

*ARDEN, Episode 5:*

*“The Curse Did It”*

*By Christopher Dole, Sara Ghaleb, and Emily VanDerWerff*

*Created by Christopher Dole, Emily VanDerWerff, and Sara Ghaleb*

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*ANDY: Arden is sponsored by Wheyface Industries. If Wheyface had a face it would be smiling. If Wheyface had a way it would be good. Wheyface Industries. The good people.*

BEA [in studio]: Last time on Arden...

[Click-play. Bea's voice, but sounding more like a fuzzy recording]

*BEA: Last time on Arden...*

[clearer]

BEA: That can't be right. Pamela, is this on the previously on Arden clip?

PAMELA: That's what the file's called. But hold on, let me just check something.

[That same fuzzy recording]

*BEA: Last time on Arden...*

PAMELA: [deeply annoyed sigh] It's uh. I'll fix it.

BRENDA: Hey, I have a radio question.

BEA: I'll bet you do.

BRENDA: Did an intern label a clip of you saying "previously on Arden" as "previously on Arden," and then you played that thinking it was the clip summarizing the previous episodes?

BEA: No, Bentley. I don't have an intern on this show. One or more radio professionals did this.

BRENDA: The same radio professionals that will surely edit this out.

BEA: One and the same, my friend. This is not an auspicious start to the episode.

BRENDA: It's not.

BEA: No, it's perfect!

BRENDA: You're very quick to disagree with me. Have you noticed that?

BEA: No I'm not! This is perfect because... hold on.

[Click.]

[recording starts again, after time has passed]

[spooky piano music]

BEA (doing a spooky voice): Helloooo, welcome to Arden. This week things get a bit spooky-

[Brenda makes an amused sound]

BEA (doing a spooky voice): As we discuss The Capsom Case Currrrrrrsssssse!

BRENDA: Should we have lit candles for this?

BEA: Please imagine that we're doing this show in a gothic mansion, surrounded by candles. You all know the story of Julie Capsom's tragic end. She disappeared on a dark, snowy night in the dead of winter. Not a trace left of her besides her broken down car with a man's torso in the trunk -- and also all the blooooood. Don't forget the blood.

Yet we still haven't spoken of the way the horror of that night seeped into every living soul who touched the case. The closer they were, the worse they *died*.

BRENDA: Why are you talking like that?

BEA: I'm having some fun with the show!

BRENDA: People are dead, Bea. You're turning it into a spectacle.

BEA: Really? Five episodes into the true crime show you co-host and you ask why it's such a spectacle? As if that's not what you've made it in the last four installments? I thought you'd like this bit.

BRENDA: It's pretty crass is all.

BEA: *You're Ms. Crass.*

BRENDA: I'm not crass. I have panache. This is just tacky.

BEA: Normally I would agree. But the curse is different. Besides, I get to make fun of The Curse. I'm part of The Curse.

BRENDA: Were you murdered in highly unexplained circumstances eight years ago, and now you're a ghost haunting me?

BEA: The Capsom Case Curse is an urban legend that everyone involved in Julie Capsom's disappearance will meet a horrible end. Like that horror movie Julie did in 2001 where everyone who looked at that evil horse died.

BRENDA: That's not a real movie!

BEA: Look up "My *Fiend Flicka*." Straight to DVD. I wouldn't recommend it. Especially if you're scared of horses.

BRENDA: ...Scared of horses? Is that a thing?

BEA: Of course it's a thing, why would it not be a thing? Just so you know, if you see a horse where it shouldn't be, *be aware*.

Anyway, the Curse has been credited for the deaths of Ralph's best friend Mark Bolt, Julie's cousin Tyrell Capsom, Julie's mother Kathleen Weir Capsom, AND true crime author Dietrich Barnes, who died right before the release of his book about the Capsom case and its consequent curse. That's not to mention Ralph's parents getting hounded out of town and renowned reporter Sasha Dews losing a toe to frostbite when she camped out in the north pacific forest trying to trace Julie's steps during ABC's five-year anniversary coverage.

Now consider that I was the first reporter on the case, and you were one of the first cops on the case! We're both in it. The curse could come for either of us.

BRENDA: You think we're both cursed?

BEA: I think that if I die in a weird way in the next five years it will be added to the wikipedia page about the Capsom Case Curse whether I believe in it or not. So I might as well lean in. I choose to be in on the joke. Plus it is pretty weird. Like, cosmically weird.

BRENDA: Oh, I thought of another curse victim?

BEA: Yeah?

BRENDA: My truck!

BEA: Oh for God's--

[theme song plays]

*BEA: On December 25, 2007, somewhere around 11 pm, Julie Capsom ran her car off the road and into a tree halfway between Eureka and Crescent City, California, in the middle of northern California's most desolate stretch of major highway. A handful of witnesses saw her pacing outside her car, but by the time the police arrived, she had vanished. While dogs picked up her scent heading into the trees, it abruptly stopped in the middle of a forest clearing. What happened to Julie that Christmas night? How could someone that well-known vanish, in the United States in the 2000s? And why has this case haunted us ever since? Each week, we'll try to step through a different part of the story and see if we can't unravel this web and find the answers. Join us, won't you, as we unravel the mystery... on Arden.*

[end theme]

[theme song plays]

BEA: On December 25, 2007, somewhere around 11 pm, Julie Capsom ran her car off the road and into a tree halfway between

[Click]

PAMELA: Sorry about that. I need a better name for that file than “ardenstuff dot mp3.”

[Click]

BRENDA: Welcome back, loyal fans! Let’s take a moment and talk about rational thought.

BEA: Dear lord.

BRENDA: Eee! We agreed.

BEA: Just take it away, Detective Bentley.

BRENDA: All right. I have always made it a policy to have an open mind about the world around us. Some ignorant people might even accuse me of having “too” open of a mind. And on that point, quickly, while I have the floor: There are an estimated one trillion planets in the Milky Way alone. Believing Earth to be the only planet out of one trillion to have life is far more naive and ignorant assumption. Especially considering how many moons in our own solar system-- Pamela’s giving me the wrap it up motion, even though I was lead to believe this was an educational program.

PAMELA: Maybe you can continue this on Dr. Lheureux’s show at 1:00 am?

BRENDA: I happen to be a big fan of Dr. Lheureux and his work.

BEA: Of course you are.

BRENDA: Do you have any criticisms of “Calls from the Void” which is on your same station?

BEA: I respect the work of everyone here at Wheyface Radio. Wheyface Radio offers quality programming at all hours!

BRENDA: See, that’s the reasonable Casely I know and work with.

BEA: Work with is a stretch.

PAMELA: That was a legit offer on Dr. Lhereux’s show, actually - we can talk off-air, we don’t need to get into this.

BRENDA: Cool beans. Back to the difference between an open mind and a silly theory.

[Bea groans]

BRENDA: To quote history's greatest detective, "Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how improbable, must be the truth."

BEA: Sherlock Holmes isn't a real person, you dolt.

BRENDA: He was based on real person Joseph Bell.

BEA: Who was a surgeon, not a detective.

BRENDA: Surgeons can be detectives, haven't you ever seen House?

BEA: You know I have!

BRENDA: As I was saying, a belief in the potential of alien life is based on scientific deduction. A belief in curses, on the other hand, is based on superstition and magic. Which is not real. It is the impossible vs the improbable.

BEA: Okay. If you say so.

[a swish sound]

BRENDA: Did you just throw salt over your shoulder?

BEA: Maybe, maybe not. It's a radio podcast, I might have done anything.

BRENDA: I saw it, I was right here.

BEA: You don't seem like a very credible source.

BRENDA: You want to talk credible sources?

BEA: Always. Please only talk to me about credible sources. It makes my journalist heart beat faster.

BRENDA: You listed Dietrich Barnes, acclaimed nonfiction writer, on your list.

BEA: No one can see your air quotes around "acclaimed" and I didn't use that word.

BRENDA: Dietrich Barnes air quotes acclaimed end air quotes non fiction writer. And his book "Capsom, Lose Some"?

BEA: It's a bad title.

BRENDA: It's a bad book! Apologies for speaking ill of the dead but his theory that Julie switched with a double is! It's BAD.

BEA: That's not the point though! The curse isn't "people who solved the case" it's "people close to the case" and he wrote three hundred and sixteen, completely unsourced, terribly inaccurate pages on the case.

BRENDA: Ugh, was the book really that long?

BEA: Yes, if you include the foreword.

BRENDA: God, that foreword. I've had serious relationships that were shorter than that foreword.

BEA: I bet.

BRENDA (unamused): Ha. You know Dietrich Barnes wrote thirty six true crime books? He churned them out and he was in his late eighties. There's nothing suspicious about him dying writing any particular book on any particular case.

BEA: Okay, but he didn't die because he was 87, he died because he was trampled by a horse. Like that in that movie where everyone who saw that evil horse died.

BRENDA: That... only seems like a coincidence because you brought up murder horses first.

BEA: Why are you trying to take the fun out of this curse?

BRENDA: You're the one who keeps saying the curse is going to kill me.

BEA: Kill US! I'm part of it!

BRENDA: Well I wouldn't want to be part of any curse that would take me as a member.

BEA: Believe in it or not, that curse is coming for you.

[audio goes static-y]

BEA (groaning): Oh no. Oh no, Brenda, what have you done?

BRENDA: What? There was ranch on this mic before I came in here.

BEA: What? Pamela, can we get a new mic?

[We hear shuffling and equipment moving]

BEA: I just realized something horrible. You brought up the double theory.

BRENDA: No! I said the double theory is bad.

BEA: You said it though. Now we have to explain it for the audience.

BRENDA: The Double Theory is, as the title suggests, the theory that Julie Capsom switched places with a woman who looks a lot like her and THAT woman is the one who crashed her car. It is a bad theory.

BEA: I admit, I did my due diligence and looked into it. Julie was young, thin, and beautiful, and as such a third of Los Angeles' population looked almost exactly like her. She would have only needed to go to any casting call. Not to mention Gerald Abernathy didn't know who Julie was when he met her. He wasn't in her films' target demographic. He only described a woman who fit her description.

BRENDA: A reasonable case. Can you tell me what the fatal flaw is in the double theory?

BEA: It doesn't explain anything.

BRENDA: Thank you. Yes. If Julie switched places with a double we would still have the situation where Julie has been missing for ten years and a different woman who crashed her car vanished into the woods without a trace. It's one of those conspiracy theories that sounds fun and complicated but doesn't really change anything, except now we have *two* missing women to account for.

BEA: It's a bad theory and unlike the very legitimate curse we should take it with a grain of salt.

[swishing sound]

BRENDA: She did it again! Are we allowed to bring food in here or not?

[click.]

[Bea's footsteps walk on gravel]

BEA: You can't talk about the Capsom Case Curse without talking about the mysterious deaths of Tyrell Capsom and Mark Bolt. It's arguably a more interesting case than Julie's disappearance, but the two tragedies are forever entwined. Here is what we know: Tyrell was Julie's cousin and one of her closest friends. Mark Bolt was Ralph's best friend. Tyrell and Ralph had an altercation regarding Ralph's treatment of Julie days before she disappeared.

It's a bit hard to reconstruct what happened after December 25, 2006. Even people close to them who will talk about Julie and Ralph's disappearance don't want to talk about Tyrell and Mark. Vince Volio, who you'll recall gave us so much background on Ralph, doesn't give interviews on Mark. Tyrell's friends and family are closed off behind an iron wall of lawyers. So what's left is hearsay and records of confrontation. Of which there were many.

It seems to have started in mid-January, maybe two weeks after Julie and Ralph disappeared. There were taunts. Tyrell's car was found keyed and covered in graffiti. Some of Tyrell's buddies got in a fight with some of Mark's at least once and were written up for it.



What's key, though, is that we can't directly connect either Tyrell or Mark to these fights at all. In fact, prior to the disappearance hearsay is that they got along very well indeed. They played football together, said hi in the cafeteria, hung out at parties. No indication that Mark vandalized Tyrell's car. Maybe they tried to play peacemaker, or just stayed out of it entirely. But tensions must have been boiling on either side.

And then, March 8th, 2008. There's a report of an abandoned warehouse with blood seeping out from under the door. A lot of it. And when the police get there, they find Mark Bolt and Tyrell Capsom.

[Cut to Brenda's footsteps in a grassy area.]

BRENDA: Here is what we don't know. Why Tyrell and Mark were in the warehouse. What they talked about in the warehouse. How they died. And, while this is an extension of the previous question I believe it merits its own consideration: Where is Tyrell's entire stomach? Because it was not in the warehouse when the bodies were found. Did someone take it? No one takes stomachs! That's not a good murder prize! They're not really very stable organs to- okay, sorry, sorry!

BRENDA [quieter]: I'm in a graveyard.

[click]

BEA: I'm at Mark Bolt's grave right now. The show wanted to pay our respects before... I'm trying to come up with a tasteful way to say dig up- No. Exhume- No. Publicly discuss the past of these deceased kids whose tragic fate still haunt- sorry. Sorry. Can we re-tape that?

[Click]

BRENDA: I am at Tyrell Capsom's grave. Casely and I decided to split up for a bit. [to someone off 'camera'] Why? I think I intimidate her. Oh, oh. Because Tyrell and Mark are buried in different cemeteries. Apparently the Capsoms are so rich they have preferential postmortem real estate. Me, I'm a "when you're gone, you're gone" gal. The cemetery is very swanky though, and Tyrell got a very impressive headstone. Tyrell Loman Capsom. Did you know Tyrell was an Irish name? I looked it up. There's a fountain too. That's, uh... that's something.

[Click]

BEA: The Capsoms were a very close family, and when Tyrell died, it was an unimaginable tragedy on top of an unimaginable tragedy. Since there was no body to bury Julie, but no longer much hope of finding her Mr. Capsom poured a lot of money into his nephew's funeral. Being able to bury him in the family plot hopefully gave them some small sense of closure. But I'm sure Brenda is covering that on her end. By contrast, the Bolts had a very small, quiet funeral. They could barely afford to send Mark to college, and his loans were taken out in his name. His grave bears the simple plaque "loving son and brother." The true lasting testament to Mark is that he is remembered by his friends as incredibly loyal and lighthearted. It's still baffling to consider how the young man beloved by so many ended up in the ground so young.

[click]

BRENDA: Mark was kind of a punk, which I say with all due respect to punks. He was always hustling for some extra cash, same as Ralph. Rumor has it he's the one who got Ralph into dealing, but I met Mark. I interrogated him about Ralph's disappearance. As a cop you learn to the difference between kids who are little bit of trouble, or trouble trouble. At the time he seemed like the former, and I still feel for the guy. But looking at the evidence in that warehouse I have to ask myself if I was wrong. If I was dealing with some kind of maniac, or just a desperate kid who missed his friend and went to the wrong place at the wrong time.

See, Tyrell had a temper. A big one. There's no arguing that he was often starting fights. It's a known fact he fought Ralph. If a situation escalated, all signs usually pointed to Tyrell escalating it. Of course I never met the guy personally, so it's easier to make that judgment. Sitting here, on the Tyrell Loman Memorial bench, listening to those birds sing... it's difficult to be here and reflect on the slaughter we found in that warehouse. Let's take a break.

*[pre-recorded]*

*BEA: Love. We all want it. You can get love from other people, but other people are finicky, self involved, and unreliable. You can get it from pets, but dogs, cats, and turtles are so incompetent that you end up having to do everything for them! If only there was a midpoint. Something with the heart of animal, but the thumbs of an equal.*

*I'm here to tell you there is such a creature. Marmosets. That's right, this pocket sized primate could be your prime- mate if you order now!*

*What do they do? They climb! They scream! They hold your hand and stare at you with their big beautiful brown eyes!*

*What can't they do? Be boring! Make passive aggressive comments about your appearance! Correct your grammar!*

*Weighing less than one pound they're easy to sneak into movies or onto airplanes so you need never be alone. And you would never want to be alone! Because they're so cute. I would know, I'm looking one right now.*

*[Monkey screech]*

*BEA: Wait, is there a monkey in here right now? Did you bring a monkey?*

*ANDY: No, they're marmosets and I brought a dozen!*

*BEA: Don't open that box! Andy! Andy no!*

*[Bea screams!]*

*[The marmosets scream!]*

*[All primates in the radio booth scream!]*

*[recording cuts out]*

*[recording starts up again and is more screams and the sound of things getting knocked over, but this time it sounds muffled and far away]*

*BEA (muffled): My hair! Is it in my hair?!*

*ANDY (clearer): It's good! They groom for lice! I keep one on my beard at all times.*

*[a chair thrown through a window]*

*[recording cuts out again]*

*BEA (out of breath): Marmosets from Prime Mate Primate Mate. A high energy alternative to crippling loneliness. All doctors universally agree buying a monkey cures you of not having a monkey! Act fast before they evolve! Brought to you by Wheyface Industries. The good people.*

*[groaning]*

*BEA: Did we get all of them?*

*[A noise! Bea screams!]*

*[end of ad]*

ROSALIND: Welcome back my adoring fans! Apologies if my opening act was such a downer. It's a beautiful day here at the Hollywood Forever Cemetery, my favorite Los Angeles area cemetery. I've had my share of adventures here, it's an excellent place for drop offs, but you didn't hear it from me. And for pick ups, but you didn't hear that from me either. There is a beautiful ceremony going on over the next hill. I wonder if there's a tasteful way to inquire after their florist. A lot of people are afraid of bold reds outside of a romantic context, and honestly it's cowardly.

BRENDA: Rosalind, someone died.

ROSALIND: Everyone's dying, keep up.

BRENDA: Am I the only one taking this seriously?

ROSALIND: If you have to ask...

*[Brenda huffs]*

ROSALIND: What are you so moody about? Don't tell me you're scared of The Caaaaaaapsom Case Cuuuuuuuurrse!

BRENDA: I am not!

ROSALIND: I think you're safe. For now.

BRENDA: For now?

ROSALIND: Well you said it yourself: the curse is probably to blame for your car going so-

[Rosalind makes an animated disaster noise that would put AuralEmoji to shame]

BRENDA: Hey! It's one thing to say I'm going to die in a freak accident, but you know better than to go after Tommy.

ROSALIND: Tommy was your car?

BRENDA: Truck! Tommy was my truck. And yes, trucks are boys.

ROSALIND: Cars, curses, gender -- they're all social constructs, Brenda. It's good news! It means The Capsom Curse already got you. Feels like you guys are in the clear. Knock on wood.

[Rosalind knocks on a tree]

BRENDA: Does that work on live trees?

ROSALIND: You say you hate arguing with Bea, but 5 minutes away from her and you're fixing to fight me over if trees are, or are not, wood.

BRENDA: I don't hate arguing with Bea! She's the one-

ROSALIND: Bea's the only one I know who loves arguing as much as you do. You two argue at the drop of a hat about the way the hat was dropped. Why are you mad at Bea?

BRENDA: Okay. Fine. Bea has been incredibly unprofessional. I would even go so far as to say reprehensible! She sent Andy an email with a bunch of positive fan comments about me and suggested Andy build off of my heat and give me my own show NOW.

ROSALIND: That sounds very flattering?

BRENDA: That's what so devious about it! She wants me off my own show, named after my own company, so badly that she would say nice things about me! I mean! The nerve! The nerve! She would never say I was well liked and engaging to my face! If someone's going to say something nice about me don't go behind my back like a snake!

ROSALIND: Snakes. Known for their civility.

BRENDA: You sound like Andy. He showed me the email because he thought I'd be flattered at the "high regard" Casely holds me in! High regard my left elbow! The grieving family is looking at us again. Let's get out of here. And stop holding that pen up like it's a recorder. The bit's over. It's a pen.

ROSALIND: Gotcha, boss.

[whispering]

There you have it folks. Honestly, I should be the reporter. They're both useless without me.

[click]

BEA: I'm here at the Los Angeles County Medical Examiner's Office to interview Shirley Inness, the medical examiner who performed the autopsy on Mark Bolt. Just Mark Bolt. Not only do the Capsom's have a preferred burial ground, but they have a preferred mortician. That may seem strange, even for the rich and eccentric, but Los Angeles is a very large county and there are a lot of morticians to choose from. With so many, it makes sense to have a favorite. That sentence sounds weird, doesn't it? What I mean is a lot of people die here.

[Click]

I met Dr. Shirley Inness in her office, not in the morgue. She's been with the Medical Examiner's office for twenty four years. She offered me tea, which I declined. She is surprisingly tall at 6 foot 2, and has a very cheerful disposition for someone in her line of work. She reminded me of an elementary school teacher, although that might have been the height difference. Let's get to the interview!

[click]

BEA: Dr. Inness, pleasure to meet you.

DR. INNESS: Pleasure's all mine.

BEA: You have an interesting line of work.

DR. INNESS: It's dead boring. Ha! Forgive me, I make that joke every time.

BEA: It's a good joke. Dr. Inness, how long have you been with the medical examiner's office?

DR. INNESS: Twenty-four years.

BEA: That's very impressive.

DR. INNESS: Nothing to it. You just don't die. Believe me, I've seen everything.

BEA: The Capsom/Bolt case, would you characterize that as one of the most unusual cases you've seen?

DR. INNESS: It was memorable. I'll say that. I know you know this, Bea, but for the listeners at home I'd like to clarify everything I'm going to say is public record. The case has technically been closed. I don't want you thinking M.E.s go around blabbing the details of all deaths to any nosey nelson who pops up. So. Mark Bolt.

[Dr. Inness takes on a more professional tone]

Height, 71 inches. Five foot, eleven. Weight 188 lbs, by estimation before death. Time of death estimated at 1:30 a.m.

The decedent brought in missing most of his blood.

BEA: Can you speak to the blood loss?

DR. INNESS: Likely lost through his severed arm. Right arm was removed at the shoulder joint by a sharp jagged object.

BEA: You suspect the jagged object could be the chainsaw that was found at scene?

DR. INNESS: Yes, though if it wasn't for the blood on the chainsaw I wouldn't be able to tell for sure. Ty- excuse me - whoever removed the arm was not experienced with the tool and made multiple careless cuts. Difficult to identify.

BEA: So you believe someone else was there?

DR. INNESS: I know there were only two human samples of DNA found and I know there were two dead bodies. My opinions on how the night played out are irrelevant. So the decedent. All his natural teeth, but he had five fillings. Otherwise strong bone density. Decedent had a broken femur, multiple broken ribs, and a fractured skull. Fractured skull appears to have been caused by hitting the pavement of the warehouse floor. Broken ribs caused by a blunt force. Broken femur occurred after death. Appears to have been, for lack of a better word, "snapped."

The decedent's stomach was perfectly intact. Body appeared well nourished and muscular. Toxicology report found a blood alcohol level of 0.32%. Which is high. Toxicology and lungs also indicate frequent marijuana use.

BEA: If you were to speculate?

[Dr. Inness hesitates]

DR. INNESS: I shouldn't speculate.

BEA: If I were to speculate I would say that Mark got drunk, got into and then lost a physical fight when a chainsaw sawed off his arm, causing him to die of blood loss.

DR. INNESS: But you forget the fractured skull! He would have lost the arm, tried to get up, and then have his head slammed at that moment. ... in your hypothetical.

BEA: Any of Tyrell's DNA found on Mark?

DR. INNESS: Some hair from, I'm speculating again, hair grabbing. And blood spatter, but there's no way to know if the blood was before or after Mark passed.

BEA: You have been incredibly helpful.

[ click]

BRENDA: I'm at the coroner's office to speak with the Medical Examiner who examined Tyrell Capsom's body. Dr. Francis Padilla. He's been a coroner for sixteen years. You must have some wild stories, huh, Francis?

DR. PADILLA: I wouldn't consider laying bodies to rest wild.

BRENDA: Of course! Finally someone who treats the dead with some respect. Do you recall the Tyrell Capsom case.

DR. PADILLA: Quite well.

BRENDA: What can you tell us about it?

DR. PADILLA: Out of respect for both the Capsom and Bolt families I would also like to decline to speculate on the case or further sensationalize the tragic deaths of two young men.

BRENDA: Of course.

DR. PADILLA: Have a pleasant evening.

BRENDA: Wait, was that it? Are you seriously not going to speak with me?

DR. PADILLA: I did speak with you.

BRENDA: That was it? Why did you even agree to meet with me?

DR. PADILLA: You barged in here, as I recall. And I was worried that if I did not you would simply say "the coroner would not speak with me but..." and then put words in my mouth. Mr. Bentley, I respect the pursuit of truth, I consider my own profession to be part of that pursuit. However I also believe that this case is over, and digging it back up is not going to find a single thing that benefits the victims of this incident. Only the onlookers.

BRENDA: Very well said. I understand your point of view, and I respect your stance. [beat...] But you gotta tell me what happened to the stomach!

DR. PADILLA: Please leave my office.

BRENDA: I can just look this up!

DR. PADILLA: No one is stopping you, ma'am.

[click]

[Recording again at a slightly busy public location]

BRENDA: Thanks to the good people of Reddit I was able to locate a copy of the original autopsy report! Thank you, Reddit. Please stop speculating on what's going on in my personal dating life. I love you guys. But it's creepy.

So: Tyrell Capsom. Deceased. Weight: Inconclusive, due to the missing goddamn stomach. Toxicology: trace amounts of ecstasy and Adderall. That's interesting. Eyes had severe corneal damage. Huh. Rosalind, ask me how many bones he broke.

ROSALIND (like a joke): How broke were they?

BRENDA: I said how many. One! He had a fractured pinky finger. Rest of him: totally fine. I mean that's not true. He was missing a stomach and almost all his blood, but all his other bones good and accounted for. Except for a front tooth that was missing and replaced with a crown years ago. Lacrosse accident, I imagine.

ROSALIND: Is that in the report?

BRENDA: Only the missing tooth, I knew the Lacrosse thing already.

ROSALIND: What about the raccoon blood?

BRENDA: I'm so glad you asked! This report has NO mention of the raccoon blood. Listeners, part of the reason police still have not been able to figure out what exactly happened that night is because a lot of the forensic evidence was contaminated by raccoon blood. Some raccoons got into a fight, and got blood all over the human blood and it just made the whole situation very messy. Only one injured raccoon found, and he was not a very helpful witness.

ROSALIND: Any raccoon bites on the body?

BRENDA: A few on the ankles. Nothing deadly. Hard to catch rabies after you die.

ROSALIND: I would watch that zombie movie.

BRENDA: I swear I'm going to have a nightmare tonight about horses with zombie rabies.

ROSALIND: But the incredibly gruesome and violent murders slide right off you?



BRENDA: The scariest thing about those deaths is the not knowing.

ROSALIND: Do you at least feel like you understand the case more now?

BRENDA: Absolutely not. Want to order another round?

ROSALIND: No. I get the feeling you're going to need me to drive you home.

BRENDA: And that's what makes you the world's greatest assistant!

[Click]

ROSALIND: Hello, it's me. The world's greatest assistant. I found someone you might like to meet.

BRENDA: What?

ROSALIND: Over there, corner booth.

BRENDA: Oh! Okay.

[sound of them crossing the bar]

"MARGE": Hello! Brenda Bentley?

BRENDA: How'd you know.

"MARGE": I've listened to the show.

BRENDA: Ah, a fan. You send in one of those letters about how much you love me?

"MARGE": I haven't. Would you like me to?

BRENDA: It's fine. I didn't even read them, really.

ROSALIND: Tell Brenda what you do.

"MARGE": I'm a CSI with the LAPD.

BRENDA: Of course.

"MARGE": I was one of the CSIs who arrived on the scene of the Bolt/Capsom warehouse deaths.

BRENDA: Oh my god, that's incredible. You're not going to believe this, but that's what I've been investigating today. Rosalind, isn't this just- the craziest coincidence!

ROSALIND: I looked up who worked that case and then called all of them asking if anyone would be willing to give you an interview today.

BRENDA: And you found this lovely Crime Scene Investigation professional to speak with me on the record at this bar.

ROSALIND: Yes.

BRENDA: Rosalind, best assistant in the history of the world. Can you get me a coffee.

ROSALIND: Okay. Hold this.

BRENDA: Why are you handing me your pen?

ROSALIND: It's a recorder. It's on.

BRENDA: mouther-[expletive].

"MARGE": Umm, Not totally on the record. I'd like to remain anonymous. But I'm legit, I can show you my ID.

BRENDA: [too close to mic] LISTENERS, ahem. Listeners, let the record show that I examined the ID and she is indeed legit. Interesting last name, your husband's?

"MARGE": Yes.

BRENDA: Well, since this bar is playing Simpson's reruns how about I call you "Marge"?

"MARGE": Perfect. So the case: On April 26th, 2007 around 10 am I was called into a crime scene at a warehouse in San Pedro. The warehouse was shut down in 2003. It used to can tuna and there was still a faint smell of it hanging around the place. Probably why there didn't seem to be much of a sign of squatters. The lock on the door had been cut through by bolt cutters but it's unclear if Mark and Tyrell did it or or they just took advantage of the situation. Mark Bolt was found on his side, his armless side, with his head fractured. Blood and hair at the point of contact on the floor indicates that his head had not been moved once it hit the floor. This to me indicates his arm was removed prior to this injury, but that's only one woman's opinion.

Tyrell Capsom was found face down, so it was only once he was moved that the reality of the missing stomach was realized. He was two yards away from Mark and they were positioned at a 140 degree angle from each other. Excuse me, positioned makes it sound like a third party arranged them when there is no evidence of that. They fell in a 140 degree angle from each other. A 10 and 3. There was a lot of blood. Mostly raccoon blood. Signs that raccoons have been nesting there for a long time. We found some of Tyrell's footprints at the scene. He was wearing distinctive boots. Alligator skin. Cannot stress this enough: no other footprints. I've read some of the online theories and they all say the LAPD are idiots for not looking for another person. We didn't find so much as a hair from another person. We checked security cameras in the area. We searched for witnesses. We agree it would make more sense! But sometimes

Occam's Razor isn't the answer. Not to mention, I just don't know how a third party could have done what was done. The whole thing doesn't become less impossible just because a new guy tags in. It's like that Double Theory in Dietrich Barnes' book.

BRENDA: You read Capsom: Lose Some?

"MARGE": No, the case of the strangler by the Great Lakes? "Rust Belt Tightened." He was always trying to sell a double theory.

BRENDA: I hate his books.

"MARGE": Me too. But I keep reading them.

BRENDA: Me too.

"MARGE": Anyway, Tyrell was found clutching a tire iron, which might have broken Mark's leg but didn't fracture Mark's skull. He was also found near a chainsaw. It was his. It had his fingerprints and there's a credit card receipt for him buying it in 2005 for a - I want to say never finished gazebo, but I might be projecting. It's worth noting that Mark was wearing gloves! So who knows what he did or did not touch! We don't.

BRENDA: And what do you believe happened to the stomach?

"MARGE": My pet theory is that one of the raccoons sliced his belly open and slept in there for warmth like a tauntaun, but that doesn't add up because it was spring in Los Angeles and also raccoons don't have lightsabers.

BRENDA: So you don't know what happened to it.

"MARGE": I have no [bleep] idea.

BRENDA: Thank you so much.

"MARGE": Thank you! I'm loving the show. Andy's a hoot.

BRENDA: I will pass that along!

[ click ]

BRENDA: Good morning listeners!

BEA: Good middle of the show to those of you who are listening to the pre taped show in one sitting.

BRENDA: Well maybe they're listening in the morning.

BEA: Maybe they are.

BRENDA: Good morning all. We got a lot done last night. We make a good team when we don't work together.

BEA: Tell Rosalind she does great work.

BRENDA: Every day.

BEA: There is one more aspect of The Curse I'd like to discuss, though it's far less gory or sensational than the Bolt/Capsom murders.

BRENDA: Is it my poor truck?

BEA: For the *last time*--

BRENDA: I thought we were still doing bits because you were back on the curse.

BEA: We're not. We'll skip this. And start again..... NOW.

[static]

BEA, later: Sorry about that. We do not know what happened, but we had a bit of a tech SNAFU. Back to the program. The final victim of the curse is Mrs. Kathleen Weir Capsom, Julie's mother. In 2011, four years after Julie disappeared, Kathleen Weir Capsom lost her battle with pancreatic cancer. In the immediate aftermath of Julie's disappearance, the Capsoms were everywhere. Interviews with every news station, every newspaper. They made public appearances, and even took out a national ad asking "Have you see Julie?" The media frenzy around the family had only just started to die down when Tyrell Capsom's death put them right back in the public spotlight. That was how the Capsoms became shorthand for tragedy. And somewhere amid this dark series of events, the Capsoms retreated from the spotlight completely. Kathleen Weir Capsom never made another movie or TV show. She cancelled a string of charity appearances in her final months. It was only after her death, indeed after the funeral, that Mr. Robert Capsom released a statement informing the world that Kathleen had cancer. Once one of the biggest stars in Hollywood, Kathleen Weir Capsom chose to die and be put to rest without any fanfare.

Perhaps then it's only appropriate that her wish for privacy be respected even now, six years later. Perhaps the only fitting end to this story is the two overly curious reporters, and I use that term loosely, being physically dragged out of the coroner's office in Brentwood.

BRENDA: We weren't dragged out, we were escorted out. Trust me, I've been dragged out of my share of coroner's offices.

BEA: Why do you say that like it's a brag?

BRENDA: Look, any good detective should have a few lifetime bans from morgues.

BEA: I've never heard that before. What are you doing in morgues?

BRENDA: Living my best life!

BEA: Well I wish you were less lively with Dr. Padilla.

BRENDA: I bet he does too. Typical coroner, can't stand anyone with a pulse. He agreed to speak with us about the inconsistencies in Mrs. Capsom's autopsy.

BEA: Did he?

BRENDA: Yes! He said "Please come to my office at once. And bring your cohort."

BEA: And the word "cohort" didn't project a vibe of hostility?

BRENDA: He has a hostile vibe! You saw it! You know what, I have a clip.

BEA: You have a clip?

BRENDA: On my pen.

BEA: That pen's a recorder?

BRENDA: Right?

[Pen recording]

DR. PADILLA: Mr. Bentley, Ms. Casely, I'm so glad you came.

BEA: Francis Padilla, it's a pleasure to meet you.

DR. PADILLA: It won't be. I've been told you'll recognize Aaron Poins, who is here to represent the Capsom family.

POINS: Hello again.

BRENDA: Poins, you sonuva - Is this a set up?

BEA: What's happening?

DR. PADILLA: Yesterday I met with Ms. Bentley to discuss details of Tyrell Capsom's autopsy.

BRENDA: Yes, and yet you didn't.

DR. PADILLA: I explained plainly that I was not ethically comfortable divulging those details and Ms. Bentley left. I believed we understood each other.

BRENDA: Why do I feel like I'm about to need my lawyer?

DR. PADILLA: Imagine my surprise when I get a google alert for my name, on a site called "Red dit" requesting a copy of Dr. Francis Padilla's autopsy reports.

POINS: Were you going to read on the air unverified autopsy reports given to you by a completely anonymous source regarding a dead teenager?

BEA: Holy [bleep], Brenda.

BRENDA: Casely, I thought you wanted to crack the case. This is how you crack a case. You get all the information you have a piece it together.

BEA: I don't want to crack the case! There is no case to crack. She's gone. What my job is as a journalist is to find confirmable facts and present them clearly. This is why I didn't want a detective on my radio show.

BRENDA: This is not why! You hate me.

BEA: I don't hate you, you idiot.

BRENDA: Don't call me an idiot, you coward!

[Poins coughs]

POINS: Security is here to escort you out. And please tell Mr. Wheyface we will be delivering a whole host of legal documents to his office later today. I look forward to it.

[The rest of this scene is over lapping]

BEA: Too late, I'm leaving! Can I leave? Are we getting sued? Do I need to sign anything?

BRENDA: I can't believe you called security! Why do you even have a google alert for your name? What kind of narcissist are you? You're going to have to drag me out yourself if you want me to leave!

[end recording]

BEA: I do not feel like the audience needed to hear that part.

BRENDA: Is that so Mrs. Confirmable Information?

BEA: Luckily, Andy's lawyers got in touch with the Capsom lawyers. They are not thrilled about us revealing that Tyrell took Adderall, but upon examination of the report Brenda obtained, they had to admit it was a legitimate copy of Dr. Padilla's report and thus we are not committing libel! So congrats? Brenda, you have anything to say for yourself?

BRENDA: What is there to say? Classic curse.

BEA: Now you believe in the curse?

BRENDA: I believe it's been a rough show.

BEA: Say it.

BRENDA: Fine, I [bleep]ed up all on my own. There is no dumb curse.

[FIRE ALARM GOES OFF]

BRENDA: Are you doing that to mess with me?

BEA: No, are you?

BRENDA: No.

BEA: Let's get out of here!

[click]

BEA: Sorry about that. Brenda and I are back in the recording booth to take one last shot at ending this episode without major catastrophe.

BRENDA: Now who's tempting fate?

BEA: Well here's something to be happy about. I just spoke with Pamela and it seems like we won't have to work under these conditions much longer.

BRENDA: Yeah? And what's that supposed to mean.

BEA: That the show is falling apart?

BRENDA: Is it that hard to work with me?

BEA: A howler monkey got into the wiring.

BRENDA: Okay, lit degree! I guess it does metaphorically feel like a monkey got into the wiring! That's no reason to try to force me out of the show.

BEA: No, I'm being literal. One of Andy's monkeys got into the wiring of the building and has been breaking our equipment. Marmosets are cute but they are terrible sound engineers.

BRENDA: Oh.

BEA: Why do you think I'm forcing you out of the show?

BRENDA: Andy showed me the files you sent him.

BEA: I was being nice! Supportive, even.

BRENDA: Don't bull[bleep] me.

BEA: Okay. I won't. But I really do believe you getting your own show will be best for everyone. I want to be clear about that, I'm not trying to take Arden away from you, I'm trying to give you something that's completely yours so I can keep what's mine. No one's getting screwed over!

BRENDA: You know, I think for once I'm going to fight the impulse to debate you on this. If we can't work together than there's really no point trying to work together. I think I did pretty well reporting on my own yesterday.

BEA: With Rosalind.

BRENDA: Who is coming with me.

BEA: That's fair.

BRENDA: Goodbye, Casely. I'll see you around. Probably in the parking lot because Andy still owns this building.

BEA:...

BRENDA: Is it that shocking to see me be the bigger person for once?

BEA: You're right, there's no reason we can't shake hands and leave as colleagues.

BRENDA: I'll show myself out.

BEA: Of course.

[Sound of Brenda leaving, door opening and closing]

BEA: Well. There you have it folks, Arden is the latest victim of the Capsom Case Cuuuuurse. [unconvincing laugh].

Uh, anyways. So that's the Capsom Case Curse. It's creepy, unexplainable, and incredibly tragic. There is, I admit, something about the Capsoms that's larger than life. A grandness that lends itself to the idea that the very forces of the universe work differently around them. But, uh, back in reality, I do also have to acknowledge, for the record, that Bentley was right about a couple of things. But only a couple.

First off. Dietrich Barnes. Kathleen Weir Capsom. We know how they died. Their deaths were unexpected, but not supernatural. No death really deserve to be treated as spectacle or a gimmick.



Which brings me to Tyrell and Mark... it's become a ghost story under the sheer weight of the loss. Two young men, loved by their families, loved by their friends, and just starting their lives, were suddenly dead. Very, certainly, dead. A loss that big feels impossible if you really let yourself feel it. So it became something safer, a legend, a myth, a thread on a true crime discussion forum to be picked apart for decades. We'll never know why, but in death we never know why. Not really.

So we got wrapped up in the spectacle. Which wouldn't have happened if the show had been what I'd pitched in the first place, but - but now it's going to be different. Respectful. Journalistic. Everything I wanted it to be. And that's what's better, right?

It's just...

The thing about death is---

Oh god. Pamela, can we do a new take? I just realized what a total blowhard I sound like. I mean, a kid lost his whole stomach.

*ANDY: On the next Arden.... Something will happen? We promised you twelve episodes and that's a Wheyface Guarantee and you can trust that because we're good people, so, uh... we'll see you next week? Brought to you by Wheyface Industries. The good people.*