fast getaway, yeah exactly, stay on a path. "I want to run as fast as I can, let's not go through six inches of snow, let's just go through a cleared path, then just hustle out of here."

Devin and Joe: Yeah.

Joe: Yeah, and unfortunately on all the accounts that I read, nobody gives that amount of detail, about whether the paths had been cleared and shoveled outside.

Steve: It's 200 years ago, of course not.

Joe: Yeah, so... [laughs]

Steve: The accounts were not as detailed as they are now.

Joe: Yeah so, it might be that if you could research it, somebody might have written a very detailed account that actually had that information in it, but I haven't seen it. But it's quite possible.

Devin: How old did Kaspar appear to be? Did he appear to be the age he claimed, or...

Joe: They said he appeared to be between the ages of fifteen and eighteen when he showed up, that's what they thought.

Devin: So he maybe looked younger than...

Joe: Yeah, and it was in the year 1828, and these letters claimed in it that he had been born in 1812, so they assumed the letters were true, and that he was sixteen.

Devin: Huh.

Joe: Perhaps he was a little older.

Steve: So if he was sixteen – then according to that account he'd been sixteen, he died at 21?

Joe: Yeah, he died pretty young.

Steve: Yeah, that is really young...

Devin: That's really young today, yeah.

Steve: Goodness, they gave him beer when he was sixteen.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: I know, they gave him a beer and sausage.

[**Steve laughs**]

Joe: The dumbass spat it out, I know, are you kidding me? Yeah, it's one of those eternal mysteries, but it persists to this day. They did DNA analysis. Obviously, DNA analysis has not been around for very long. Der Spiegel reported an attempt to match a blood sample from underpants, assumed to have been his, and apparently they were the wrong underpants, because in 2002 – this was in '96 when Der Spiegel reported this – in 2002, the Institute of Forensic Medicine for the University of Münster analyzed hair and body cells from locks of hair and items of clothing that had belonged to him, but while the items all matched DNA-wise, they did not match the blood from the 1996 thing, which means that they were using the wrong blood. They compared that to a DNA segment from Astrid von Medinger - I think I pronounced that right - a descendant in the female line of Stephanie de Beauharnais - I think I'm pronouncing that right - who was from the house of Baden. They were not identical but it was definitely a possibility that there was a relationship between Kaspar Hauser and the house of Baden, but...

Steve: Now the...

Joe: On the other hand...

Steve: ... the DNA sample that they were referencing against, was that someone that was alive at the same time, or someone in modern times?

Joe: This I don't know, I assume there was somebody in the house of Baden that was actually alive and willing to provide a sample.

Steve: So modern times. So we've got 200 years of... between for genetics to change, so that would add the mystery or the inconclusiveness.

Devin: Sure.

Joe: Yeah and so there was a relatively high similarity in DNA, not enough to be conclusive. And as far as matching, the DNA was definitely De Beauharnais, who would have been his mother or the child that was buried, because obviously their remains are known and they could be dug up and we could get a little DNA, but the House of Baden does not permit that.

Steve: Shocking!

Devin: Mhm.

Joe: Shocking, I don't think I would permit that either, actually.

[Joe laughs]

Devin: Yeah...

Steve: "There is this urban legend that this guy is related to us, why don't we just go ahead and dig up all our old relatives, what the heck."

Joe: Yeah, exactly, so it's an interesting little thing which is, maybe all that stuff was true, but mostly I think it's probably a fraud, and I think a lot of people bought into it, because people wanted to buy into lurid stuff like that.

Steve: So you're convinced he's a sham.

Joe: Not a hundred percent, but... 95% convinced he's a sham, yes.

Steve: How about you, Devin?

Devin: I don't know. I don't know where I come down on this, I think that it's hard for me to imagine someone being so desperate for attention that they would stab themselves that deep, even by accident. But I... I don't really know where I stand on that, I'd have to do a little more research, I think.

Joe: Yeah?

Devin: Yeah.

Steve: I have mixed feelings on it. So I don't say that he was a huckster or sham, but I'm not convinced that it was the way that Kaspar said it happened... the only reasons that I say that is I've read some accounts of this, and the things that didn't ring true for me against Kaspar is the fact that the incident where somebody barged in on him in the bathroom, and cut him in the forehead...

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: ... the problem that I had with that, and there's other accounts that were similar where he had evidently had a couple run-ins of getting stabbed or beat up and stuff like that by bad people...

Joe: Yeah, yeah.

Steve: ...is that in that particular one where he got his head cut, they followed the blood trail.

Joe: Yeah, exactly.

Steve: ... from the bathroom to his room and then to the cellar where he had gone to hide, and it's very plausible, and people said, "Well, he didn't really think this through very well as he cut himself and then said: 'Oh, what am I gonna do with the razor?'" washed it off, went back to his room, put it in his room and then went and hid, which seems like poor planning, which a lot of these things seem as if... From the outside they're very sensational, but once you look at them, it's very poorly planned...

Joe: Yeah, yeah.

Steve: ... which is somebody's got this great idea, but they just don't think about how to tie it together, and so it just... it's really loose and...

Joe: Yeah, and the whole...

Steve: There's nothing credible about it.

Joe: Yeah, exactly, the whole idea that you know, like say for example if I was stabbed or slashed by somebody, I would run to where there were people.

Steve: Exactly!

Joe: Yeah, I wouldn't run and hide in a cellar where I'm isolated and can be stabbed again, it doesn't make sense.

Steve: Yeah, and here's the other problem with that. Do you ... and this is again, I've seen in the accounts... that's the hard part, the accounts are 200 years old. People are interpreting them, because the language is different now than it was then. But the accounts talk about the fact that he had been in a big argument or had been chastised by the people that were currently hosting him in their home, so he was in trouble. He got in trouble, and he got his hands slapped for doing something wrong and bad, and he wanted to get in everybody's good graces, so "I'm gonna get attacked and everybody will love me and hug me and forget about that I did wrong".

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: And it's like a 5 year old, or a 3 year old, I...

Devin: Yeah...

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: "The cat broke that, I didn't break that. Oh God, the kitty scratched me." kind of...

Devin: Yeah, I was going to say that, actually my B evidence for him actually being a part of the royal family, because that's very indicative of inbreeding...

[Joe and Steve laugh]

Joe: There you go. That's so true, but the thing about it is, it's true, you know what happened was consistent about him was, he was taken in by a lot of different people and families and stuff, and consistently he managed to alienate all of them.

Steve: Mhm.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: Every single one of them, because if everybody came away with the impression that he was an incredible liar and a fraud, and there's something else I was going to say. Yeah, another huge glaring inconsistency or just whatever you want to call it, is the claim to have been kept for sixteen years in a little hole, be fed nothing but bread and water. Well, excuse me, you would die. I mean, seriously.

Steve: That's very true.

Joe: Yeah, you're not going to be able to survive on that diet. I'm sorry. And so, like I said, he comes into town with two letters written in the same handwriting, written by two people sixteen years apart, but they are in the same handwriting, and so, I think what this is, the strongest, the best answer for this whole thing is that many, many people wanted to believe something that was just outlandishly silly and ...

Steve: And people want to believe!

Joe: ... and they, yeah, and they do want to believe and so, even to this day, people believe in this... crap.

Steve: Well obviously, we're curious about wanting, possibly wanting to believe, because we're still doing stories like this. This is what we do. We all look into this stuff, 'cause we ...

Joe: Mhm.

Steve: ...still, we find it fascinating! So, and I mean, we're almost on the same level, it's just that we have the benefit of all this research coming ahead of us.

Joe: Yeah, super high IQ's and just really super good looks and...

[**Devin and Steve laugh**]

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: We've got all of that that you people out there don't have, sorry.

Steve: Yeah, you know, I get off a model runway, I take off my awesome sunglasses, I shake out my full head of hair and I walk and I go ahead and start researching stuff like this, 'cause that's just what my life is.

Joe: Well, when get off the runway, that's not what I do. What I do is, I jump in the Ferrari with my intern. My intern's taking notes as I'm speeding down the highway of Malibu at ninety miles an hour. That's kind of how it works for me...

Steve: How about you, Devin? How's your work for you?

Devin: I'm not a model, so...

Joe: You're not? I thought you were...

Devin: No...

[**Steve laughs**]

Joe: Oh, that's it, you're out.

Devin: Oh, crap...

Joe: If you're not a model...

Devin: Oh, I thought we were doing mysteries, I didn't...

Joe: Yeah, if you want to find out more about Kaspar Hauser, we will have links on our website, which is thinkingsidewayspodcast.com and also if you have any more information, any theories, or just complaints...

Devin: If you are Kaspar Hauser...

Joe: Oh yeah, if you are Kaspar Hauser, or descendant from Kaspar Hauser, or descended from the House of Baden, then we would like to hear from you, so please, send us an email at thinkingsidewayspodcast@gmail.com. Anyway, that's it for tonight, we will talk to you guys soon. I am Joe, goodnight.

Devin: I am Devin, and goodnight.

Steve: This is Steve, and I'll be talking to you soon.

[**Outro music plays**]