

Thinking Sideways Podcast - The Disappearance of Zebb Quinn

Devin: Hey guys, welcome to Thinking Sideways the podcast. Team Sideways here to solve a mystery for you.

Joe: Mmhmm.

Devin: I'm Devin, joined this time by...

Joe: Joe.

Devin: ...and...

Steve: Steve.

Joe: As opposed to the other times.

Steve: Which is where I am Joe.

Joe: And I am Steve.

Devin: Yep, that's true. You're gonna have to adjust the way you talk, you two.

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: (low voice) I'm gonna have to lower my voice.

Joe: (high voice) And I'm going to have to raise my voice.

Devin: And Joe's gonna have to talk way slower.

Steve: I can't help the rate I have my speech patterns at.

Devin: I know. This week we're gonna talk about something that was requested by a number of people.

Steve: Uh, yeah.

Devin: Lots and lots of people. Pretty much since we started doing the podcast it's been a pretty constant stream and we've been saying "no... no..."

Steve: I wouldn't say we said "no" as much as there were other...

Devin: "Later."

Steve: ...ones we wanted to tackle.

Devin: "Not tonight... my head kinda hurts"

Joe: I know, but uh there's been a recent development in this particular case.

Devin: There has. So we're gonna talk about that.

Steve: Which, good thing we waited.

Devin: Yeah, it's good. This is... we do wait sometimes and this is a good reason why.

Steve: Yep.

Devin: We're gonna talk about the disappearance of Zebb Quinn. 9pm on January 2nd 2000, Zebb Quinn finishes his shift at Walmart. He's 18 years old and he and his friend Robert Jason Owens decide to go look at a car that Zebb has been thinking about buying. They converse about it quickly for a minute in the parking lot and then they each get in their own cars and they stop at a gas station at about 9:15pm, after which Owens reports that Zebb flashed his lights at him – Zebb was behind...

Steve: This is while they're driving.

Devin: Yeah. And so he flashes his lights which I guess is like universal signal for “hey, pull over”.

Steve: Yeah.

Devin: I didn't know that, but...

Steve: Really?!

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: No, I've had cell phones as long as I've driven. You just text the person.

Joe: Woah, woah continue on, stop making me feel old.

Joe: You're not supposed to text and drive.

Devin: Shhhh... So they pull over and Zebb hops out of the car and says he's gotten a page so he's gonna go walk over to the payphone to make a phone call.

Steve: Okay, now I read that he actually drove back somewhere to make the call, that there wasn't a payphone where they'd pulled over.

Devin: Oh, okay.

Joe: That's, yeah I've read that too.

Steve: I've seen it both ways...

Devin: Yeah, I have too.

Steve: ...that's why I bring it up because I don't know that he went necessarily back to the gas station where they...

Devin: Yeah, that's possible.

Steve: Cause we know the time that they were at the gas station because they were on camera.

Devin: Mmhhh. But there was no camera of him coming back so I suspect it wasn't the... they would have mentioned that, so.

Joe: There could have been other payphones.

Devin: Oh, I'm sure there were. There were lots of payphones in those days.

Joe: Yeah, remember that? You don't see so many of them anymore.

Steve: That's cause nobody has pagers.

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: When Zebb returned Owens described him as kind of frantic and Zebb said he needed to cancel their plans to go look at the car and drove off, rear ending Owens's car on the way out, that's how much of a hurry he was in I guess.

Joe: Mmhhh. Again it's another inconsistent one between various accounts of the story because the one I heard is that after he said he needed to go return the page he rear ended his car then.

Devin: Mmmm.

Joe: And then came back ten minutes later after making the phone call and apologized and said he couldn't go look at the car.

Devin: Oh, that's interesting, I actually hadn't seen that anywhere.

Steve: So he either did it as he went to answer the page or after.

Devin: Yeah, but he did rear end Owens.

Joe: Yeah, either way...

Steve: According to Owens.

Joe: Yeah, it's kind of a trivial thing. But someone's gonna call us on that probably.

Devin: Probably, yeah. Around midnight Owens shows up at the hospital with a couple fractured ribs and a head injury. He says he was in a car accident though, of note, there was no car accident reported.

Joe: Mmhhh. And by the way I was not able to find this out anywhere, was that a single car accident, or...?

Devin: I don't think that anybody knows, cause guess what wasn't reported. A car accident.

Steve: Yeah, because whoever else was involved didn't come forward, or...

Devin: Or if he like ran into a pole.

Steve: I was gonna say it was a single car accident.

Devin: He said, you know he told the... I guess the police, I guess the hospital called the police or something like that but the report was that it had happened near the Waffle House on interstate 26.

Steve: Love the Waffle House.

Joe: Yeah, so anyway that's an interesting thing is that maybe the police have more detailed records about this.

Devin: But it hasn't been released.

Joe: Yeah, that's the thing, it hasn't been released, so it's frustrating. I have a lot of questions about this.

Devin: Yeah, I totally agree with that. And I wanna, I do wanna pause here for a second, I think some of our listeners are gonna be excitedly sitting listening, driving, I think most of you drive, driving...

Steve: Commuting in some way.

Devin: Going "I know that name! Why do I know that name? Why does Robert Jason Owens sound so familiar?" Well, friends, we'll talk about that.

Steve: Not quite yet.

Devin: But not yet.

Steve: No.

Devin: So just chill for a second.

Steve: Hold on, we'll get there.

Devin: Okay, we will get there, I promise. Two days after Zebb disappeared a phone call was placed by someone claiming to be Zebb to his place of work, Walmart, claiming to be sick so he wouldn't be in to work. The coworker that he spoke to...

Steve: The caller.

Devin: Yeah, the coworker that was answering the call knew Zebb pretty well and decided that the voice didn't sound like him even if he was sick. So he called the cops because by this point, it should be noted, I just totally glossed over this, by this point Zebb's mom had reported him missing.

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: It'd been two days.

Devin: It's been two days.

Joe: And by the way, another version I heard of this is that the guy was suspicious, he didn't call the cops but he did a *69 on him, called him back, somebody answered and then later on he told the police that the call originated there.

Devin: But somehow the call was traced back to a Volvo factory that happens that Owens worked at and the cops questioned him and said “hey, dude, like was Zebb here? Like what's going on?” And Owens said “oh, no, Zebb called me and he said he needed me to call into work for him.” Which, like if you can use a phone why don't you just call Walmart yourself and say “hey, I'm sick I won't be in” I don't know why you call your friend to call the place.

Steve: Uhhh, I actually have an idea on that. I've had jobs where you had to call in within x amount of time before the start of your shift. So you couldn't call in four hours before your shift.

Devin: Ohhh.

Steve: But you had to call in... you could call in two hours before your shift. So let's say you start at 10.

Devin: You could call at 8.

Steve: The earliest you could call in and say “I can't come in” is 8. So that could... I mean I don't know what Walmart's policy is or what it was at that time. But I've been in jobs where you couldn't call... you couldn't go out and have too much to drink and call in at two in the morning so you could keep drinking... kind of situation.

Devin: Uh huh, sure.

Steve: Which is why those policies are in place, so people don't pull that garbage.

Devin: Sure, that's fair, okay. That's a good thought. Thanks, Steve.

Joe: Yeah, that doesn't make any sense to me still.

Devin: I agree, but hey. Two weeks after he disappeared his car showed up. It was parked in a parking lot of a restaurant called The Little Pigs Barbecue.

Steve: Mmmm, Little Pigs Barbecue.

Devin: Which...

Joe: Nice name.

Devin: Is that a franchise? Is that why you're saying “mmm”, or? Do you know of it?

Steve: No, I have no idea I just... mmm Little Pigs Barbecue.

Devin: Okay, sure.

Steve: I like barbecue.

Devin: Fair.

Steve: Mmm, barbecue.

Devin: Anyway this restaurant is right next to a hospital that happens to employ Zebb's grandma, mom and sister. They all worked in a neonatal care unit there.

Steve: Nurses, I'm guessing?

Devin: Mmhmm.

Steve: Okay.

Devin: Yep. A hotel keycard, several plastic empty drink bottles, hair, a jacket not belonging to Zebb and a three month old Labrador mix puppy were found in the car.

Joe: Oh puppies, yes, I love puppies!

Steve: Awww! Sorry. I'm trying not to get sidetracked by the puppy.

Devin: Yeah, I know, me too. On the rear windshield somebody had drawn large lips with two exclamation points in lipstick and the driver side seat was adjusted for someone who was much shorter than Zebb.

Steve: Do you know how tall Zebb was?

Devin: He was like 6'2"? I think? I wanna say? He was tall.

Steve: Okay, I never saw, I never remember seeing it specifically.

Devin: You know what, no maybe he was like 5'10". There's not much difference.

Steve: He was a taller guy.

Devin: Taller, not...

Steve: Tall-er.

Joe: Uh, by the way the jacket that was found, was that a men's jacket or a women's jacket?

Devin: I wasn't able to find that information.

Steve: Again, it's always listed as a jacket.

Devin: Yep, just as a jacket not belonging to him. I also wasn't able to find any height information for any of the people who've been implicated in this case.

Steve: I've actually found a little bit on that.

Devin: Okay, great, we'll talk about that in a minute then too. Forensic evidence was collected at the, from the car at the scene but nothing ever really came of it and don't worry, don't worry lest we get sidetracked, one of the investigators adopted the puppy.

Steve: Awww.

Devin: So the puppy is okay.

Joe: Well that's good to know.

Devin: Yeah. So don't worry about that.

Steve: One shining spot in this story.

Devin: Really the only one, yeah.

Joe: Speaking of the puppy though, did they find any poop or urine in the car?

Devin: There's no mention of that.

Joe: Yeah, I haven't seen it either.

Steve: But that would indicate how long the dog had been in the car.

Joe: Yeah, exactly.

Devin: Yeah, I don't think... there wasn't any mention of that. The implication that I had was that it was fairly recent.

Steve: Okay.

Joe: I guess so.

Steve: And it's, the thing is I think that it's... the dog could have been in the car... the car could have been there hours without an issue because we're talking January, Asheville, it's gonna be cold but it's not freezing cold, so therefore it's not like it would be a hot summer day where in an hour and a half a dog would expire.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: Yeah, luckily for the puppy.

Devin: Yeah. Another interesting thing that we're gonna talk about as it pertains to this story is Zebb's aunt and kind of girlfriend... not, they're not the same person, I'm sorry. (All laughing) The way I phrased that...

Steve: Good clarification.

Joe: And the relationship with the sort of girlfriend is kind of nebulous.

Devin: Mhmm, yeah. Apparently...

Steve: As is the aunt relationship.

Devin: Yeah, apparently Zebb had kind of started a relationship slash friendship with this girl named Misty. Misty had a boyfriend who, according to Zebb, was abusive. There's not a whole lot of information about Misty out there. I did read that she had a kid with her boyfriend but I can't confirm that through other sources. On the Wikipedia page it says her boyfriend's name is Wesley, which... just...

Joe: That's what I've heard too, but...

Devin: As you wish. (Steve laughing)

Steve: Wait, I also always... this is one of my hard things with re-tellings of stories and they go through forums and whatnot is everybody says the boyfriend was abusive. That could have been as simple as he was a jerk.

Devin: Yeah.

Steve: And the way that it was described to Zebb he then translates that into abusive, or some low variant and then in the re-tellings turns out that he's basically a wife beater. Like I want people to keep that in mind. We really don't know what this guy did. For all we know he swore at her and Zebb equated that to something else.

Devin: Yeah. Next up is Ina Utish... is that how you would say that? Ustich? Ustich? Anyway, that's Zebb's aunt and though she hadn't spoken to him in years...

Joe: Is that true? I thought they just didn't speak often.

Devin: I read years but often could be possible too. The description that I read most frequently is that they were kind of estranged.

Joe: Mmhmm.

Devin: They weren't...

Steve: Again, this is the same thing as the 'abusive' line.

Devin: It's the exact same thing, yeah.

Steve: This thing has been retold so many times that it's easy to read something like that and believe that's cast iron they haven't talked in years.

Devin: Yeah, absolutely.

Steve: And it could be they just talk once in a while when they see each other.

Devin: Yeah. On the night in question, January 2nd, apparently Ina was having dinner with her friend Tamara who happens to be Misty's mom and it's unclear but it's possible that Misty and Wesley were also at the dinner at Ina's house.

Joe: Sorry to do this, I've heard that it was dinner elsewhere, not her house.

Steve: I have actually seen that as well.

Devin: You've seen that too?

Steve: I've seen it... well again, I've seen it both ways.

Devin: Uh huh.

Joe: Mmhmm.

Devin: Yeah, that's the hard part of this case.

Joe: I think, you know, on balance having seen it both ways I know that she also the next day reported that her place had been broken into so if there were four people there... so that's why I think that probably they were... she was not home and they were all having their dinner elsewhere.

Steve: It does make sense based on circumstances that I know Joe's started to go into it. It would make sense that they weren't at her house but having dinner...

Joe: Somewhere.

Steve: Like, having dinner could be anywhere.

Devin: The reason that it's interesting to mention this...

Steve: This whole family conundrum.

Devin: This whole family conundrum is that they were able to track the phone that the page to Zebb's pager... where that came from and it came from Ina's landline at home. So whether they were home or not is a fairly important question but one that I was never able to pin down and apparently neither were you guys.

Steve: No.

Joe: No.

Devin: And I had heard that it was at a later date that she filed the police report not...

Steve: She didn't do it that night

Devin: I heard that it wasn't... I didn't understand it to be that evening or the day after I understood it to be a few days later.

Joe: Mmhmm.

Steve: I would agree with that.

Devin: And the police report that she filed she said "somebody broke into my house" and they said "oh, well what's missing?" and she said "nothing, there's just a few pictures moved around".

Joe: Mmhmm, that's a little strange, huh.

Devin: Yeah.

Steve: Which could literally mean somebody that has a key to my house in the family came over to see me, came in the house and I wasn't there, they bumped some stuff around and then they left.

Devin: Or I've bumped into something when I was drunk one night on accident and forgot it happened.

Joe: That's a good point.

Devin: And noticed that it was different and they said “hey, somebody paged your missing nephew from your phone, you know anything about that?” and you go “no, my house was broken into, I don't know anything about that”.

Joe: Yeah, that's... it does seem a little strange.

Steve: The thing about her putting up such a stonewall about the phone call, to me it's so funny that this is 2000, of course we've got phones that have memory, so it very easily could have been that Zebb's pager number was the last... would have been, with a 'Z', the last thing in her phone book, and she went too far, scrolled too far, and hit the send button and then realized what was going on and stopped the call. I mean, do you know what I'm saying?

Devin: Yeah, but I think that the way he reacted to the page indicated that something... there was something more. Usually a page comes up with a number and then...

Steve: Some kind of input.

Devin: Some kind of message.

Steve: Do we know what the input message was?

Devin: I wasn't able to find it, I don't think anybody knows that.

Joe: No, I don't think all pagers are even capable of having additional... anything beyond the phone number.

Devin: So it could have just been the number, that's fine.

Steve: And that's where I'm leading to, is that there wasn't anything inputted, it was just an “ah crap, I'm calling the pager” 'end'. Zebb of course doesn't understand that and so he immediately says “well, I never hear from her, I gotta go figure out what's going on”.

Devin: “Something must be wrong.” Yeah, that's fair. The other, I guess, you know, not to really go too far into it but the suspicious part to me about her filing that police report was I understand she specified it was around 9pm that her house got broken into. On that night.

Steve: Like she had a pretty succinct window?

Devin: Mmhmm, yeah. Although, you know, because if someone just moved the pictures around I don't know how you would know when somebody broke into your house. But...

Joe: Yeah, it just depends on how many hours you've been gone, I mean if you've been gone from 8:30 to 9:30 then obviously...

Devin: Then obviously it happened then, yeah.

Joe: It seems like it would take a little longer.

Steve: That's a short dinner.

Devin: Yep.

Joe: That's a pretty brief dinner, yeah.

Devin: Misty and Wesley deny involvement in the case at all which, you know if they were at the home is a smart thing to do and they did both give samples for DNA testing against the samples that were found both in the car... no just in the car because that's the only place there were samples. They were found in the car and there were no matches to any of that.

Joe: Did they test the puppy's DNA? Did they interrogate the puppy?

Devin: No. They did... but they did...

Steve: They threw a ball for the puppy though.

Devin: No, apparently they kept clippings of the dog's hair just in case.

Joe: Yeah, they did.

Steve: Yes.

Devin: In case there was some trace evidence on him, they could find out later. Investigators agree that there was probably more than one person involved in the disappearance of Zebb Quinn and his family is pretty sure that he was murdered that night. According to his mother he didn't have anything extra with him, no money or clothes or he wore contact lenses and he didn't have any contact lenses or anything like that.

Steve: Solution.

Devin: Yeah. And it's certainly possible that he had gotten some, he did have a job.

Joe: He worked at Walmart, he could have shoplifted tons of it.

Devin: He could have, it's true. But I... from everything I've read about Zebb I'm willing to believe her.

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: Well, he seems like a pretty upright kid.

Devin: Yeah. He seemed like a good kid.

Joe: No, I mean yeah, why run away.

Steve: Yeah, none of that makes sense.

Joe: It makes absolutely no sense.

Devin: So that's the story. That's literally everything we know. Theories, since Joe's kind of going there already.

Steve: Yeah he did sort of hint at the first one for us.

Devin: Well in fairness I was kind of...

Steve: Alluding.

Devin: Setting it up for that.

Joe: Yeah, yeah.

Devin: The first theory is that Zebb ran away.

Joe: Yeah and actually I believe it because he worked at Walmart, he would have been able to accumulate a lifetime supply of food and other stuff.

Steve: He was definitely involved in the black market contact lens solution trade.

Devin: Probably, yeah.

Steve: Totally. That totally makes sense.

Devin: No. I don't think Zebb had any reason to... as far as I can tell he was a happy kid.

Steve: Yeah, nothing indicates he had a reason to go.

Devin: No.

Joe: No.

Devin: Okay, ready? Next theory is that Zebb and Misty ran away together.

Steve: Ahh, the lovers. Got it.

Devin: So if you choose to believe what Owens says at face value, right, that he had two car accidents in one day, somehow, then it could make sense that Misty and Zebb ran away together. The theory kind of goes that, you know, Misty had been being abused by Wesley, she'd had enough, so she paged Zebb from Ina's phone, cause they were there...

Steve: Mmhmm.

Devin: And said...

Steve: "Come get me"?

Devin: "Come get me", basically. So Zebb hurried off really, ready to do whatever she wanted.

Steve: Knight in shining armor.

Devin: Knight in shining armor. Picked her up, took her to a hotel – explains the hotel car key, or the hotel card key not car key.

Joe: Oh by the way, just... have you ever seen a card key for a hotel that didn't have the hotel's name on it?

Devin: I have.

Steve: I have too.

Joe: Have you? Okay.

Devin: Yeah, the really cheap ones.

Steve: Yeah, I was about to say, they are the super cheapos.

Joe: Oh, maybe that explains that.

Steve: Just a white key.

Devin: Yep, exactly.

Joe: I only stay in classy joints.

Steve: They don't have a number on them, they don't have anything on them.

Devin: Just a white card.

Joe: Well, all right.

Devin: So Zebb picked her up, they hole up in a hotel for a couple days, Wesley finds... he buys her a dog, I don't know, I don't know how the dog's involved, I've gotta be honest with you.

Joe: The dog is really the biggest mystery here.

Devin: Yeah, he buys her a dog I guess or something.

Steve: Or she already had the dog, maybe.

Devin: Mmm, I think she would have mentioned that.

Steve: You think so?

Devin: I think she would have said "ohh, my dog!"

Steve: Maybe.

Devin: Or somebody would have said "yeah, Misty had a dog for a while and now she doesn't"

Steve: Okay, if where we're heading in this theory is correct, she would have shut her mouth about her missing three month old puppy. Because it would have been in the car.

Devin: Yeah, well...

Steve: She wouldn't have said anything. If the theory we're running through is correct.

Devin: She wouldn't have, but somebody else would have probably mentioned to somebody "hey, Misty's dog went missing, and that dog looks an awful lot like Misty's dog"

Joe: Yeah, it's really too bad they didn't have Facebook in those days because there would have been a ton of incriminating pictures of her with the puppy out there.

Devin: Yeah, really. We did have MySpace in those days.

Steve: Yeah, MySpace sucked.

Devin: Well, we posted a lot of pictures.

Steve: People didn't post to MySpace as often because camera phones in 2000 were not as common.

Devin: That's true, I remember.

Steve: And you never could tell what the picture was.

Devin: That's true. Anyways, the theory continues on that Wesley either found out of his own volition or Misty decided "oh, I miss my kid" who somehow was being taken care of by parents.

Joe: If the kid existed.

Devin: Or if the kid even existed or she called Wesley and was like "I'm sorry baby, I..."

Steve: I'm pretty sure the kid existed.

Devin: Yeah, I think so too. "I'm sorry baby, I take you back, come save me from Zebb, he's holding me hostage" or whatever. Wesley comes to the hotel, there was an altercation, he kills Zebb.

Steve: Somehow.

Devin: Somehow.

Steve: Accidentally or intentionally.

Devin: Together Misty and Wesley dispose of the body, then they take the car and drop it in really super weird mysterious circumstances for reasons unknown, instead of just like leaving it in the middle of the forest, or at the hotel or something.

Joe: Yeah, that's intriguing because if you're driving round a car for two weeks that belongs to somebody who's disappeared, presumed murdered, that's kinda risky don't you think. At the same time it couldn't have been in that parking lot for a full two weeks with the puppy in the back.

Steve: No, it couldn't.

Devin: It probably couldn't even for a couple days.

Steve: No.

Devin: To be honest with you people notice if a dog's in a car.

Steve: Well, and the other weird thing that I came across, and I couldn't find the source of this, I found it repeated in some other places but could never find the initial source, is that there are reports

that Misty was spotted in Zebb's car in Nashville.

Joe: Yeah, I've heard that too, but...

Steve: Nashville is 300 miles away which is a four to five hour drive one way. How she was spotted I don't know, in a city the size of Nashville. That's weird.

Joe: Yeah, I kind of discount that.

Steve: Yeah, no I don't put a lot of stock in it.

Devin: I do too but it is weird.

Steve: But it's a weird... it's one of those rumors, I guess is the best way to put it.

Devin: Mmhmm.

Steve: It's like wait, huh?

Joe: Yeah, I don't place any... besides which Misty's a very common name... (all laughing) haha, okay.

Devin: The other part, the other...

Steve: Variant?

Devin: Yeah, variant on this theory is that Zebb's interest and advances were misinterpreted by Misty or by Wesley as kind of stalking behavior.

Steve: Ahh, yeah.

Devin: Because we've all been there, do you remember when you were like a 17, 18 year old kid you would get obsessed with somebody and you'd be like "well it would be so romantic if I would just go stand outside their door all day to show them how much I love them"

Joe: Yeah, I know.

Devin: And the other party is standing there like "oh my god, he's back" like "what is going on right now?"

Steve: "Why is the weirdo here again?"

Joe: Yeah, there is a lot of that. In the movies it's always like...

Devin: It's always romantic in the movies.

Joe: In the movies and TV, yeah.

Devin: It's not in real life.

Steve: Yeah.

Devin: Just, gentlemen and ladies who may be thinking about this, it's not a good idea.

Steve: Nope.

Devin: It's never a good idea, don't do it.

Steve: Yeah, that ticket I got proves it.

Devin: Yeah, do not do it. Not a good idea. I mean I guess it's possible that he was smitten with her and she was being friendly but not necessarily flirty or even just being a little flirty but wasn't actually interested.

Steve: I would probably say more nice than anything.

Devin: Yeah.

Steve: Because if it is a misinterpreted love then just being nice is really all it takes.

Devin: Yeah, so she wasn't blatantly saying "no, freak, get away from me".

Steve: Yes.

Devin: So he interpreted that, for whatever reason, and then, you know, Wesley though "ahh, well, I'm just gonna take care of this guy."

Steve: "I'm gonna beat the crap out of this guy"

Devin: Yeah. Beat him too hard, or whatever.

Steve: Which happens.

Devin: It does happen.

Steve: I mean there are lots of times where guys get into fights and somebody dies in a simple fist fight.

Devin: Mmhmm.

Joe: Oh, it happens all the time. Actually, the uh, I might have mentioned this before but the FBI's got a whole separate category in their homicide table by murder weapon and the category's called 'hands, fists, feet'.

Devin: Oh!

Joe: Yep, and I checked, the most recent time I checked that was not too long ago and for the past five years there's about, averaging about 800 deaths a year, 800 homicides a year just bare hands.

Devin: That's crazy.

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: It's insane.

Joe: Yeah, I mean deaths by rifles, by rifles of all kinds, including those deadly assault rifles, is more like in maybe 300 a year, something like that.

Devin: Wow, wow.

Joe: Yeah, more people just get beaten to death by someone that's bare handed.

Devin: I don't think you realize.

Steve: A gun is super dangerous but you don't think that of your body when you're using it as a weapon.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: Yeah, no, it's, uh, you can have a cerebral hemorrhage and everything, yeah.

Devin: Although again, I've mentioned before, I'll mention again, I don't have any information on Wesley's size versus Zebb's size. I don't know if that would have been something that would have been possible or even probable, I don't know... I know very little about Wesley and his temperament, I don't know, you know, again if he just interpreted Wesley being a little bit of a jerk to Misty as being highly abusive behavior or if he was actually physically abusive, or if he was just emotionally abusive or what that situation is and the kind of mitigating factors that would go into this being a likely theory.

Steve: The... well the other thing that I'll throw in since we're on this theory is that I did come across chatter on the internet about that Zebb and Misty had had a several hour long conversation on the phone the night before which would have been January 1st, New Year's Day.

Devin: Yeah.

Steve: Well if that was true I would be interested to know where that call was placed from. In other words did it come from Zebb's aunt's house, did it come from her mom's, you know to try and tighten up the circle a little bit on some of this.

Devin: Yeah.

Steve: I've never been able to... again this is another one of those ones where I see it in places but I never can find where it originated from.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: Yeah, it really would be nice to be able to get ahold of the police files because I assume they've checked all this stuff out.

Devin: Well, I mean it's an active case.

Joe: Yeah, I know, that's why...

Steve: Because I don't think we've said it yet but - a body?

Devin: Nothing, no.

Steve: Nope, never.

Joe: No bod. Although, some bodies have recently shown up.

Devin: We'll talk about that in a minute.

Joe: Not yet.

Devin: The next theory is that Zebb was lured to the aunt's house by an angry Wesley.

Joe: Ah, the angry Wesley.

Steve: So this is another variant basically.

Devin: Another variant, yeah. And I think it's unlikely particularly because all Wesley would have had to do was pretend to be Misty and it seems that Zebb would have gone anywhere for her. He could have lured him out into the middle of the forest, I mean it could have been anywhere, why pick the aunt's house.

Joe: Yeah, that is a little strange. I mean I could see where she could... she or somebody could have broken in and then dialed this pager and that way you don't have... say you're Wesley and you wanna murder him or beat him seriously...

Devin: Or talk to him.

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: Start out, you know, talking to him.

Joe: Maybe you don't wanna have the number, you know dial his pager from your number.

Devin: Mmm.

Joe: Yeah, so.

Devin: But payphones are a thing.

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: The thing is, though, is that if you want to lure somebody unsuspecting into a confrontation you lure them somewhere that, you entice them to go somewhere that's familiar.

Devin: You've thought about this before, haven't you?

Steve: Oh of course, of course, I mean I never was gonna tell you guys to meet me at the rock quarry. (Devin laughing) But no, you would say "okay, well I could say 'meet me at the Piggly Wiggly'" which is on the exact opposite side of town, or I could say "hey, come," you know just do it from this phone number, "come meet me". Zebb doesn't know exactly who it is but he knows the phone number so he would go there, because he would know the number, because this is the day and age where you still knew phone numbers.

Joe: Yeah, I remember those days.

Steve: So he would automatically... he may not know who it was and just go. It would be an easy way to get somebody there.

Devin: Yeah, that's fair. That's a fair point. You ready to go onto the next theory?

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: Oh boy, yeah. Let's have this one.

Devin: As... I mentioned that Robert Jason Owens has been in the news a little bit lately, right?

Steve: Wait, do you hear that? There's some cheering from the people who are listening right now. (Devin and Steve laughing)

Devin: I can hear it... I hear it. So this theory is that Zebb was killed by Robert Jason Owens. And the reason this is a pretty good theory is... a lot of reasons.

Joe: There was the check in at the hospital with the broken ribs and the head injury.

Devin: Well to start with Owens's accounting of the events that led up to Zebb's disappearance are questionable at best. And also only of his own word.

Steve: Yeah, he's the only one. He's the only witness.

Devin: With the exception of the last time anybody can corroborate where Zebb was is with the surveillance tape at 9:15 at the gas station. So the whole... and he did get a page.

Joe: Yeah he's telling the truth about that.

Devin: Telling the truth about that. But you can't corroborate that Zebb went anywhere, can't corroborate anything else, you definitely can't corroborate the fact that Owens got into a separate car accident.

Joe: Mmhmm.

Steve: There's a whole host of questions that I have around Owens that I know are unanswered and I don't know if you want me to ask those questions now, or later.

Devin: Let's do it later.

Steve: Okay.

Devin: Because I wanna say that not only is this questionable accounting a thing but it turns out that Robert Jason Owens is an actual total murderer.

Joe: Kinda documented, yeah.

Steve: Killed people.

Devin: An actual convicted murder.

Joe: Well he's not convicted yet.

Devin: I thought he was.

Joe: They only arrested him in March, right?

Steve: Yeah, the trial's not done.

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: As of the day of this recording.

Devin: Yeah, sorry.

Joe: Yeah but the evidence... he's not convicted, I doubt that's he going to get off because he's kind of admitted to at least one of the killings.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: And they found some pretty damning evidence.

Devin: They did. Do you... I don't know if either of you know who Cristie Codd is?

Joe: You know, I did not know.

Steve: I didn't.

Joe: Until, yeah until this.

Devin: Well Cristie was a finalist on the Food Network competition 'The Next Food Network Star' and she and her husband J.T. Codd as well as her unborn child were murdered by Owens. Not to... I won't go into too much detail.

Steve: Let's just say brutally.

Devin: Brutally. By the end of it they fit into a fireplace.

Joe: A wood stove.

Devin: Wood stove.

Joe: And they didn't fit all at once.

Devin: No.

Joe: Yeah. (Joe and Steve laughing)

Devin: And reportedly he murdered them on a Thursday and then broke into their house and stole a laptop, jewelry and a handgun, I think it was on Friday or Saturday.

Joe: Yeah, something like that.

Devin: A while after.

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: So basically hack hack hack... "oh hey! House keys!"

Devin: "I bet they have some stuff!" Yeah.

Joe: I don't quite get the whole thing about breaking into their house, I mean cause he would have had access to their keys, right?

Devin: Mmhmm, you would assume but maybe not.

Joe: Or... did he access the house using the keys?

Devin: I have no idea.

Steve: You know, I...

Devin: Super active investigation happening right now.

Steve: Yeah. They're not gonna tell us.

Devin: He also spent I think it was 23 months in jail within a few years after Zebb disappeared for unrelated charges. I was never really able to... to be fair I didn't like go access his actual criminal history and all that stuff.

Steve: I was gonna say, I don't believe that was 23 consecutive months.

Devin: No, no, no, and it wasn't like a murder or something, it was all kind of...

Steve: Petty.

Devin: Misdemeanors.

Joe: No, there was a drunk driving thing and then there was another one where he's driving drunk and he gets into a chase with the police and he was shooting at them apparently.

Steve: Yeah, he shot at the cops. Brilliant.

Devin: Good idea.

Joe: Not a model citizen.

Devin: So I guess the question is kind of asked, could he... I mean could they have gotten into a fight? Could Zebb...

Joe: That's kind of what I was thinking.

Devin: Could Zebb have, you know, accidentally rear ended him and hopped out and said "oh my gosh, I'm so sorry" and he... it seems like this guy has a little bit of a temper.

Joe: Mmhmm.

Devin: Maybe a little bit. Could he have...

Steve: Flown into a rage.

Devin: Yeah. Flown into a rage. Would that explain, also, his injuries.

Joe: Well that's, yeah, kinda what I'm thinking is that Zebb, you know, he attacked Zebb, Zebb fought back and broke a few ribs and dipped him in the face a few times, but then he picks up a big rock, and you know...

Devin: Something.

Joe: Hits Zebb with it.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: He might not even have intentionally killed him.

Steve: Yeah, as we talked about, you can punch somebody, one punch just the wrong way and that's all it takes.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: Yeah. I think the key to solving the mystery is for the police to look at their files and I don't know if they ever looked at this, you would hope that they did. But what was the status of... Owens was driving a pickup truck that night, correct?

Devin: I think, yeah.

Steve: I think so.

Joe: I believe he was driving a pickup truck. So he got in a serious enough wreck to go to the hospital with broken bones, etcetera, so that truck should have been pretty wrecked up.

Devin: You would think.

Joe: So did the police ever look at that?

Devin: Not as far as I could tell.

Steve: To dovetail on that question, when Zebb's car was found at the barbecue joint, what condition was it in? I mean rear ending someone can be as simple as backing up and...

Joe: Touching them.

Steve: Touching them, kissing bumpers or wailing into them at, you know, at full throttle. So I never saw anything that describes the damage to his car.

Joe: No.

Devin: I mean you can, like you said you can just kiss a car, you know scuff some paint. I don't have the impression that the car that Zebb was driving was in particularly good condition.

Steve: But you know if it's gonna be, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think where Joe was kind of leading this was maybe it was more of they had more than just a little rear ending, but one of them hit the other and caused an accident. Well if one of them has broken ribs and a knocked up skull both cars should show a) significant damage and b) paint scrapings from one should be on the other.

Devin: I don't think that's what Joe was saying, I thought he meant the injuries were sustained during a fight.

Steve: Ahh.

Joe: And so...

Devin: It could have been as simple as a little scrape and Zebb would have been like "oh my gosh I'm so sorry" and Owens had a, you know...

Joe: Or the fight could have happened later on afterwards.

Devin: Oh yeah, absolutely.

Steve: But what I'm also asking is...

Joe: What I'm saying is that if he got into a wreck it should be all... his truck should be wrecked up. Did the police look at it? Because if he said he got in a wreck but his truck is perfectly straight and looking pretty good and nothing dented well obviously he got the injuries somewhere else.

Devin: Yeah. I presume they looked at the truck but I don't... I didn't ever see a record of it.

Joe: I think that actually, I'm gonna tell you the truth, I'm optimistic that this is going to be solved.

Devin: I am too.

Joe: But I'm gonna wait til the end if you want.

Devin: Okay.

Joe: Or I could tell you now.

Devin: You can tell us now.

Joe: I'll tell you now. I think that he's murdered three people, Owens that is. He very likely is gonna get the death penalty and if I were the judge in the case I think I would tell him "look..."

Steve: Offer him a plea.

Joe: "Here's your deal. You can have life in prison rather than death but you've gotta come clean on Zebb Quinn, dude".

Devin: Yeah. I think that seems to be the general feeling, and you know we're not done with this

episode cause there's still lots of questions. Because I do have some serious questions because if he did it there are a lot of other questions of things that happened in the night that I don't understand why that happened.

Joe: Mmhmm.

Devin: But I am also optimistic that in a plea bargain sort of situation he will come clean about what happened to Zebb. At the very least even if he didn't do it he will be able to provide many more details or something like that.

Steve: Cause I think the one thing we haven't talked about is that he was sort of cooperative in the first day after Zebb disappeared.

Devin: Mmhmm.

Steve: And then he shut down and he was completely uncooperative after that.

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: Yeah. So to kind of dovetail off of this the things that concern me about the 'Owens did it' theory is there's no connection between Owens and Ina or Misty or Wesley or Tamara. So why did the page happen?

Steve: Or was it just coincidental?

Devin: Was it just coincidental. Or did...

Joe: Or accidental.

Devin: Or accidental. But then why would Ina lie and say "somebody broke into my house at that time"?

Steve: Again I can tell you that people are weird about the cops. They don't like the cops around their place for whatever reason and they'll just start coming up with excuses. I've seen people do that a million times. Do I think that's what's going on? No, but I can see that as a "oh, the 5-O are here again, just tell 'em somebody broke in. Get 'em out of here!" you know.

Joe: Maybe somebody did break into her house.

Devin: But she didn't... it was my impression that she voluntarily submitted a police report that her house was broken into. It wasn't my impression that the cops showed up and she said "oh, somebody broke into my house" it was that a couple days later she said "oh, you know what, somebody broke into my house, so that's weird". I don't know.

Steve: Yeah, I dunno, I mean the timing doesn't change my idea.

Devin: Sure, sure, sure.

Steve: But you're right, I mean the timing of when she decides to come forward with the "I've been broken into" is a little weird.

Devin: Yeah, and if she was indeed broken into and for some reason or somehow Owens broke into

her house even though that seems super unlikely because he was with Zebb when the page... there wouldn't... I don't have the impression that there was time between the time that the page came in and the time that they were seen at the gas station for him for go, break into a house, page the guy...

Steve: Unless Zebb didn't tell Owens he had to go on his own but he went with him and they both go to the aunt's house and the aunt has since left to go to dinner, Zebb's got a key – I'm totally making this up as I go – they walk into the house, Owens is just kind of walking around poking things, just you know killing time while Zebb's looking for everybody, and then they lock the place up and leave and whatever happens after that happens. But of course the house is now slightly different than when she left it. After a day or two of looking around and going “wait a minute that picture's facing the wrong way.”

Devin: But then she, again...

Steve: Rabbit hole, I just opened a rabbit hole.

Devin: But then she would have said “oh, I accidentally paged Zebb and then I left and then somebody came into my house”

Steve: She may not have realized that she paged Zebb. I mean, how many people do you know that butt dial?

Devin: That's not butt dialing though.

Steve: It is if the phone is in the couch and you're sitting on the couch and it's hitting the buttons. That's basically, that's a couch dial.

Devin: Maybe.

Steve: It's the old 90s or 2000s phone version of a butt dial.

Devin: Maybe.

Joe: That can happen I guess.

Devin: I guess it could happen.

Steve: Cause the call would go through, it would hit the pager and then the pager would terminate the call and then give a dead signal and then eventually the phone, I presume, would have to shut itself off with no signal.

Devin: They usually just beep.

Steve: I'm thinking it was more of not a corded phone but a wireless phone.

Devin: So the battery died is that what we're thinking?

Steve: Yeah something like that.

Devin: Sorry, I know we're so far down this rabbit hole.

Steve: Yeah, we're really going down, but...

Devin: Um, okay, so...

Steve: I'll stop.

Devin: Okay, fine. So the next big question is , right, why dump the car, right, particularly with a bunch of stuff in it, like what happened to the car?

Joe: The car might not have been dumped, he might have, the person who was driving the car might have been inside the Little Piggies or whatever it was.

Devin: That's true. Yeah, that's definitely true.

Joe: Generally speaking when I'm in a restaurant , you know, I have a nice dinner and then there's police swarming around outside the car that I stole...

Devin: You're not gonna go out and...

Joe: I'll just go out the back door.

Devin: Yeah. I guess the question... it seems like the lipstick note on the back of the car, that seems like a note, right, that doesn't seem like "hey, I've stolen a car so I'm gonna write some stuff on it" and all of that, that seems weird to me.

Steve: Is it a note or more of a teenage gag?

Devin: Well even then, you stole a car, you're not gonna draw on it.

Steve: But if friends are walking by and, or young people and they think they know that car they would do that as a gag.

Devin: Not two weeks after somebody's been reported missing.

Joe: The person in possession of the car might not know the owner of the car. Let's say Owens kills Zebb.

Steve: And then sells the car?

Joe: No, doesn't even sell it, just leaves it in a parking lot somewhere with keys in it and then somebody else comes along and steals it and just drives it around for a week or two cause that's what people, you know people in a lot of places car theft is treated like basically they give you a tap on the wrist, you're not even likely to go to jail.

Devin: Yeah, I guess, still, my argument is, the lips with the exclamation point, like why. Why? If you've stolen a car, even if you've just stolen it out of a parking lot you don't decorate it like that. So then...

Joe: Why not?

Devin: Because, why?

Joe: It's not gonna get you... the only thing that matters is what's gonna get you noticed by the

police or pulled over by the police and something like that won't necessarily get you pulled over by the police.

Steve: No.

Devin: That's fair. But you are gonna get more noticed.

Joe: Maybe.

Steve: I don't think that that's going to get you put on the red flag. I mean, on a cop's radar because we all see cars driving around with stuff written on the windows. "Go the volleyball team" or the basketball team or whatever. Whatever it is. All the time. I see that, I never read it, I don't care. It doesn't make anybody stand out to me.

Devin: That's fair but there's also not like a manhunt happening. If like...

Steve: There could be a manhunt going on right now and the one that I went by today I'd have no idea. Cause Asheville is not a teeny tiny town.

Devin: No, but I guess I would... I would, to put it in like local perspective, I would say that the disappearance of Zebb Quinn is probably on par with the disappearance of Kyron Horman.

Joe: Yeah, it's a...

Devin: You knew about that and if someone was like "hey, keep an eye out for this car it's like associated with Kyron Horman"

Steve: Again I think how long did it take for the Kyron Horman story to gain enough traction that everybody knew about it?

Devin: That's fair.

Steve: Was it three days later? Was it a month later?

Devin: It wasn't that much longer, yeah.

Steve: I don't remember how long and...

Devin: That's fair.

Steve: Kids are much quicker but I'm just saying there's a time scale here.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: So, all right, the next question then is if you have killed this guy...

Joe: Or even if you haven't killed the guy.

Devin: Why two days later make the phone call to Walmart?

Joe: Yeah, that's kind of inexplicable, I know.

Devin: I don't understand that at all.

Steve: I have no idea.

Devin: So those are my big three questions.

Joe: And then there's a few more too.

Devin: Well those are just pertaining specifically to this theory.

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: I have a lot of other questions for this case but that's that theory.

Joe: Well there's also, one of your other questions I know is why were they going to look at a car at 9pm.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: And I don't know that we got that from anybody other than Robert Owens did we?

Devin: That they were going to look at a car?

Joe: That they were going to look at a car.

Steve: I don't know that the source was anybody but him.

Devin: I don't think that it was but it's also possible, I didn't see but it's totally possible that it was corroborated by his coworkers...

Joe: They might have mentioned that, yeah maybe.

Devin: You know his coworkers, he might have been talking to his coworkers and saying "I'm gonna go look at a car" or even his mom. I can't remember if his mom ever knew where he was going after work.

Steve: Yeah, I'd want some kind of second source confirmation of that.

Devin: She didn't report him missing until the next morning so I'm not given to understand that she was expecting him...

Steve: To be home right away.

Devin: Right after work.

Steve: Yeah, but you know and it's funny I've seen a lot of people say "why were you looking at a car at 9 o'clock at night, oh my gosh what the heck?"

Joe: It's possible, I mean it's entirely possible.

Steve: People have garages, people have outdoor lights.

Devin: But you're 18 and you don't work full time like a 9-5 Monday through Friday, find a different day to go when you can actually take a look at the car or take it on a drive, or it's not dark out and like weird in the middle of the winter. I don't know.

Steve: But if you go to somebody's house and they say "hey the car's in the garage" and you turn on the light it's the same thing as coming over there at 9 o'clock in the morning when the sun is shining. You can see the car, you can still take it for a test drive.

Joe: Well, anyway.

Steve: These things are still viable scenarios or options.

Devin: Yeah, that's fair.

Joe: This isn't a huge part of the mystery, it's just kind of a, you know.

Devin: It's just a weird... bit.

Steve: I don't find going to look at a car at 9 o'clock at night that weird.

Devin: I do.

Joe: No it's not.

Devin: But again I don't know, maybe it's cause I'm a lady. I don't like doing things at night.

Steve: I think that's exactly what it is.

Devin: That's probably part of it.

Joe: That's probably it.

Steve: As a guy I'd be like "it's 11 o'clock at night let's go and check out that car". Sure, whatever.

Devin: Yeah. Nope, not me. Not interested, thank you. If it's dark outside and there's not a lot of people around me, no thank you.

Joe: Just take a gun.

Devin: My next question is where did the dog come from?

Steve: Its mom.

Joe: It came from its mommy, yeah.

Devin: Okay.

Joe: Ha ha.

Devin: You guys are the worst. (Steve laughing) But seriously, like what? Like, what?

Joe: I think they make some inquiries trying to figure out like they talked to breeders and shelters and all kinds of places.

Devin: Yeah, and they couldn't track it down.

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: Yeah, I don't...

Steve: There's a lot of puppies being born though. All over the place, it's easy that it could have just come from somebody. But it's still a weird bit.

Joe: There are lots of puppies.

Devin: And if it came from somebody, right, it's not as though, again, it's not as though there weren't inquiries, it's not as though people weren't on the news all the time saying "hey do you guys know where this dog came from?"

Steve: Yeah.

Joe: Yeah you would think they could put it on the news.

Devin: Not everybody watches the news, it's fair, I understand, but...

Joe: Nah but I mean this might tie in with the hotel key too.

Devin: Yeah, that's the other question.

Joe: Well no, it might tie in with the fact that they were driving this car around for two weeks and didn't get pulled over and busted which is that they might have been like out of town.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: They might have been...

Steve: Road trip?

Joe: They might have been road tripping to God knows where and at some point along the way they stayed in a hotel and some point along the way they picked up a puppy.

Devin: Yep.

Joe: Not in that town. So that explains why no breeders or shelters or anybody else in that town would recognize the puppy.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: Although at the same time of course if it was just a black Lab puppy then well, sorry, they all look alike, you know.

Devin: Yeah, it's hard. Yeah, that's true. I guess, I don't know, one of the things I wish I knew about

this case was things as simple as odometer readings.

Joe: Yeah.

Steve: Great point.

Devin: Granted his mom probably wouldn't know exactly what the odometer was on his car. He was 18, he was his own free kid but she would probably know like oh, we had the oil changed this long ago.

Steve: And go to the place that did the oil change.

Devin: Or even, I don't know, it had about this much on it. If he's driving, you know, to Nashville... if he's driving... if it's this long road trip that's happening those miles are being racked up much quicker than it would be just driving in normal day to day life.

Joe: Mmhmm.

Devin: I wish that was information that we had cause it would shine some light on what was going on at least with the car if not with Zebb.

Joe: Yeah and it might be information that the police have at least if they are competent because...

Devin: I'm sure they have the odometer reading but I don't know if they have like a difference or anything like that.

Joe: It just depends on did he get his oil changed, did he get Jiffy Lube to do it for him versus doing it himself, you know.

Devin: That's true.

Joe: Because you know you get it changed there and they have that little sticker that they stick in the windshield that's got the odometer reading...

Devin: They also keep records.

Joe: Yeah, yeah.

Devin: Most places keep records

Joe: He might also change his oil because especially when you're young you're kind of broke it's a lot easier to change your oil yourself.

Devin: Yeah. Lots of people don't know how to do it. I mean, again, I don't know, maybe he did it's totally possible.

Steve: Uh yeah I can see a guy, you know, knowing how to do that.

Joe: It's not rocket science.

Steve: Yeah it really isn't.

Devin: Yeah, I mean, I know how to do it I just choose not to because my car has a plate underneath.

Steve: Undo a bolt, wait, put the bolt in, undo a thing, put the thing in, fill. That easy.

Devin: Or use synthetic oil and never change it.

Joe: Quite easy.

Devin: Whatever you wanna do.

Joe: Actually I mostly go to Jiffy Lube these days but it's not because it's that hard but just because I don't want to deal with getting rid of the old oil.

Devin: Yeah.

Steve: That is the sucky part.

Devin: My next question is about the hotel, right, is that, you know, they couldn't ever figure out where the key card was from. I don't know how key card technology works. None of our experts are experts in the hospitality business, unfortunately.

Joe: Yeah see I don't know if there's... so in other words you're saying there's no way they could tell.

Devin: That they could have just scanned it.

Joe: That there's a signature.

Devin: Yeah.

Steve: It's a generic thing. I've seen them do it, they punch something in, it's just a magnetic impression that then the card reader at the door knows to pick up.

Devin: Sure.

Steve: That's as, you know...

Joe: So they don't leave any information.

Steve: Room one does this frequency code, and room two does the next one...

Devin: Fair.

Steve: That's all there is, but there's nothing unique like I'm sure they...

Joe: But there's nothing about the hotel itself that issues that card.

Steve: Yeah it's a magnetic signature that is probably in every card reader or whatever the machine that puts it into it. Cause I've watched them just grab one out of the stack that was probably discharged and just stick it in the machine

Devin: And they re-mag it.

Steve: It just goes zip zip, spits it out, it's done.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: Yeah. So and, but... it's not that puzzling really because it's very likely the hotel was not even in Asheville, North Carolina.

Devin: Yeah. That's a fair point, you know we've talked about that while I was asking these questions I kind of was like "oh yeah that's right it could have been from not local.

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: It's not that many hotels that don't, you know, somehow put their name on the cards or anything like that. It seems like a hey let's do a 300 mile search radius for hotels that don't have these specific key cards. And to be fair, right, because it's a very specific, especially in 2000, it's a very specific set of hotels because many of them still had the actual physical keys that you have. It wasn't full key card technology yet.

Steve: True.

Devin: And then most of the ones that had key cards were the nicer, more expensive hotels that you've got their image on the back or whatever. So it seems like it... again, this is because I'm not a police officer. It seems like it would have been at least worthwhile to figure out which those hotels were and see if you could pass a picture of Zebb around and say "hey did you see this car?" or "did you see this guy?"

Steve: I'm gonna guess that the pool of hotels that you're thinking is rather small is quite large because there is a lot, in any town, there is a huge number of cheapo hotels that don't necessarily have the best clientele and therefore are gonna go to the magnetic system because they can't use a true key because, you know, they're getting stolen all the time.

Joe: That's true I suppose.

Steve: But, you know, I'm not gonna invest in getting custom keys printed because that's not cheap.

Devin: Mmhmm.

Steve: And if they're stealing the regular keys they're gonna steal the electronic keys, try to use them on... whatever, you know. I'm not gonna go into cultures, in terms of drug culture stuff, but people do this kind of weird stuff. So it's just screw it, we're going with the cheapest one possible, shut it down.

Devin: Fair, totally fair.

Joe: Yeah, but the other thing, and I'm sure you guys don't know this, I'm sure the police know, they didn't lift any fingerprints off of the hotel card did they?

Devin: No.

Steve: I've never seen anything like that.

Joe: They must have done.

Devin: They did print it, but I didn't ever hear...

Joe: The thing about it is...

Devin: I mean they could have lifted prints that just didn't match anything.

Joe: That has to be it, because this is the other thing that would tell you something significant about the whole thing and that is that they lifted no prints from the hotel key card, that means it was planted there deliberately.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: As a false clue.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: Yeah, but they must have, I'm sure they did.

Steve: Well that's a scary thought.

Joe: Yeah. Well, hopefully the police are smart enough to figure that out, if there are no prints on it hopefully they figured out that following this thing is a waste of resources.

Devin: That's a scary thought, actually that's a really scary thought. I hadn't thought about that.

Steve: I hadn't thought about somebody taking the time to wipe everything down.

Devin: Or just plant stuff.

Steve: Plant stuff...

Joe: False clues, false leads.

Steve: Grab a jacket from somebody off the bus, and then drop a key card that's generic and then wipe the car down, I hadn't ever thought about that.

Devin: It would though... gosh, that would explain why it's such a random assortment of stuff in the car, right...

Joe: Yeah, water bottles...

Devin: "I'll throw a puppy in here, and here's some drink bottles, and here's a key card and some weird random message on the back of the car"

Steve: Yeah.

Joe: Yeah. (Joe laughing)

Devin: And then drop it where... you know the thing is that it was dropped in a very strategic location. Assuming it was dropped, right. It's fair, maybe it wasn't dropped, maybe it's that that

person happened to be inside the restaurant.

Joe: Maybe they were inside.

Devin: It's a pretty large coincidence in fairness, though, that his car was found right next to the place of work of three of his relatives.

Joe: Mmhmm.

Devin: That's a huge coincidence.

Joe: Maybe it was one of his relatives.

Devin: It's... probably not.

Joe: Nah, just kidding. They would have parked in the hospital parking lot.

Devin: Yeah. They would be smarter than to do that. I mean, you know, so I think it the sense is that it was deliberately dropped to be found. If it was then... like why with all that stuff in it? Was it? Oh my gosh, was it?

Steve: Red herring.

Joe: That's actually not a fantastic amount of stuff to leave in a car.

Devin: It's not, but it's a weird assortment of stuff. It's not that it's that much it's just a lot of random stuff.

Joe: And somebody said that the combination of the lipstick and the puppy actually was a message in and of itself. Which was 'puppy love'. (Steve laughing) Seriously, I mean I didn't originate that one but you've got the lips, you know, and the exclamation point. And then 'puppy love'.

Devin: Yeah. I mean, it's possible.

Joe: Yeah. Yeah.

Steve: It's weird, I don't even know what that means but okay, all right, okay.

Devin: So... yeah, I guess all we can do is really hope that this case will be solved in the next year or two as the trial of Owens continues.

Steve: If Owens did it.

Devin: If Owens did it. Certainly...

Joe: He might not know anything about it, I mean he certainly after what happened in March he's certainly my favorite candidate now.

Devin: But he also must know...

Steve: Something.

Devin: At least a little more given the call that he placed two days later.

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: Right.

Joe: That's a little suspicious.

Devin: Because either Zebb was truly alive and called him and said "hey dude call in for me" or he wasn't and he just decided to place the call for whatever reason, right? I think if someone says "I know I'm on death row, but no I'm sticking to my story of what happened to Zebb" you can probably trust what they're saying.

Steve: Well but the other hard part though, this is my concern with this offer of a bargain is that he may just 'fess up just to get off of death row.

Joe: That's true too.

Devin: They usually require proof like "hey tell us where you buried the body, then".

Steve: Right, you've got to be able to prove something but it just, it always... I always am hesitant with those things, because it's... I mean that's what I would do. If I got convicted and went to death row, not that I'm gonna do something, I swear you two...

Joe: Yeah right.

Steve: Here, have those drinks... But if I was gonna do something and I did go to death row and they said "hey, you know Steve we think you did this other thing and if you admit to it we'll totally give you life" "Oh, yeah I totally did it. Absolutely. I did it. I killed the Snuffleupagus, I totally did it.

Joe: Sure, but again they'll probably demand to know where you disposed of the body and stuff like that, you know, so...

Devin: Yeah.

Steve: "Oh yeah, I shredded him and I recycled him" He's made of nothing but felt, that's totally recyclable.

Joe: Well he certainly went a long way towards disposing of those other bodies back in March, so...

Devin: Yeah, so I don't know...

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: That's kind of my feeling is that all I can do is hope, honestly, hope that Owens did it and that he confesses and that that's what happened.

Steve: Or that we get at least one step closer to what is going on.

Devin: Because I need to know. I wanna know.

Joe: Yeah, I think I'm more than 50/50 sure that this is going to be solved not too far in the future.

Devin: I sure... I hope that's true.

Devin: Steve, you feeling the same way?

Steve: Yeah, well I just... there's so many damn questions.

Devin: Yeah, there really are.

Steve: I don't know what I feel.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: Yeah.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: And again, I don't think... it's not necessarily true that Owens even murdered him deliberately, it could have been a fight and an accidental death.

Devin: It could have been an accident.

Joe: You know, it could have been.

Devin: Yeah.

Joe: That happens, it happens to the best of us, and you know you just hide the body and get on with your life, right?

Steve: That's normal.

Devin: Totally normal.

Joe: Oh yeah.

Devin: Well, if you wanna see some of our research that we did for this episode you can find that as well as stream or download our episodes on our website. That website is of course www.thinkingsidewayspodcast.com. You can also leave a comment there, you can get merch on the website. There's a cool little 'merch' icon, it's right above the 'donate' button on the right hand side... is this the right hand side?! ...of the page.

Steve: Devin is flailing with her right hand.

Devin: This side! This side!

Steve: It really is this side.

Devin: Whatever that side is. You're probably listening to us on iTunes though, if you are go ahead and leave us a comment and a rating, you're probably already subscribed, if you're not you should do that. You can find us on Facebook if you want to connect with us there's the page and the group. You can just search 'Thinking Sideways podcast' and they'll both pop up.

Steve: If they don't send us a message, we had somebody this last week...

Devin: They were lost.

Steve: Yeah, actually sending us search results, they weren't getting it so we had to help them out. But we'll totally help you out.

Devin: We will. We're accessible people. You can find us on Twitter –Thinkin' Sideways, there's been some interesting activity on that recently. Also just send us an email if you want to talk about this or any other cases, if you have suggestions or if you're an expert in something send us an email.

Joe: Or if you just want to tell me that I'm awesome.

Devin: Or me.

Steve: What? (Devin and Joe laughing).

Joe: All right, okay, don't worry about Steve.

Devin: Don't worry about Steve. That email address is thinkingsidewayspodcast@gmail.com

Steve: Sorry, I was on Twitter.

Joe: Yeah, excuse me I'm texting.

Devin: That having been said, we're gonna get out of here.

Steve: Bye everybody.

Joe: Ta ta.

Devin: See you next week.