

[Snap Judgment intro]

**Glynn:** Hey, Snappers. We know you enjoy your storytelling in the bright light of day, but if you also like your storytelling crafted in the dark of night, this is for you. Because right now, we're hiring two freelance stories scouts for our incredible sister show, Spooked. In our efforts to bring you more supernatural stories from around the globe, Spooked is searching for someone who has lived in or has deep cultural knowledge of the Caribbean or the indigenous peoples of the Americas, the American South, Southeast Asia, or West Africa. This amazing story scout will find and pitch original first-person stories, and work closely with the Spooked team and work closely with me. Is this person you? Do you know someone who might be interested? For more information, go to [snapjudgment.org/careers](http://snapjudgment.org/careers).

[music]

**Glynn:** It was maybe the happiest I've ever been. Holding my brand-new baby boy, you couldn't tell me nothing. Joy, joy, joy, joy. I'm thinking, I have a little girl. Now, I have this baby boy, both of them perfect, created in love. Everything I've always wanted come true. I weep with happiness, with gratitude. And this bliss, it followed a few moments later, by the most horrifying time in my life. We realized that something was wrong. I can't tell you that story right now. Huh, not right ever. I can't. I will tell you that, a few days later, it was exhausting, spent terrified for my little man. I'm leaving the neonatal intensive care unit, the NICU for a moment to go home to hug my baby girl. Maybe shower, eat some, before returning to the hospital. My father's at my house for some reason. I don't know why, it's all a fog to me. What I do recall is that he says, "Son, I know we don't share the same beliefs, but I want you to know that I'm praying on Jesus. I'm praying on Jesus for you both, and I'm praying on Jesus for that baby."

My father now, we don't share the same beliefs, blah. I can recall telling him, "Pops, if you have any prayer, any god, any faith, any magic, any healing, any power that you can send to my little boy right now, whatever you have to do, do that. Do that." And he does. Bows his head to his God right there and I bow my head too, to a force I had long ago stopped believing in. They say there are no atheists in foxholes. There are no atheists at the neonatal intensive care unit either. Crystals, magic lamps, amulets, give me all of it. I don't care. Just help my baby boy. Help him.

A few weeks later, pushing that stroller out of that place with that boy, I thought I was happy before. Pops, he asked me later, isn't his God good? I don't know who did what, the prayers, the Gods, the nurses, the doctors, the faith, the angels. I don't know who let us depart from that place as if escaping a tomb. I do not know, and I do not care.

[music]

Today, on Snap Judgment, we proudly present The Don't Look Back! Special. My name is Glynn Washington. You don't know what you don't know when you're listening to Snap Judgment.

[music]

Now, every year right around this time, we do a Look Back Special. But this year, we're changing up the soup, and featuring amazing supernatural stories from our sister show, Spooked. Our first story, it does have a tiny bit of squeamishness. But not to worry, I promise, because we get to meet Bill. And Bill's headed home from college for the holidays, driving to see his high school sweetheart. But he's got to make it to the Appalachian Mountains first. Snap Judgment.

[raining]

**Bill:** It's a rainy, misty Sunday morning.

[car drives past]

**Bill:** I'm driving through an area that there are trees on the, left trees on the right, and I'm going down a hill.

It swerves back and forth, back and forth, like a snake. But my father used to say, "Going around these curves, we can almost look out the car window and see the back of the car." But I was going to see my girlfriend. So, it's all worth it.

The road makes a big swing to the left, right there. On the right-hand side is this big, muddy gully. When I tried to make that curve into the left, I slid off the road into the gully. But I gun the motor trying to get out of the ditch and back on the road, like you do. When the tires were spinning really fast and they caught, I sped up. When I got on the road, I started to slide diagonally across the road over this cliff. I realized at one point there, I'm not going to stop. This car is not going to stop. Then, once I left the road and started going down that crevice, I don't remember that part.

[car crashes]

**Bill:** The next thing I knew, the car was right side up, down at the bottom of that hill, sitting in a little creek bed, which had some water in it, because it's been raining.

[raining]

**Bill:** And there I was, sitting in the car, still inside. I looked down and I had little pieces of broken glass in my arms. It had just started to bleed. So, I figured, "Well, I haven't been here very long. I just blacked out there for a second as I came down, and here I am." So, I got out of the car, and this is the strangest thing. I locked it, and then realized this car was a total loss.

[ominous music]

**Bill:** The windows were all broken. The engine was almost out. It had been dislodged. I thought, "Well, I'm going to have to get out of here and get some help. What am I going to tell my father?" I looked at where I was, and I realized that I'm over a cliff out in the middle of nowhere. Anybody driving down that

road, even if somebody does come down the road, they don't know I'm down here. They're not going to be able to see me. And it's raining and I really thought about this too, they're going to have their windows up, because it's raining. So, I can yell all I want to and nobody's going to know I'm down here. There's not going to be any help. If I make it, I'm going to have to get out of here myself.

The cliff was very steep. There was a light rain happening at the time. So, all of the leaves and the little saplings and everything, everything was wet. I looked up at the saplings, and I thought, "Well, maybe I can grab a hold of them, pull myself up, and maybe put my foot on some of them, maybe I can actually get up there." I tried to do it, and when I leaned over and something wet and sticky ran over the front of my face. I went, "What in the world is this? I reached my hand up, wiped it off my face and it was blood.

[eerie music]

I put my hand up to my head and I could feel my scalp, because my scalp had been cut from ear to ear, and flipped backwards, so my hand is on my bare skull. I grabbed my skin and pulled it back over like a little flap, then reached back again to grab a sapling, but I was losing a lot of blood. I mean a lot, because now I'm covered in it. My pants, my shirt, everything's bloody. That's when I got really scared.

[music]

**Glynn:** Ooh, don't go anywhere. Bill's car had just gone off the edge of a cliff. He's alone. It's raining. He's injured. Find out what or who comes next. Snap Judgment.

[music]

**Glynn:** Welcome back to Snap Judgment. You're listening to The Don't Look Back! Special. We're featuring stories crafted in the dark of night from our sister show, Spooked. When last we left, Bill had just crashed his car on the side of a cliff in a remote area. He was severely injured. He began reaching for saplings on the side of the mountain to try and somehow make his way to safety. Snap Judgment.

[eerie music]

**Bill:** I tried to pull myself up, and I got up a little bit, and I was able to get one of my feet on a rock to try to push myself up a little further. I looked up the cliff, and I realized it's almost straight up. Then, I reached up to try to grab another sapling. I just didn't have the strength. I didn't feel I could do it. Up about another 40 feet or so, I felt somebody looking at me, up to the right. There's a guy sitting on the front porch of this house, wearing a fedora hat, slacks on his shirt, sitting on the edge of the porch and had one leg propped up. He was smoking a cigarette. But from where I was down in that creek bed, it would have been a tough walk up to that house.

When our eyes met, then he took the cigarette and flipped it on the ground, and walked over and got in his car, [car starts] and started backing off that driveway. When he came to the end of that driveway, I lost sight of him. I couldn't see that part right there where his car came to the main road. And then, all of

a sudden, he appears up above me. He's up on the main road, and I could see him from maybe the shoulders up, and he still had on his fedora. He stuck his head out the window and he said, "Hey, buddy, if you can get up this hill, I'll take you in town to the hospital."

When he made his offer to me, I was still pretty far down that cliff. It was almost straight up. So, that's when I started climbing up the hill. There were enough of those little tree saplings about the size of your wrist, they're about that size, that I could grab one, pull myself up and then put my foot on that one and reach up and grab another one. It seemed like I had, I don't know, when I first tried to do it before I noticed him, I couldn't do it. But when I knew he was up there, suddenly, I don't know, I was like I had some kind of superpower. I could hoist myself up that cliff. I was surprised that I did it before I knew it. I was at the top.

When I got to the top of the little cliff, I reached up and I grabbed his door handle, and opened the door [car door shuts] and I got in. I'm really bloody. I'm going to make a mess. His car was an older car, probably from the late 40s.

[car drives away]

It seemed his entire car, the clothes he was wearing, the house and everything had no color to it. There was no red. Everything was gray and brown. He drives maybe a quarter of a mile or so, and he had this jacket wadded up in the seat between the two of us. He picked up his jacket. Without looking at me, looking straight ahead, handed it over to me and said, "You know, buddy, I was in the war. And I've seen people hurt like this. And if you don't do something about it, you're going to die. Take my jacket, put it on your head and hold it real tight."

I took the jacket from him and when he handed it to me, I recognized it immediately because my father had one exactly like it. His jacket was a military jacket. An old waist-length jacket with stretchy sleeves and a stretchy bottom and zipped up the front. I just took it to the top my-- I do remember reaching up and making sure that my little piece of skin was in the correct place there on my scalp. Then, I put the jacket down on the top my head and held it really firm and I held it there all the way to town.

When we got close to my hometown of Paintsville, he said, "Which hospital do you want to go to?" I said, "Well, my mom used to work at the clinic. So, let's go to that one." In about a minute or two, we're at the clinic, which was on Main Street.

[car pulls up]

He pulled up in front. And he said, "I can't get out of the car. Are you okay? Can you make it?" I said, "Yeah, I think I'm going to be okay." I was really weak, but I opened the door got out. [car door shuts] It was only like three steps that I had to step up. And he drove off. [car drives away] So, he turned to the left and drove back in the same direction we had come in.

I can't really remember much. I had lost a lot of blood. When I got into the hospital, somehow, I got upstairs to where the operating room was. The next thing I realized that I was lying on an operating table, and somebody had a bowl underneath the back of my head, and they're sewing me up. They had called my mother, she came there. She was saying, "Are you okay?" I'm like, "Yeah, I'm alright. I'm fine." She said, "Yeah, they gave you 55 stitches. You've got a cut all the way across the back of your head. Thank goodness you got here. Who was the guy that brought you?" I said, "I have no idea."

After I got out the hospital, after about three days, I believe, my father said, "Why don't we go back out there and talk to that guy and talk to him about cleaning his car up, because you evidently bled in it a lot." We drove out to the scene where this happened. We just pulled out right there. He said, "Right down is where you went over." You could see the place where the car slid over. And you could see the place in the gully that I had made on the right-hand side. And you could see on the left-hand side of the road, where I had gone over the cliff and where I had hit this rock. There was glass and stuff still down at the bottom of that little ravine.

When we went out there, we pulled up to that little driveway. We just pulled out right there. And he said, "There's no way you could have been in that driveway." That little road that led from the main road, Highway 40, over to his house was grown up with weeds. Weeds like waist high, really big weeds. There was no way a car could have been parked between that road in that house. We were talking about three or four days. There's no way those weeds could have grown up in just three or four days. Now, I know I just had a traumatic accident, and I got hit in the head. So, maybe I don't remember things correctly, but I distinctly remember his car sitting in the driveway, and him walking out and getting in that car. I asked my girlfriend's mom and dad and other people who lived around there. "Who is this guy?" They said, "Nobody has lived in that old house for a long time. Whoever he was, he doesn't live there."

At the time, yeah, I was only 19 years old. I was just happy to be alive and healing up and back to school, get on with my life. But as time has gone by, I think about this. I don't think I'm special or that somebody saved me for something. But I've always wondered if maybe there's something I'm supposed to have done or have done. Maybe I've already done it or maybe I haven't done it yet.

Have you ever heard the story about the little old lady whose car's broken down, and a guy comes along and stops and helps her? She says, "Thank you very much. Can I pay you?" He goes, "No, no, no, you don't owe me anything. Just the chain of love continues." She goes in a little restaurant for a bite to eat and a waitress, who's pregnant, comes over. And the lady says, "I'll pay it forward," and leaves her a big tip of like hundreds of dollars. And then that night, the waitress is home with her husband, and says, "A lady gave me this big tip." And her husband is the guy, the guy that helped the old lady. I believe in that.

10 years later, almost exactly 10 years later, it was Christmas Eve 1971. I was driving home to see my mother in Paintsville, Kentucky. In the middle of the exit ramp was a car upside down. I had heard that sometimes people do block exit ramps and when you get out to help, they waylay you.

I parked on up the exit ramp. I was, I don't know, 50 feet away or something like that. [opens trunk] I opened my trunk and got my tire iron, a big metal iron, and I held it behind my leg as I walked down there.

[footsteps]

Well, I realized pretty soon that this really was wreck. And the two guys that were standing there evidently had come by next and they were both drunk, they didn't know what to do. I came up and I said, "What's going on? They said, "This guy's wrecked and we can see him in there." The car started burning a little bit, it was upside down. When the hot gas hit the muffler, it started to flame. This thing was going to burn up pretty soon. One of the guys said, "We need to break that window." I happened to have that tire iron in my hand.

[breaks the window]

We mashed the wind out, broke all the glass out. One of those guys pulled this guy out of his car. One of his Christmas gifts, one gift, out of his car-- and he had it full, I mean he was surrounded by-- and these were all wrapped, packages with ribbons, and they were all around. He must have had the whole back of that car full of gifts for his family.

[burning]

When the car caught on fire, they all burned up. Burst into flame, and we gave him the one gift that we've been able to save out of the car. In the meantime, they call the local fire department, they were putting out the fire and I drove on home to see mother. I just wondered maybe that was it. It happened almost exactly 10 years later or maybe it hasn't happened yet.

[music]

**Glynn:** Spooksters, let this be reminded to you, always take extra care when rounding those tight curves. You never know who's going to be nearby, watching over you. Big thank you to Bill Love for sharing his story to Spooked. The original score for that pieces by Leon Morimoto. It was produced by Annie Nguyen.

[music]

**Glynn:** Ooh, don't go anywhere because after the break, we're back on the road. Heading to rural Montana, and a snowstorm is coming. Stay tuned.

[music]

**Glynn:** Welcome back to Snap Judgment. You're listening to The Don't Look Back! Special. My name is Glynn Washington. We're sharing stories from our supernatural sister show, Spooked. Now, I've heard

some people driving listen to Spooked, they get so engaged, they forget to make their turn. I understand. But what if you really did get lost? Really lost? Who comes to save you? Our next story comes to us from the wilds of rural Montana. Snap Judgment.

[music]

**Valerie:** I was an EMT, which is emergency medical technician, in Dillon, Montana. This story takes place on New Year's Eve 1987. I was having dinner with my boyfriend at that time, his name was Hank. We were having New Year's Eve dinner. I was on call 24/7. So, I just wear a pager all the time. [page beep] And I got a page, and the page said, "Man down in alley." I immediately responded, and I said I had to go on this call.

I got to the young man, he was about 14 years old, and he was having seizures. The boy had freckles. He was a redheaded, green-eyed boy. We were trying to contain him enough to protect him, but he was 14, he was a pretty good-sized boy. It took a lot of the police, and these guys are big guys, to control his body enough that we can strap him down.

We transport him to the hospital, which was about three minutes away. They immediately did blood tests, and they came back and told us that there was cocaine in his system. They said there must have been something else in there, laced it with something, and that they were going to put him in ICU right away.

Actually, as I'm thinking about this, I remember making eye contact with him at one time. He knew he wasn't going to be okay. He knew, and yet we went for it anyway. We did everything to save that boy's life. Even though his body was still there, there was something missing. He wasn't dead. His body was alive, but his soul had already moved on.

I'm going to ask you just to imagine that it was New Year's Eve in your life and you had just seen a young boy in grand mal seizures and then you find out that the reason this boy is so seriously ill is because he got some cocaine that was laced with something. Would you get mad? Especially if you knew that the man that possibly brought in the drugs was your boyfriend.

When I went home, I just couldn't sleep because I knew that Hank was bringing in drugs. It was just so upsetting to me that perhaps that boy got one of his drugs. I went to bed for a little bit.

[car starts]

It's about 3 o'clock in the morning, and I got in my car, and that's one way that I can call my little spirit is by going into nature, going for a drive.

It's cold, it's dark. In Montana, these old roads, they're just two-lane highways. I just headed to where I knew where it was always calming for me, which was Yellowstone Park, which was about three hours away. So, it was a nice little drive. I probably hit there maybe 5:30 in the morning or something. It was

still dark. I remember turning off, and then I just went, "Wow, this road doesn't seem like the same place that I usually go."

It was cold. It was very cold, and there was probably about two and a half, three feet of snow. The biggest thing I was thinking was I knew that they were bringing those drugs in. It made me very mad. My mind was really playing tapes of, "If I did this, I could do this. If I did that, I could do this."

[wind howling]

I realized I was lost probably about an hour up the road. It was just the wind was shaking the car when I was driving. It was blowing so hard, this blizzard. I knew I couldn't try and turn around because I would get stuck. And then, I went, "Man, this is not good." As I'm driving, the snow is literally just coming over the car. It was so deep, I was pushing through it, and it was coming over the top of the car. I reached down into my jockey box to see if I had any food, and I had a half a piece of gum. I didn't have any water. I didn't have any other food.

I still had about a half a tank of gas or so, and I decided that if I would stop and then just turn the engine off until I got really cold and then I would start it up, I probably had enough gas for about six hours. I don't even know where I am. There is so much snow and the blizzard is happening. If this continues, my car will be completely covered. They won't find me. I went, "This is it. This is where I'm going to die." I just kept thinking about my daughter, Brandy.

[truck pulling over]

And then, I heard a truck come up behind me. And this guy pulls up. I think it was about a '60 Ford pickup, blue and white. He had a cowboy hat on, he's got the guns in the back. I would say he's probably in his 50s. He was really tall. He had a brown hat and his hair was that dirty blonde brown. It was all straggling, he had a beard, and blue jeans, and his face was full of wrinkles. He just said, "What in the hell are you doing out here?" And started yelling at me, and I'm like, "Ah, I don't really know what I'm doing out here."

I think I told him, "I think I'm lost," and he just kept asking me, "Who are you? Who are you?" I was trying to tell him who I was, but he wouldn't listen to me. He just kept on, "Who are you? What are you doing? What are you doing?" And I really started getting scared because he is getting pretty loud, and the rifle's there in the truck. He looked at my plates. He says, "You're from Montana." I said, "Yeah." And he says, "Well, do you even know where you are?" I said, "I have no clue." And he said, "Well, you're in Idaho. I'll follow you, and I'm going to show you how to get out of here." I got in my car, I started driving and there's still no road.

He was so close to me that I could see him. He had green eyes. They were emerald green eyes, and he was right on my tail. And then, he starts honking his horn, just laying on his horn. So, I stop. He walks up to my car, and he says, "Okay, down there, do you see the telephone posts?" I could see them in the distance. He says, "Just follow the fence line," and I could see a fence line down there. He says,

"It'll get you to that town. There's a gas station down there, go to the house and knock on the door in the back of the gas station and they'll help you." I got in the car and I'm driving, and he's right on my butt again. I was watching where I was going, but also watching him. And then, he just vanished. Just disappeared.

I thought, "Well, he must have taken a road or went off the road off somewhere." I stopped and I got out. Then, I backed up a little bit because I was like, "Where could he have gone?" He just disappeared. There was no sign. Then, I looked down, and there was only one set of tracks. They were my car tracks. There were no other car tracks. There were no truck tracks.

[ominous sound]

This is weird. How could that have happened? Because I know he was there. I never touched him, and he never touched me, but I could smell his breath. I could feel the heat coming off his body, he was so close to me. For him just to vanish like that, what could have that been?

I got chicken skin. Even though he was really angry, that man was really angry at me, there was a genuine caring about me.

I remember looking into his eyes and wondering, "Where did he come from?" And then, I remembered that boy, and he had the same kind of eyes. They were green. Although the little boy's eyes were bloodshot and stuff, it was the same eyes. Same color eyes, that emerald green. Oh, my God, it was the spirit of that boy, and I know that's who came.

I got back in my car after checking out the car track thing and headed towards the telephone post. I got to a little town called Dubois, and I stopped and went to the house, knocked on the door, they gave me some gas. And then, I headed back to my brother's house where they were having a New Year's Day party.

[music]

**Glynn:** Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Valerie, for sharing your story. The story comes to us from the book, *Trucker Ghost Stories*. It's edited by Annie Wilder. Original score was by Leon Morimoto. It is produced by Eliza Smith.

[music]

**Glynn:** Oh, yes, this is but one episode crafted in the dark of night. If you want more Spooked, if you need for Spooked, the new season of Spooked is streaming right now, rolling out new episodes through spring of 2022. You can hear the newest episodes by subscribing to Luminary channel on Apple Podcasts or directly on Luminary, that's [luminary.link/spooked](https://luminary.link/spooked). Spooked was created by the team that walks under the light of the full moon. Except for, of course, Mark Ristich. We can't get those roller skates off him. Anna Sussman, Eliza Smith, Chris Hambrick, Annie Nguyen, Lauren Newsome, Leon

Morimoto, Davey Kim, Renzo Gorrio, Teo Ducot, Marisa Dodge, Zoe Ferrigno, [unintelligible [00:45:30] Anne Ford, Doug Stuart, Isaiah Simms. The Spooked theme song is by Pat Mesiti-Miller. My name is Glynn Washington.

Know that people tend to hide the things most dear to them in the darkness, in underground, in the shadow. The first mistake is to fail to consider who you are hiding your secrets from. As for me, everything I hold dear, I like to keep it close, and I never ever, never, ever, ever, ever turn out the lights. PRX.

[music]