

SHELTER: Dialogue Transcript Page 1

Narrator (O.S.)

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SUBTITLE

Lewisburg, West Virginia

Vigil reader 1

Loretta Moore, age 23, March 28th of 1994, Lewisburg, West Virginia, the assailant was her ex-boyfriend.

Vigil reader 2

Carolyn Sue Morrison, 45, January 15, 1995 In Roncevert, and the alleged assailant was her husband.

Vigil reader 3 (O.S.)

Debbie Semple, Age 32, 8-6-94, In Moundsville, the alleged assailant was her ex-boyfriend.

Vigil reader 4

Felisha Connely, a child, July 30 of 1996, in Cloe, and the assailant was her father.

Vigil speaker 1

The child advocate office is tracking him down to pay some of the \$10,000 child support that he owes me. And he called his attorney to inform him that he would either kill or paralyze me. So I find myself going back home, pulling the blinds, right back where I was 7 years ago, a prisoner in my own home. Then I come to a point and I said, I can't live like this. I will not go home before dark. I will not pull my blinds. And I will fight.

I know that if he wanted to shoot me, he could shoot me. But I choose to fight and I choose to help other women to flight, and I've told everybody and I'm telling you tonight - if something happens to me, please follow up. Probably it's not an accident. It's probably my ex-husband out there somewhere.

Vigil speaker 2

My name is Tiffany McMurtha and I'd like to remember my mom. She was murdered the day after Christmas in '94 by her husband and he was sentenced to the rest of his life in prison.

Vigil Speaker 3

When I decided to leave my husband, it was because my children were being beaten on a daily basis for absolutely no good reason. And it's a miracle that we're alive. And it's thanks to people that made me realize I didn't have to spend the rest of my life like that, as funny as it seems, because it didn't seem like I could have survived.

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TITLE
SHELTER

SUBTITLE
Lisa talks with Terry, shelter worker at the Family Refuge Center
Lewisburg, West Virginia

Lisa

If we ran out of groceries or something and I wanted to go to the grocery store during the day, I would have to sit and debate before I went -- should I go or should I not. If I go and, you know, he comes home and sees, then he's going to get upset. And then if I tell him I went to the grocery store and he checks the miles to see if that's where I went, then he's going to say, "Well who did you see, who did you talk to?" So, I mean, everything I did I had to really sit and think about it, you know, what the consequences would be. And then from there it just got worse.

You know the jealousy. I had to sleep with him, you know, after he threatened to shoot me, threatened to stab me for something I didn't even do, I had to sleep with him. And I laid there all night long, you know, just praying that I would live to see the morning.

He's not going to change. He'll never change. I mean because he don't think he has a problem. You know, once you're married in God's eyes, you're always married. And that's what he's told me. You know, 'til death do us part.

SUBTITLE
Cassie, Lisa's daughter

Cassie

Come on Cassie, remember how to do it. One. Two. Three. Wait. I have to get a good start.

TITLE
Most of what we know
about domestic violence comes from
battered women in shelters.

TITLE
This comes from
Lisa, Kathleen, Kathy, Karen, and Tammy
at the Family Refuge Center
Greenbriar, Monroe and Pocahontas Co., West Virginia

SUBTITLE
Ron Miller, minister Shuck Memorial Baptist Church

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Ron Miller

The wife has decided she's had enough, she wants a divorce, she wants out of the situation and the spouse, he will come and say "You need to come talk to us. We need to get back in church and you need to talk to us." What they're really saying is, "You need to come talk to my wife so she doesn't leave me. I'm very hesitant to go into those kinds of situations and try to keep that together. I often think of that when I do a wedding. For better, for worse, for richer for poorer 'til death do us part.

I know of some cases where the church has supported the abuser. The woman has felt isolated and ostracized for what's happened and almost to blame for what's happened. And I'm sure that it has probably been said, "Well, God would want you to work this out." Well, I don't know why that person suddenly speaks for God in that situation. A family is not somebody ruling and dominating and killing and hurting. That's not family. And I think the church needs to understand what family is.

SUBTITLE

A year and a half later, Lisa is living in her own home.

Lisa

My mother died in this house. Me and Ralph lived together in this house. Now I feel safe enough to be here. Because when I left Ralph all those times, I had to go to a shelter and he would stay here. And that bothered me so bad because, you know, it's my home. Both my parents are dead and they left me this home. And I had to run.

I'll always watch. I'll never get to the point to where I think, well it's over. He's not going to bother me any more. Because that's just, you know, everything I went through with him. I'll always watch to make sure.

Gerald Crosier

I'd say in the last three years, we've had at least 200 To 250 domestic violence in this little county.

SUBTITLE

Gerald Crosier, Sheriff Monroe County, WV

Gerald Crosier

When you get into that number, you're going to get somebody hurt. They're dangerous. More officers killed in domestic violence than any other case, because sometimes you walk in and the guy you're going after -- he -- he's lost it. And most of them have guns. I don't know how many we've taken guns from and stuff, you know, to go in the house after them.

SUBTITLE

National Training Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence

"The Changing Role of Law Enforcement"

Mark Wynn, former officer Nashville, TN Police Department

Mark Wynn

I do believe that this is the most committed, the most committed and the least reported crime in this country today. Of the hostages taken during criminal incidents, 70% are taken during domestic violence situations. You like to think it's that trapped bank robber or that trapped market owner, when we pull up on a scene on a quick response and then the whole situation sort of unfolds, but most likely it's going to be a domestic violence call. A lot of you've been there.

It's a cyclic crime, not only within that particular family, but it cycles from one father to one son, from one generation to the next. And we sort of pass it off in the darkness of night from one father to one son -- sometimes daughters, but most often little boys -- and it creates our criminal base. I mean if you look at the violent criminal offenders in prison today and you ask them what happened to them as they were growing up, they'll tell you, "I lived in a home filled with violence and rage and destruction."

Half of the men that we're arresting are either physically or sexually assaulting their children and then there's this number -- three quarters of the victims who are killed, are killed after they've left the violent relationship. You have to think about that for a minute. I know we're all a bit frustrated by the way the victim reacts to us and the criminal justice system, but what we're asking them to do when we ask them to leave is we're telling them, "You can trust me. Put your life in my hands. You can trust me." And often when they do, they leave and they don't survive it. And they know that.

SUBTITLE

Gloria, Family Refuge Center paralegal, helps Kathleen fill out a domestic violence petition.

Gloria

You don't want your name. You don't want him to know where you're going do you? So what we're going to put here is "same" because right now your address is the same, okay?

Kathleen

All right.

Well he shoved her once, but you know, he just told her things -- mean things you know, and was mean to her and told her how she couldn't stay in the house.

Gloria

How old is she?

Kathleen

Six-years-old. Just said she couldn't stay in the house and that she had to get out and he didn't want her around no more.

Said he was going to F... U... C... K... me whether I wanted it or not.

Gloria

I'm going to put that in quotes, okay? I know it's hard to see that, you know that kind of language, but the magistrate needs to know the way he was treating you and what he was saying to you.

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Did he say at any point that he would not let Cassandra come with you -- that he was going to keep her?

Kathleen

Right. He said he'd keep her and he said many times he'd take them and go to Ohio and I'd never see them again.

Heard her crying in the playpen and I snuck around to the back door and it was locked. So I went around to the front and listened and I didn't hear him there and I just seen her in the playpen.

Gloria

Do you have any idea of where he was?

Kathleen

He might've been around -- going around the back to see what I was doing.

Gloria

Went back and got my daughter. Did he say any other kinds of things like?

Kathleen

Like if I messed up our marriage, he'd kill me. I mean he did say that.

Gloria

He did say that. If you messed up the marriage, he would kill you. Okay.

Bruce Hosey (O.S.)

Possessive and compulsive and they don't want to let go and they think of their wife or their girl friend as being property and you realize that they're dangerous.

Gloria

I would try to set a time late in the afternoon that if it isn't served by then that she would come to the shelter and stay with us at the shelter.

SUBTITLE

Bruce Hosey, Deputy Sheriff, Greenbriar County

Bruce Hosey

Hopefully then once this order is served and we make it clear to him that he needs to obey the terms and conditions of the order, then he won't come around and he won't cause a problem. But you know, you may just speak to some of your neighbors and

have some kind of a plan so should they see the truck there or see him there in violation of the order

Gloria
That they should call.

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Bruce Hosey
That they should call. When the order comes, we'll serve it. The fact about letting your neighbors know -- the order is only as good as you know, as the protection that you have and that, you know if nobody knows you need help -- nobody can help you.

Gloria
All right. Is there anything else you need right now?

You need a hug.

Kathleen
Thank you. That's why I come back here. Don't here to talk with strangers. I hope this is the last time I have to do this.

Gloria
Yes. I hope so too.

SUBTITLE
Kathleen a year and a half later.

Kathleen
That was like the middle of the end. It still just kept going on and on. I figured, you know if you try to leave, that's when things will get bad. But while you're there, they're not going to get so bad because you're there. But once you try to make that break to go -- that's when things would get way out of control. So it kind of made me not want to try to get out because I didn't think I could make it, you know. I'd tried before and I couldn't seem to get away from it. And he's persistently coming wherever I was you know. I moved away and had my own place, you know was living and he came in and he stayed. You know, wasn't much I could do.

Say well if I just do like he says. I don't wear make-up or stay home all the time or I'll fix him dinner just like he likes you and know and just do everything to make him happy. You know and then maybe just if he's gone to work say oh well you know we got this time to ourselves you know, and make the best of it and play a little music, play little games, you know with the kids and try to have fun before he gets back.

And we had no friends you know, no family members any more you know. They've all went their own way and just you know were tired of the whole situation.

And just depression you know from trying to deal with him, the situation, you know, to where you felt if you didn't get out of it, you might not be sane any more, you know. It's either like I guess a do or die situation.

SUBTITLE

Gloria Family Refuge Center

Gloria

She finally made the decision that she had to leave here -- that she just wasn't going to be safe. He wasn't going to leave her alone. And so she moved to Virginia.

I was working one Saturday afternoon and the phone rang and I picked it up and she was hysterical. At first I didn't even know who it was, you know. I had to get her
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calmed down because she was crying. She could see him. She says, "What should I do?" And I said, "Call the police," because he had violated a federal law. When you go across the state line for the purposes of violating a protective order, you've violated the federal statute.

They took him into custody and they put him the southern regional jail for

SUBTITLE

Terry, Family Refuge Center

Terry

Almost three months. But in the three months that he was in jail, it gave her a break she had never had before.

Kathleen

Hopefully I've got out while they were young enough to where it won't seem like a familiar thing. When they meet someone it seems like a familiar thing. My father and him are just alike. You know and now looking back at it, I see exactly they're both alike in the same way they act and controlling and that kind of thing. And I don't know. You blame yourself and then you don't blame yourself. And it just happens to people. But I think it could happen to anybody.

Terry (O.S.)

The number of people that will experience abuse in their lifetime, for women is 50-60%.

Mark Wynn

I remember very well turning on the television when we first got a television and I watched the old black and white TV series "Dragnet" -- Jack Webb, and you know, Sgt. Friday, and Gannon. And I used to imagine that Friday would come to my house. That the knock on the door wouldn't be the Dallas County sheriff's department, it would be the L.A.P.D. and it'd be old Joe Friday there, you know saying, "just the facts, just the facts." And I'd finally be able to tell an adult what was going on in my home, and we could be saved. But the problem was that instead of getting Jack, who was a model cop, we got Joe who didn't understand the issue or often told us as a family, "If we come out here again, you're all going to jail."

We were taught some incredible things 25 years ago in police academies. One of the things that we were taught was that domestic violence was a nuisance crime that required you to be mediator – until the women's movement just woke law enforcement up, by shaking them and saying, "Wait a minute."

subtitle

Ellen Pence Praxis International

Ellen Pence

In the early 1970's, there was a group in England who had just taken over a government building, who were all being beaten up and said, "We have no place to live and you need to – the government needs to house us. And we can't go back to our husbands who are beating us." They coined this term – that they're being "battered." And this is where the first term "battered women" came from.

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archival battered woman

I'm blind in my left eye. I've got hairline fractures in my cheekbone. My knees are – have been dislocated through kickings. My child was born prematurely through being kicked in the stomach.

Ellen Pence

The feminists, who were organizing the groups, maybe had some ideas that they were going to overthrow the patriarchy in the next 20 years or whatever. But this issue of battering started to really come to the fore because it was the thing that you couldn't kick her out or she was going to get beat up.

subtitle

Debbie Tucker National Training Center On Domestic And Sexual Violence

Debbie Tucker

In Houston we heard about a woman and her two children passing the night in a dumpster and we just were like this can't – this can't go on – there has to be a place where people can get help.

You know, we've got 13 beds, 3 cribs, bring it on. And the very first kinds of things that we encountered was 300 families calling in the first month needing assistance. There's three families in the kitchen, we've not met before and it's awkward. And we're like yeah – maybe we got to get organized, you know. That's what we're doing in essence, we're starting a place that women can go to and organize themselves for the next steps that they want to take in their lives. The saturation that we have to achieve to really move attitudes, values, belief, behavior is very intense.

Women's Protest (singing)

No more keeping quiet for me. No more. No more. No more keeping quiet for me.
Many thousands gone.

subtitle

Tillie Black Bear, White Buffalo Calf Woman Society

Tillie Black Bear

I think the biggest problem probably that still exists is the attitudes about women – the attitudes that men have about women and if men develop those attitudes through society – it's society that's going to have to change.

I'm a survivor. We began to talk about the need for a women's organization here at Rosebud. By the fall of 1977, the women were gathering and meeting. The chair of White Buffalo Calf asked me if I would be interested in going to present at a hearing that the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights was having -- a two day symposium on what they called "wife battering." And I said I would. I think there was just kind of a general feeling among the women there -- there was probably 3 or 4-hundred women there -- that there really needed to be a national voice. If our states were not organized into coalitions or network, then we were given the task of going back and doing that organizing piece. And I remember my reaction at the time was like; you mean you want me to go back to the state of South Dakota to organize? You know do you realize that I'm an Indian woman, you know, living on an Indian reservation? I thought it would be hard to organize around this issue. We formed the South Dakota Coalition Against Domestic Violence, which is

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still a very strong organization here in the state. Domestic violence was a human rights issue.

subtitle

Trudy Laurenson, Director Family Refuge Center

Trudy Laurenson

We started in '78 here in, you know a backwater place. It was a sort of a logical outgrowth of the activism and the desire for change that was part of the sixties and seventies.

subtitle

Stephanie Mendelson Family Refuge Center

Stephanie Mendelson

And it was happening nationwide.

At the same time they were just popping up all over. It wasn't coming down from the top. It was like a grass fire across the country.

Trudy Laurenson

Hands on, advocacy, let's not duplicate in our shelters and safe homes and our organizations the kinds of dominance and power and control that women are getting out of.

subtitle

Family Refuge Center

Trudy Laurenson

This happened in every state. There are between 1,200 and 2,000 is the new number I've heard for the number of shelters there are.

We're here to make change.

Gloria

It is the number one health threat to women. Now we didn't – we as the movement did not say that. The American Medical Association said that – that domestic violence is the single biggest health threat to women.

SUBTITLE

Melody, Kathy's daughter, and Kathy

Narrator (O.S.)

Maybe I'm hearing the oxygen?

Kathy

It's going... Yeah. That's it. It's my oxygen.

When he seen me with another man one day, he started telling everybody that he was going to shoot me. I thought well man, I said, "Don't that" – I just, you know I thought to myself, "he's just joking," you know. And I heard this noise and I looked up and he shot me. And all I can remember is trying to hold the blood in. I mean it was pouring out

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faster than I could – it just – you just couldn't imagine. I mean the blood was so hot, my fingers were so numb. It was just like I knew I was dying.

I never heard from the prosecuting attorney. I mean never a phone call, never a letter. I mean I never even got the news of when the court date was going to be.

subtitle

Richard H. Lorensen Former Prosecuting Attorney

Richard H. Lorensen

The thing I like about being a prosecutor is you can really go after the truth and you do have a lot of power because you're kind of the gatekeeper for the courthouse and court system. Yeah, I feel like as a prosecutor my first obligation is to not arrest law-abiding citizens, you know. And so you know I try to look at things critically to see if the complaining witness is a reasonable person and can be believed.

If the first thing they do is say, "I'm telling you the absolute truth," I wonder why they have to start off telling me that, you know. Is there some reason that I would doubt what they're saying? There's a lot of little clues that you pick up on. I mean somebody wears a t-shirt that says "so many men, so little time" and they're talking about, you know, some affront by someone. You know, you have to look at a lot of different things.

subtitle

Judy, Family Refuge Center

Judy

The best training I had, but I wouldn't suggest it to anybody was when I personally went through it. I learned how the you know, the civil system worked, the criminal system. I always led a very sheltered life and I thought when you went to the courthouse for help that it was there. I came out of the courthouse screaming.

Victim blaming that comes from magistrates and law enforcement and everybody, you know. Well if she would just do this, this, and this he wouldn't get so angry that he would hit her.

At one hearing the guy said he beat her up because she didn't keep a clean house. Two police officers were asked to go to her house to see if it was clean. Well, I don't care how dirty the house is, there's no reason that he should raise his hand and hit her.

Richard H. Lorenson

Somebody has to believe in the victim. I try to do the best I can. Some of the jurors that come on the jury, you know they're not going to raise their hand and say, "well, I, you know, beat my wife;" or you know, "I," you know, "I've held a gun to my wife's head, you know, and it really calmed her down." You know, there're people like that on the jury sometimes. And you know there are some people on the jury who don't believe in these kinds of cases or something or they don't like a woman who is rough looking and unmarried and drinks. You know, those are the people who make the decisions. And you know, that's what I have to cater my case to.

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Ellen Pence

You've got real victims – the good women -- and then you've got all of these other people who really brought on and are part of the violence and are not – you don't protect them the way you protect these women. And it's a very small percent. And I'm just going to make this up – 12% of women are good victims. And 88% of us on some level fall short of that good victim status. And I think that's the thing that we face in society today, is that up front they'll say, "Yes, women should be protected," but all of the women aren't part of that.

Richard H. Lorenson

The thing that really upsets me is when somebody comes in and I've never seen them before and they start screaming at me because of something about their case. What do they think they're going to accomplish by doing that? And I've had people do – a lot of people do that. I mean they're just so anti-society. I call it a "loser mentality." You know they feel like they've already lost and they're going to come in and they're going to scream at me because, you know, that's how they're going to get something done. And that's probably the way they grew up, you know, getting stuff done with their family – fighting everybody. And unfortunately a lot of those people wind up in predicaments perhaps more frequently than other people. But they're difficult people to deal with. And I think as a prosecutor, you have to learn how to deal with difficult people.

Kathy

You know, I'm not saying the system don't work.

Melody

It don't work. I'm serious. It don't.

I just don't see it happening in my life. You know, having kids – Well, I mean, you know, I do want to have a kid, but you know I don't know about a husband. You know what I'm saying? I mean I'm serious.

Kathy

Maybe it's just how hard it is

Melody

It's a germ in the air.

Kathy

I think it's got a lot to do with

Melody

Whatever's happened in their life maybe.

Kathy

Well you, haven't you ever heard a man tell his son, "Oh son, men don't cry? Men are tough," you know. A then women are teaching their kids to play with dollies and put tears in their eyes and

Melody

Not me.

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Kathy

and cook and clean for their husbands and

Melody

I ain't no slave.

Kathy

I know you ain't 'cause I can't get you to do nothing for me.

Melody

It's going to change. It's going to change boy.

subtitle

8 Months Later Kathy Wins A Settlement In Civil Court

News Reporter (O.S.)

Two years ago a single bullet shattered Kathy Feliciano's life forever after a man she refused to date shot her in the stomach.

Kathy

I definitely did not deserve to be shot.

Reporter (O.S.)

Last week a jury agreed. This victim of domestic violence was awarded over \$900,000 in a civil law suit.

Kathy

I never got my chance in criminal court and I feel as if justice was served. I mean I got my day in court.

News Reporter (O.S.)

But that day won't change the fact she's in dire need of a lung transplant and she's been given five years left to live.

Kathy

It took a strong person to survive what I've went through, but I enjoy life. Hey, I can still smile and, you know I enjoy living.

Reporter (O.S.)

Townsend Fidell, 13 news.

Kathy

They let him plead guilty to malicious assault. Malicious assault could be spitting on somebody. He got a year and a half. And I had to fight for that half.

subtitle

3 Years Later With Her Health Failing, Kathy Has Not Received Any Money From Her Settlement.

Kathy

Even though the judge still ordered him to pay me almost a million dollars, I haven't gotten a red penny from him. I mean I'm the one that's embarrassed when I have to operated on and I have to hand them a Medicaid card. I shouldn't have to be a burden to the state.

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I know I'm going to be here 'til, you know God calls me home. And I know that what time I'm still here, I want to try to enjoy it as – you know, as much as possible. So I try to live normal, but it's really hard.

Daughter.

Melody

Yeah, I graduated.

Kathy

And I was proud that day, too. I was right there.

I don't do much any more, but sit here and I enjoy the – you know, the views. It's beautiful up here, you know, and I got family close by. And I just like it here. It's beautiful.

music interlude

Gloria

I went with this woman who lost custody of her two children in magistrate court this morning.

Terry

Did he have a lawyer?

Gloria

Yes.

Terry

And she didn't?

Gloria

And she didn't.

I'm just going to read it so we have an idea of what we're talking about. He picked you up and threw you. That was when you came back down from the scenic highway, right?

Karen

No.

Gloria

We need a few more minutes to meet. Could we?

Karen

I'm so afraid. I'm so afraid I'm going to lose my kids.

Gloria

You're not going to lose your kids. What is his mother going to say?

Karen

Lies – all lies.

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Gloria

She going to say you're a bad mother?

Karen

Probably. But she's the one that abandoned her son when he was my daughter's age. I mean, she's going to lie through her teeth for him.

Gloria

Who – you've had the children with you in North Carolina all the time?

Karen

Yes. He's never touched Nicole. He won't give her a bath because she's a girl. He would not change a diaper because she was a girl. I have raised these kids from day one.

subtitle

C. Chuck Camper Investigator/Security Advisor

C. Chuck Camper

I'm a free-lance investigator and security specialist. I work on both U.S. and international markets. I happened to be here in my hometown and picked up this current domestic case.

I pat myself on the back a little bit, I'm a pretty good judge of character. If a guy comes to me and gives me a story reference his marriage, custody of his children or whatever, I can usually determine whether or not he's telling me the straight story. And always before I investigate in a domestic case, I check my client out. For a number of reasons, I want to know frankly if he's telling me the truth. I also want to know if they can afford me. Is the amount of money they've given me as a retainer all I'm going to get? So it's a financial issue, for me. I need to know who I'm dealing with and in finding out those things you can usually find out if he's the kind of guy that beats his wife.

Gloria

In determining custody often times abuse of the mother is not taken into consideration. I hear magistrates, I hear law masters, I hear circuit judges, I hear lawyers say, "Well but he doesn't hurt the kids." But when he hurts the mother, he does hurt the children. That's certainly emotional abuse – at the minimum. Often times children get hurt in the crossfire. Statistics tell us that if children live in a home where their mother's being physically abused, 60 to 70% of those children are being physically abused.

But now what I'm seeing is real change in attitude. I'm seeing fathers go after custody – and that would be all right if I thought the fathers were really interested in having custody of their children, but I think it's a new way they've devised to abuse moms now. For as long as I've done this job, the threat's been around that if you try to leave me, I'll take the kids. That's a threat that most battered women hear. They hear their abuser say, "You'll never see the kids again. I'll take the kids away from you. The court'll give me the kids. You can't support the kids, I can," dah-da-ta-dah-da-ta-dah. That's been something that's been around as long as I've done this job. But now I'm actually seeing fathers going after it in court. They've got attorneys that are helping them. Now she's really in a bad position, 'cause now she's not just got the abuser to deal with, she's got a whole bunch of people that are helping the abuser and the legal system's going along with it. It's really dangerous. This is really dangerous. I'm real concerned about this and I've seeing it – I'm seeing this happen more and more.

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Karen has lost custody of her children. She has a few hours with them.

Gloria

It's really. It's hard. This is so hard. Not as an advocate, not as somebody who works in domestic violence, but as a mother to lose my children would be – I can't imagine how awful that would be. And the system doesn't seem to think that that's so serious. That makes me really angry. That makes me really angry. That in the name of protecting children, we're allowing abusers to abuse in a new way – makes me really angry.

Gloria

So you've got yourself together. Now we have to try to tell the kids. Did you bring something for the kids?

Karen

Just for this weekend. He's supposed to have stuff up there.

Gloria

You don't want the kids to see you crying.

Gloria (O.S.)

How can a child be better off with the father when the father's been an abuser of the mother? How can that be? How can that be? It can't be.

Gloria

Okay, we'll see you later on this afternoon.

Child

I'll be good.

Karen

Okay. I'm going to put you in your car seat.

subtitle

Soon after losing custody Karen went back to her husband. During the next 4 years, she stayed in the shelter 3 times.

Karen's Child

I'll be good.

Gloria

Karen, I'm leaving my card here, okay?

subtitle

Karen is now divorced. He has custody of the children.

Mark Wynn

Some of these – what they call "mad dad movements," they're making the point that the pendulum has swung too far to the left or right and now they're suffering because of domestic violence legislation or pro-arrest policies or us identifying that 90% of the offenders in domestic violence are male and they feel as though that that's not accurate and that it's half and half and women are just as violent as men. I can't find that in the studies that I've seen. I don't see that in the numbers after 22 years in law enforcement. I don't see that in the numbers at hospitals of victims going in the hospital. I don't see that talking to therapists who deal with victims of domestic violence. I don't see that in the

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ranks of the homicides in this country. There may be a day when it is 50-50, but I don't see it now.

Tammy

Gracie came in August. Her husband beat her up -- broke four of her ribs and her nose. When she came in the shelter, the morning she'd get up -- she couldn't make it down the steps, and I'd carry her down.

She stayed here until, I think it was October. And she moved into an apartment out at Union and there for a while everything was going good for her. But he found out where she was and he moved back in with her. And I went out to see her. She had bruises on her face. So the next thing I know -- I found out that she was found dead. They say they investigated it, but he always went around in town saying that once he'd get her in Pocahontas County again, he was going to kill her. I can't say that he did, but she's dead now. Because they said that they found her in a car. She was drunk, and she froze to death. Hypothermia set in where she stayed in the car so long. And Noah, her son's the one that found her dead. And I think he's, right now at this time he's living with his dad. And his dad still drinks. And I hope that he's taking good care of him.

She always would share what she had. She could always put a smile on your face even though you didn't really feel like smiling.

Tillie Black Bear

There's still not enough people saying, "Hey, violence is not okay. To hit your wife is not okay. To hit your partner is not okay. To hit your child, to rape your child is not okay." We don't have enough of that -- people saying that or even institutions saying that. you know, leaders in this country, you know. Each time a woman dies as a result of violence, you know, children that die as a result of violence -- there should be some out-cry. But there isn't.

subtitle

Tammy's children are in foster care. She's in the shelter.

Terry (o.s.)

You've never been in a room an hour alone with your children.

Tammy

No.

Terry (O.S.)

for a little over three months? And you aren't writing letters. You're not calling 'cause that you've been asked not to. So it's been pretty rough

Tammy

Yeah.

Terry (O.S.)

and maybe hard for your kids to understand.

Gloria

This is a woman who's had continuum of abuse from the very time she got here.

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Tammy

They said I failed to protect them. And I stayed away from him.

Terry (O.S.)

And you went to welfare and reported it?

Tammy

Yeah. And he lied and told them he was living with me. And he wasn't.

Terry (O.S.)

And he wasn't.

Tammy

I don't know, he fools everybody.

Terry (O.S.)

Well and if he thought it was okay to have this kind of relationship with you when you were thirteen, then he maybe thinks it's okay with young girls.

Tammy

I don't think he should get by with what he did.

Terry (O.S.)

I don't think so either.

Tammy

He's walking around not having to deal with nothing and we're being punished for what he did.

subtitle

Janet Turner, Supervisor Child Protective Services

Narrator (O.S.)

If a woman comes to the department and says, "My husband has sexually abusing my daughter"

Janet Turner

Well if the mother was reporting that, then we would – our first step would be to see what action she is willing to take to protect her children. We're assuming that she was unaware of the abuse up to that point. That's not always the case. And sometimes there are other issues going on as to why she's now reporting when perhaps she did know that there was sexual abuse occurring in the family. But for whatever reason she had she did not report it and then something happens - brings it on for her to – encourages her to make the report.

Narrator (O.S.)

How would you assess a woman's ability to protect her child?

Janet Turner

Well, it has to be a demonstrated ability to protect her child, because someone would say to us, "Well yeah, I'll make sure he doesn't come back into the home." But there's –

historically that hasn't been the case or just in the general assessment of how this individual functions it would appear that they've been in a controlling situation for a number of years. It's not likely that they would just give that up. Especially if there are other factors in place. So we'd ask for a demonstration that they are able and willing to protect their child.

Terry

It goes both ways. I mean there are clearly situations where children aren't protected in their homes by their moms. But there are many, many times where the mom will hear and the mom will do the right thing which is go and report it and then it's so hard on her because the first assumption is that she was a party to this. And it really takes somebody working with the mom to get past this.

Gloria

You lose a lot when you're in this situation. Because they have an incredible amount of power. Why are they not all over his case? I would love to see the department haul the fathers in and say to them, you know, "You will never see your kids again unless you do this, this, this, this, this, this, and this. If we would just come down hard on him, put him in jail for what he does, maybe he would a. either shape up or b. leave her alone. You know, and then she could protect her children. Then she could take care of her children.

Terry

And the effort is to change her, when the effort should be to change him.

Narrator (O.S.)

Who are the major abusers of children – mothers or fathers?

Janet Turner

Generally speaking, physical abuse it is the men in the family. Neglect, lack of supervision, poor parenting practices, things of – it's usually the mother.

Terry

If you're on welfare in West Virginia, a woman with two kids gets somewhere around \$250 a month. You're not going to do an awful lot with that. If she's neglecting, there's a father for these children. Are we maybe looking at the wrong person here? Are we having expectations of the mom that we don't have of the dad?

Gloria

We have a real double standard. They will always come down harder on the women.

Terry

It's the beginning of a long rocky road.

subtitle

3 months later, Tammy's children are with her.

Crystal

My foster mommy said that I'd never get to go back, but it looks like I did. Yeah. She's the strongest woman in the whole world.

Amanda

Un-uh.

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Crystal

Uh-huh. Can't put yourself down now, you're on the TV.

Tammy

I kept thinking that the kids was at camp and eventually they was going to get to come home.

Tammy's older daughter Amanda

It was horrible.

Crystal

Hard.

Tammy

We got through it.

Crystal

I felt as though I was upside-down.

Amanda

She felt like she was upside-down.

Tammy

She felt like her world was upside-down.

I have them back in my home, but I don't have custody of them yet, and don't know when that's going to happen. They can come in and take them out and there's nothing I can do about it, but let it happen.

subtitle

Shannon, Child Advocate Family Refuge Center

Shannon

Oh I think she's a bright, bright girl, but there was such an interruption. Instead of giving her mother the support that she needed, they've made her mother afraid. So Tammy's ended up moving quite a bit. Crystal's changed schools three times this year – back and forth, which of course interrupts your development at school. I do think it's in the kids' minds that this is what happens – they just come and take you away.

subtitle

Tammy applies for a HUD certificate for housing.

Narrator (O.S.)

So, how'd it go?

Terry
How do you feel it went?

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Tammy
There is hope.

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Terry
There is hope. Where are you on the list?

Tammy
106.

Terry
You're probably looking at a year. It's frustrating because when people say, "Why doesn't she just leave," this is one of the really major obstacles for people trying to have a house and live a life that's free of abuse. You have to have a place to live in.

Ellen Pence
In my grandmother's day, you got battered for 50 years. You got battered for 25 years. When the kids were finally gone, maybe you left him. But that's not true any more. Women are leaving in their twenties and thirties now. And the whole welfare reform thing has actually put women backwards, given us less options to leave brutal husbands than we had before. So we're in worse shape now than we were ten years ago.

Debbie Tucker
And the punitive nature of this whole welfare climate is very frustrating to me -- shaming people who need any kind of economic leg up.

Tammy
Stranded.

Terry
Stranded.

Mark Wynn
Only until the entire society is part of the solution for a victim to get out and the road is seamless. There's a straight view of where you start from the time you call 9-1-1 to the time you take your children out of the violent relationship and find a home for yourself and a job and a helping hand along the way. To have some hope in a community that shepherds them through all this long term so they don't turn and go back to another violent offender. Or their children don't turn out to be violent offenders of tomorrow.

Ellen Pence
85% of the men that I have worked with over the years that have battered only hit people in their homes. Only hit their wives and only hit their children. So it's not about his alcoholism or his unemployment or his rage – it's about his home. It's about who he sees himself as when he walks into his front door.

These men are men, they're our sons, they're our boys and they're beating and raping and hurting women, and how did we produce them? And then we have to ask ourselves, "What are we doing for our daughters to give them what they need to live in a world where those things happen to women?"

subtitle

Crystal, Tammy's daughter is part of a girls' group.

Crystal

Go to your next-door neighbor and call the police and tell them – "take us to a better home," like here. Keep you safe.

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Girl #1

Foster home and they ain't sending me in no foster home and that's why I ain't calling no police. I'll run.

Girl #2

I don't like foster homes.

Girl #1

Me either.

Girl #2

Because they could take you away from your family.

Girl (O.S.)

But violence will never happen again at our house, I hope not anyways.

Crystal

We got took and if we get taken again, she – my mom will get us back when we're 18.

Narrator (O.S.)

Do you think your husband's going to hurt you?

Girl #3

Nope. 'Cause I ain't getting married

Girl #4

My mom don't want to get married 'cause she don't trust anybody.

Girl #3 (O.S.)

That's why I ain't getting married, 'cause I ain't trusting no man. First time they put their hands on me – they're bye-bye. If they don't leave, I'm going to shoot them.

Girl #4

I said, I'm going to be a cop when I grow up so they wouldn't beat me.

Girl #2

No problem with that. I hate all boys, except for my brother. They're just creeps.

Girl (O.S.)
Boys are rude.

Girl #2
They burp. They don't say, "Excuse me." They leave the toilet seat up and somebody could fall in.

Girl #3
Whoever I get married to don't watch TV and drink beer, they're going to have to do – cook, clean, wash dishes, they're going to have to do everything that women do.

Girl (O.S.)
You got to help some too.

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Girl #3
I know. Everything women do.

Girl #4
He's going to help around the house and help and

Girl (O.S.)
He's going to be brushing his teeth every day and washing his butt.

Girl #4
and clean – he's going to be clean.

Girl (O.S.)
He's going to be washing his butt.

Girl #2
He's going to wash his own dishes. He's going to wash his own clothes. If he has pets or anything, he's going to clean up after them for himself. He's going to have to be nice. 'Cause if he's not nice, he ain't coming in. He can sleep outside on the porch.

Crystal
I would like to get their personality, you know, if they have a good personality and you know, if they treat you good and everything. And if they have a dog, we'll like take turns.
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You wash the dog, then I wash the dog, then you. And then if you have a cat, like I have a cat. I'll clean up after the cat.

Girl (O.S.)
It scratches.

music interlude

Mark Wynn

When I went to the Holocaust Museum in Washington – I think it's an incredible place to go. I think every American should go there. There was a guide there that told us about how the Germans were having psychological problems with pushing children into the gas chamber – so they sort of neutralized the view of an inmate by stripping the clothes from them and shaving their hair. I've seen this with domestic violence offenders where they tell a victim, "You can't wear this certain make-up, you can't wear this certain hair color, you can't wear this certain dress, you can't do this, you can't do that." Taking a human and taking away all of their civil rights, denying them the right to be a human. And it makes it a lot easier for that prison guard, who happens to be in control of a family filled with domestic violence, to offend just like those men did when they pushed those small children into those gas chambers. And I'm not being melodramatic. I'm just telling you it's easy to abuse someone if you see them less than human.

Chanting

Remember the Victims. Remember the Victims
Break the Code of Silence. Stop Domestic Violence.

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Debbie Tucker

I remember when we passed the Violence Against Women Act – which for me doing a lot of the political activism kind of stuff for money and law changes and so forth – it was a wonderful moment and then immediately afterwards, I said, "Okay, we did this. We are now firmly at the cliff of success."

Tillie Black Bear

On one hand, you know, they're giving us money to establish laws to protect women and they're giving us money for shelter. But at the same time they can dictate how that's going to be done. You know, is this movement still a grassroots movement? You know, they follow these models, they – you know, they present these models that are based on the mental health and the woman becomes a client, becomes a number.

Ellen Pence

One place that we went wrong for – ten years ago – was that we stopped having the basis of our organizing, consciousness raising for women and working with organizing women to take action. More and more our shelters and our programs have become more professionalized and institutionalized so that women are seen as clients, victims. I mean can you imagine Martin Luther King organizing a group of clients?

Tillie Black Bear

As we institutionalize the movement, we just become another social agency. We're going to be here a 100 years from now – providing direct services to battered women and rape victims. You know what I mean? And so, you know, we have to take a look at it. And I think we really need to go back and look at where we've been.

women's protest singing "no more keeping quiet for me"
No more women hurt and killed

Tillie Black Bear

The heart of the whole work is of course working with the women.

women's protest singing

No more keeping quiet for me.

No more, no more.

Tillie Black Bear

This was social change work that we are going to create a world that's non-violent.

There's an old concept that we have that says it takes a village, a whole village to raise a child. And I think just by raising that child it doesn't end there. It takes a whole village for a child to live in eventually as an adult. So that responsibility continues with the village. You know, in how we as adults live within our own villages. You know we really shouldn't have any shelters.

"Hen House Lament" lyrics

Cockle doodle do, cockle doodle dumb.

You flap your wings just to see me run.

I ain't staying in your chicken yard.

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subtitle

It's Been 4 Years Since Kathleen Stayed At The Shelter.

Kathleen

I think the biggest thing was moving away from everything, everybody that I knew and moving away. I mean it was a big, big move and when Terry suggested it, I was like "No way, am I going to move to another state to get away him and let him run me away." But it's actually been really good for me. A whole new start, you know, a whole new place for the kids and just a whole new canvas.

It's kind of weird – it's hard to believe I was in that situation and that we was actually going through that kind of stuff. It seems like somebody else's life.

I was watched and controlled, told how to act, how to be, you know. It is amazing the freedom that you feel. I worked on a construction site job and I was flagging and just the sun and the trees, not having nobody over my shoulder and me scared to death to turn around and say, "hey" or not to another person, you know. It's amazing how much excitement. It's like a kid in a toy store. When you get out and you're on your own and – and you don't have that chain holding you back. You can think and feel and, you know, learn what your likes and dislikes are. You tend to lose a lot of your own thoughts when you're in a relationship like that. But, you actually can go in the store and buy a pair of pants you like. (Laughter) Just for that you should get away.

It's such a freedom feeling to be your own person. It's amazing. I mean once you've got that freedom, you will never let it go.

Kathleen's Daughter #1

I'm stuck.

Kathleen's Daughter #2
I'm stuck on myself, too.

Narrator (O.S.)
To learn more about "Shelter" visit www.itvs.org

"Hen House Lament" lyrics

I ain't staying in your chicken yard.
I don't know why life has to be so hard.
Cockle doodle do, cockle doodle dum.
You flap your wings just to see me run.
I ain't staying in your chicken yard.
I ain't staying in your chicken yard.

Tail Production Credits

Credits "Shelter"

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music courtesy of the

Reel World String Band

"Little Omie Wise" (trad.)
"Between the Shadows" (Loreena McKennitt)
"Old Grey Coat" (Tony Rice)
"Henhouse Lament" (Bev Futrell)

and

Malcolm Dalglish & Grey Larsen

"Christ Child's Lullaby" (trad.)

"Tar Hollow" (trad.)

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