[Snap Judgment intro]

**Glynn:** The first professional I spoke to about starting something called Snap Judgment, he said that I shouldn't speak into a microphone because of my speech impediment. Until that moment, I didn't know I had a speech impediment, so we had to start without his help. Instead, I asked for help from the people who'd heard these stories. If you've ever been unable to get out of the car, the kitchen, the office until you've heard the end of the story, please, become one of us and support the show that makes it happen right now at *snapjudgment.org.* You can get Snap stuff, including Snap music, a chance to pitch your story, or a backstage pass to Spooked Live, but join at a level that makes sense for you at *snapjudgment.org*. It is the joy of my life to bring you these tales.

Please know that Snap storytelling, narrated by a guy with a speech impediment, simply doesn't happen unless you make it happen. I'm asking from one Snappa to another, please stop the show for just a moment. Just a moment, and make it happen at *snapjudgment.org*. Thanks.

Okay, so you know that the people in this world who do bad things, they're not always held to account. Often, they get away with it, and sometimes they keep on causing harm, leaving a path of destruction in their wake. Well, today on Snap Judgment, an epic story spanning two continents about a group of women, mothers, daughters, grandmothers who give everything they have to try to make things right. Snap proudly presents the Road to Boito.

Know this. You are about to hear a global story about women coming together to do what had never been done before. Sensitive listeners, please be advised. This story, while it's not graphic in nature, it does involve child abuse, including sexual abuse and the death of a child. But I promise you, this story is worth the darkness, but it is going to get dark. We begin at a grandmother's house on a beautiful sunny day. Halima Gikandi takes it from here.

[somber music]

**Halima:** The first thing I noticed about you is how fashionable your blazer was.

**Janice:** I was raised with five boys, but I tell you what, my granddaughters, we play in the makeup, we play in the hair dye, we play in the clothes. We have fun.

**Halima:** Janice Jenkins lives in rural Texas. She's got red hair, a floral print blazer, bracelets that jingle when she talks out her window. You can see her garden in full bloom.

**Janice:** Just planted sweet potatoes. All kinds of herbs. We've got mints, different spearmints. I've got everything. Everything. I feel closer to my creator when I'm out playing in my gardens than anything. You can feel the peace.

**Halima:** You'd never guess, looking at her carefully manicured yard, that there also used to be an escape route running through it.

**Janice:** I would take my lawnmower, I would take the machete, I would take the rakes, and I would clear a path that I could run in the dark and did many, many times.

**Halima:** 30 years ago, Janice was living in Iowa. She had two kids, daughter, April, and son, Scout. And she had married her teenage sweetheart, Greg, a pastor.

**Janice:** And this was a man, my sun and moon set on him. I mean, I really loved Greg, a lot.

**Halima:** In the spring of 1996, her daughter, April, then 14, came home from school.

**Janice:** And was coming up the steps. Greg and I were upstairs in our bedroom, and she was screaming, very upset. She had made the comment that doing this to her was one thing, "But now, you're starting on my friends." I was sitting on the bed, and Greg was standing up by the dresser, and I seen him white knuckle the dresser, and I seen his legs shaken and the color just drained from him. In that moment, I knew something terrible had happened.

She said he had been preaching on Sunday morning and crawling in bed with her on Sunday night. I don't remember anything for about three days. I know it was three days I was still sitting in the same spot. On the third day, in that moment, I knew I had to move. I had to put one foot in front of the other. I had to because if I didn't, I never would again. A parent doing something like this to a child, it shatters them, [pause] and it shatters you. It shatters your spirit. All of a sudden, the world is not what you thought it was.

**Halima:** Janice brought her daughter to the Department of Human Services. The next day, a case worker and a sheriff's deputy interviewed Greg and read him his rights. Months after the crime, he went before a judge.

**Janice:** They slapped his hands. He did no jail time for it. None.

**Halima:** Greg took a plea bargain. He was guilty of a felony sex crime, but he was a free man.

**Janice:** The people in our church rallied around him.

**Halima:** Janice had no problem getting a divorce, but she couldn't seem to keep Greg out of her house.

**Janice:** You would go to bed and go to sleep with your doors locked, and you'd wake up in the morning, and the back door would be wide open. I would literally nail the windows shut on that house, and it never stopped him.

**Halima:** Friends of hers would spot Greg hiding in the bushes outside.

**Janice:** We slept with a loaded shotgun beside my bed at all times. It drove me to the point of insanity. I finally had to run. That's why I came to Texas.

**Halima:** But even there, she didn't feel safe.

**Janice:** We got up one day and went to do errands, and in the backseat of the car was the Sunday Omaha World-Herald from Omaha, Nebraska.

**Halima:** Janice thought Greg had left the out-of-state newspaper there as a message, "I am watching you." This stalking went on for years, and it only stopped when Greg moved to the East Coast and married his new wife. Janice also remarried. She tried to forget about Greg, but then one night in the early 2000s, she had a dream.

**Janice:** Just children crying, and Greg hovering over them. I was trying to let it go. I was working through the forgiveness, but these nightmares just started coming, and they weren't going away. I started doing some research on him. I really became a little investigator. So, I knew he was going to a church called LifeGate.

**Halima:** Janice called LifeGate, an evangelical church in Pennsylvania. She spoke to the assistant pastor, a man named Doug Lamb. She wanted him to know what Greg had done to their daughter.

**Janice:** What I was trying to tell him and what I did tell him, and the documents that I had sent showed that Greg was a registered sex offender. "This is what you have in your church. This is what you've got." And he was curt, he was short, he acted as if I was some sort of troublemaker.

**Halima:** Doug Lamb and other members of the church were already aware that Greg was a sex offender.

**Janice:** He made them believe that I was angry that I had made up this story, April had went along with it, and I had recanted that story. Well, that's the farthest thing from the truth.

**Halima:** Janice says that she sent legal documents from Greg's conviction to his new wife, the local sheriff, and a school close to where he lived.

**Janice:** I knew I had released that information, and so at that point, all I had was prayer.

**Halima:** In 2007, Janice learned that Greg was moving to Africa to open an orphanage. He had gotten support from a local charity, private donors, his church. Members of the community held a barbecue, a bake sale, a yard sale. Years pass, and then, over a decade later, Janice gets a call from a woman she doesn't know.

**Janice:** I talked to her, and she had kind of told me a little bit but not the full extent of what had happened.

**Halima:** But enough for her to know that her nightmares had come true, that her ex-husband was suspected of terrible crimes.

**Janice:** Now, there's more children. Now, there's more parents. Now, this is starting all over again for somebody else. I'd had a lot of guilty feelings because I was so relieved when he went to Africa, because it wasn't me anymore. I could sleep at night. I could sleep with my doors unlocked. I didn't have to make little trails through the wood as escape routes. Now, other people did.

[somber music]

**Halima:** The woman who called Janice was named Magi Ruto. Magi was a nurse and a new mom.

**Magi:** Hi, mama.

**Baby:** Hi, mama.

**Magi:** How are you?

**Halima:** She lives in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, but she was born and raised in rural Kenya.

**Magi:** Hey, don't bite me.

**Baby:** Argh.

**Magi:** Argh.

I was a very happy child and very, very social. I see that in my daughter now. [laughs] I see a copy of myself.

**Baby:** [unintelligible [00:12:29] time, picking me up.

**Magi:** I'll come pick you up soon, okay? [laughs]

**Halima:** In September 2017, Magi was scrolling through Facebook, which she often did after her evening shift at the nursing home. She came across this post from a local journalist in the same community that she grew up in.

**Magi:** I don't know if we had mutual friends. I don't know, but it's just one of those things that came. So, I started reading it.

**Halima:** The post was about a children's home, an orphanage in the village of Boito, Kenya. The post used a Swahili term to describe the owner.

**Magi:** Mzungu, that describes a Caucasian person in Swahili.

**Halima:** As a girl, Magi had visited children's homes with her father, a church leader, but they were always run by Kenyans.

**Magi:** It stood out, and I became interested, "What's going on? Where is this?"

**Halima:** The Facebook post led her to a cell phone video. She clicked play.

[video playing]

[Swahili language]

**Halima:** And saw a girl holding out her arm while a small crowd of men and women inspected it and asked her questions.

[Swahili language]

**Halima:** How old was she, do you think? Was she a teenager?

**Magi:** Yeah, she was a teenager.

[Swahili language]

**Magi:** In the tribal language, she's saying that they took them to clinic to have these things being put on their hand.

**Halima:** You think that was birth control?

**Magi:** Yes. The innocence of this girl, she couldn't pronounce family planning.

**Halima:** She said "family planet."

**Girl:** Family planet [Swahili language]

**Halima:** From her work as a nurse, Magi recognized the small device that had been inserted into the young girl's arm.

**Magi:** I saw the scar in her arm.

**Halima:** It was a contraceptive implant.

**Magi:** That's not a common practice. The age of the children, it doesn't happen. No.

[Swahili language]

**Halima:** The girl talked about the owner of the home. What she said took Magi's breath away.

**Magi:** He was raping other children, or he was raping people there.

[Swahili language]

And she said she ran away and she's not going back.

[Swahili language]

**Magi:** Her growing up in that area is not typical of a woman. And then, just think about a young girl, to just come out and be so brave and speak in the presence of people and not even be afraid to show her face. From the beginning, looking at that girl talking, I believed her.

**Halima:** Even if Magi believed this girl, there was still so much she didn't know. Was there proof? Who were these people running this home in Boito?

**Magi:** That really made me very curious. Find out, when was this orphanage built in Boito? How old is it? And stuff like that. So, I ended up calling my mom.

**Halima:** Magi's mom, who lives in Kenya near Boito, asked around, and that's how Magi learned that the home was run by Greg and his wife, Mary Rose.

**Magi:** When I googled their names, to my surprise, an article that was published by a Lancaster newspaper popped. And it was such a great story. They sold their home and they moved to Africa. You will say, "Wow, what a wonderful family." I got chills. It was shocking from my parents' home to the Dow Children's Home is about 10 minutes. From my home here in the States, and their last known address where they stayed is about 10 minutes as well. Now it's touching two of my homes, really, because Lancaster is my home here in America.

**Halima:** The Facebook post said that the accused had been arrested, but Magi quickly learned from her mom that wasn't true. Greg was back in Lancaster.

**Magi:** That's when I was like, "Okay." Now, I went on speed. I went through every person in Gregory Dow's Facebook page. Every individual person, one by one.

**Halima:** Magi decided to try to find Greg's victims in Kenya. She knew she was in a unique position to do that.

**Magi:** Because I'm from the culture, I'm from the tribe.

**Halima:** And she lived in America, she figured she could document the victim's stories and offer them to US law enforcement.

**Magi:** Once I got all the information, I was like, "Okay, it's just notifying the authority, and I'm done." But to my shock, [sighs] it really turned my life into something else that I had never imagined.

During the day, I'm trying to figure the puzzle in the States, the people in America that had visited at home, and then at night, it's daytime in Kenya. So, I'm making phone calls at night. I called family members, and then they referred me to their friends. Their friends referred me to someone else. That way, it was just a whole chain until I got to Geoffrey.

**Halima:** The first person Magi was able to speak with who was directly connected to the Dows in Kenya was their neighbor, a schoolteacher named Geoffrey.

**Magi:** I said, "Is there a way you can connect me with their children? I'd like to speak to them. I need to know if these allegations are really true."

**Halima:** Geoffrey said he had called child services on the home multiple times, but it stayed open.

**Magi:** He heard the children screaming from the fence. They sounded like they were in pain.

**Halima:** So, he agreed to help. Meanwhile, Magi reached out on Facebook and WhatsApp to teachers and caretakers who had worked at the home.

**Magi:** "I see that you work at the Dow Children's Home." And they're like, "Yeah, I did." "How long did you work there?" They give me information and then I will ask, "I heard there were also some allegation of child abuse." They will confirm, or sometimes they'll feel uncomfortable, and they'll think I'm the police.

**Halima:** Her nights kept getting later and later.

**Magi:** Because I'm telling myself in my head that, "Okay, I'm almost there. Let me just do one more interview. Let me interview this person."

**Halima:** Just when she thought she couldn't make any more phone calls, she learnt her older sister was going to Kenya to visit their parents.

**Magi:** She said, "Okay, so listen, let me go on your behalf." She got there, and she called me one of the days. She's like, "Oh, my goodness. You cannot believe it."

[pensive music]

**Glynn:** What Magi's sister found when she went to Kenya, right after the break. Stay tuned.

[pensive music]

Welcome back to Snap Judgment, The Road to Boito episode. Once again, sensitive listeners, please be advised that this story, while not graphic, does involve child abuse, including sexual abuse and the death of a child. The story so far. Crimes at an orphanage in Kenya. Nurse in Pennsylvania trying to investigate. Her sister heads to Kenya to see what she can find. Snap Judgment.

**Halima:** Magi's older sister, Beatrice, lived just minutes away from her in Lancaster.

**Memo:** Nobody calls me Beatrice. Beatrice is for the police. I tell them it's my government name.

[laughter]

**Memo:** Nobody calls me Beatrice. My name is Memo.

**Halima:** Her nickname Memo is short for her middle name, Chepkemoi.

**Memo:** Chepkemoi, it means I was born at night. Everybody knows me as Memo. If you say Beatrice, they're like, "Who is that?" [laughs]

**Halima:** Memo had been working with her sister from the very beginning. While Magi interviewed people in Kenya over speakerphone, Memo would record their conversations on video.

**Memo:** You would have seen us. Sometimes, we would not sleep. Like, we would be up all night. We love to play Kenyan music a lot and dance. Of course, when we are calling, we have to be quiet.

**Halima:** In the summer of 2018, when Memo was headed to Kenya to visit their folks, her sister asked for help.

**Memo:** I was only going to Kenya for a week, and so she told me, "Go to the home. Go check it out."

**Halima:** Memo started by visiting the Dow Children's Home in Boito.

**Memo:** When I was driving there, I thought it was going to be 5 miles, and it's literally maybe less than 15 minutes, right off the highway. And then, there's a church right by it. That's the church that I grew up in. Just the fact that I am from that neighborhood and that home existed for over almost 10 years, and I didn't know.

**Halima:** At the grounds of the home, she met Geoffrey, the Dow's neighbor, and two teenagers, a boy and a girl who had lived there. They led her around. She saw classrooms and dorms abandoned the year before. A large, pale, two-story building stood at the center of the property. Memo stepped over trash. She walked past piles of shoes. Then, she was led to a rock with a splash of blue paint on it. When she asked about it, they told her the story of how the Dows had buried a child there.

**Memo:** The baby was just wrapped in a cotton box, dug a hole, and that baby was just buried.

**Halima:** A 19-month-old baby named James who choked on milk. He didn't receive any medical attention. After he died, the Dows refused to turn over his remains to his family.

I mean, I can see even now you're visibly, almost in disbelief that this could happen.

**Memo:** Yeah. [breathes heavily] I think that's when I actually got to know that there was a lot that we didn't know.

**Halima:** There had been 83 children at the Dow's home when it closed. After her visit, Memo went from school to school asking teachers if any of those kids were in their classrooms.

**Memo:** When I mentioned that, they're like, "Oh, yeah, we have two." "Oh, we have three." The first thing that I did, I did a recording.

[in recording]

**Memo:** This kid is one of the kids that was there with a sibling.

**Halima:** Memo sent the interviews immediately to her sister, Magi. Magi would always watch and respond, no matter what time it was.

**Magi:** I was just reporting to her live. We were talking like 24/7. And sometimes, she's like, "Wow, what?" Because we were uncovering things every day. It was just like a nightmare. It's just getting worse and worse and worse.

**Memo:** So, how did it happen?

**Halima:** In English and in the tribal language, Kipsigis, she recorded stories about beatings and the bizarre punishments that Greg and Mary Rose would hand out.

**Memo:** You sleep on the floor, the concrete floors with nothing. Also, they were given soap to eat. That was also your form of punishment.

**Halima:** She learned that Greg would target the girls as soon as they became teenagers.

**Memo:** Where was the wife?

I would ask her, where was the wife at that time?

**Halima:** Victims told Kenyan police that Mary Rose was the one who took them to get birth control implants.

**Memo:** Then, I figured, "okay," and then she knew what was going on for her to make sure that there is no, sorry to say, white baby.

**Halima:** Magi couldn't believe what her sister had uncovered. When Memo returned to Lancaster, Magi decided she needed to go to Kenya herself.

Why?

**Magi:** Because I just had this thing that was really driving me. I could not concentrate. I just kept thinking about the victims. I just wanted to find out so much. It was just better to be in Kenya. The phone thing wasn't doing for me anymore because I was talking to people, and I'm like, "Okay, what if I'm not even talking to the right people?" I just feel like I wanted to be there.

**Halima:** She'd have to leave behind her baby daughter and her job.

**Magi:** My family was like, "Oh, my goodness, are you serious? How can you just stop your life for this?" "Okay, how about you let other people handle this?"

**Halima:** Magi took a leave from work and hopped on a plane. Now she knew they were onto something big. After an 18-hour flight, she arrived in Kenya and got to work, setting out to speak to the children Memo had met.

**Magi:** I wanted to know more about specific things. Like, I wanted them to elaborate more, to give more details.

**Halima:** Magi had studied criminal justice before becoming a nurse, and she knew details were important for law enforcement.

**Magi:** "Do you remember the day of the time?" "Where was everybody?" "Did any teacher come to your rescue?" "Do you tell any teacher?" "What's the name of the teacher that you told?"

**Halima:** Soon, she was crisscrossing the rural highways near Boito. She kept a low profile. Greg had a lot of power here.

**Magi:** People were very scared because he was very powerful in the community when it comes to money. He had gotten connection with the local people, the chief, the police. It's so easy for rumors to spread around. I can easily be turned to be, "I'm coming to speak on behalf of Mr. Dow because I'm coming from America."

**Halima:** To try to blend in, she traveled by the public means, matatus.

**Magi:** Matatus are vans. I think it's like a 12-seater, but you have more people and you all get squished up in there.

**Halima:** As she was out too late interviewing and the matatu stopped running, she'd pay someone to hop on the back of a motorcycle taxi.

**Magi:** It was scary going back. I'm a woman. It's late at night, and I'm traveling alone.

**Halima:** One afternoon, she went to a village near Boito, and there she met a girl we're calling Joy.

**Magi:** Let's call her Joy. Yeah, Joy is better.

**Halima:** Joy was a bubbly 15-year-old wearing a bright blue shirt, her hair cut short like most Kenyan schoolgirls.

**Magi:** Gave me a big hug. She has a beautiful smile.

**Halima:** Joy had been taken in by the Dows when she was six. She'd already talked to Memo, so Magi knew a bit of her story already. She'd even spoken on the phone with her.

**Magi:** Just shy and wasn't sure what was going on. But she could relate to me because I had an American accent just like her.

**Halima:** Which struck Magi. It made her realize just how much control Greg had over these kids' lives, how cut off they were from their community.

**Magi:** Because they were not allowed to leave the facility unless they're leaving with Mary Rose or Gregory Dow. That home was a different culture in this village in Kenya, because they were enclosed at the home.

**Halima:** Joy lived with her grandmother in a small mud house. Magi asked her for a tour.

**Magi:** Just to make her comfortable, I was just like, "Oh, so where'd you guys sleep? Show me the kitchen." She took me to one of the rooms that had like a bed. She sat there and we just talked.

**Halima:** After a bit of conversation, Magi made her big ask. "What happened? Will you tell me your story?"

**Magi:** "And just say it as it was. Just say what you saw, what you experienced. We're going to document on video, if that's okay with you, because I need to take that to America so that the authorities can see what you had to say."

Tell me about your experience at the Dow's Children's Home.

**Halima:** Joy was the first rape victim that Magi interviewed on tape. After she left Joy's home, she found herself overwhelmed.

**Magi:** It was a very sad moment, but I had to contain myself in order to get everything that I needed to get. And then, driving home is when I cry.

**Halima:** During the two months she spent in Kenya, she interviewed other children, their family members, police, and employees of the home. By the time that she returned to Lancaster, she felt she had done everything she could. She drove over to Memo's house and laid it all out in her sister's dining room.

**Magi:** We came and piled up everything together.

**Halima:** The table and the floor were covered with police reports, medical reports, photos.

**Magi:** I even came with soap that the kids were saying they were being fed.

**Halima:** She felt they had what they needed to finally hold Greg accountable.

**Magi:** The offense happened in 2017. Time is of the essence here. He should not get away with what he did.

**Halima:** Greg had already managed to evade the Kenyan authorities. So, the sisters called the Lancaster police. Then, Magi says she went to the DA, the Attorney General.

**Magi:** And then called the State Department, and they referred me to the Nairobi Embassy in Nairobi. That's when I felt like I hit the wall. Nothing was happening. I was just fed up. I'm just like, "Is somebody hearing me? Can someone just step up?" That's when I decided to talk to the media.

**Lindsey:** I remember thinking, "Wow, okay, this is for real. She's for real. There's something worth pursuing here."

Lindsey Blest Van Ness reported for Lancaster Online. Magi had sent their newsroom an email.

**Lindsey:** We met at a Starbucks, and from the beginning, it was clear that she had done her research.

**Halima:** Lindsey called the Dow's church, LifeGate. She spoke with Assistant Pastor Doug Lamb.

**Lindsey:** He was very defensive of the Dows, saying that, "I was in the country. I was at the home. I saw what was going on." He said at one point, "If there's a man having his way, you're going to find it difficult to keep that secret."

**Halima:** Then, she called Greg Dow, not expecting him to answer, but he actually picked up.

**Lindsey:** And then talked to me for quite a long time, which is even more surprising.

**Halima:** Lindsey confronted him with Magi and Memo's allegations. In a gravelly voice, he told her this was all a conspiracy by people in Boito.

**Lindsey:** He made a lot of callous comments about the culture and talked about how volatile the people were and how he couldn't trust anyone there.

**Halima:** Before Lindsey's story even came out, Magi and Memo finally got a phone call from the FBI.

How did it feel working with the FBI?

**Memo:** It was kind of scary. Yeah, you know you're not in trouble, but at the same time, you feel like, "Wow, you're here." Just picturing the way I watch on TVs, the interviews, I'm like, "Okay, are they looking through the glass, looking at us or something?"

**Halima:** Magi and Memo take their seat in the interrogation room and are told to turn over their phones.

**Memo:** I told them, "Hey, if you find anything else in my phone, do not use it against me."

[laughter]

**Halima:** Sitting at the table across from them is an FBI agent who doesn't know what to make of these two sisters.

**Chris:** They came in with a three-ring binder, full of various copies of things, photographs. They were very good, and they were very thorough.

**Halima:** FBI Special Agent Chris Bean.

**Chris:** It was a three-hour initial interview. Usually, the initial interviews are maybe 30, 45 minutes.

**Halima:** Still, Agent Bean has doubts.

**Chris:** Basically, it boiled down to an allegation of an American citizen committing a crime overseas. There are certain instances where we can do that, and there are certain instances where we can't. Are we actually going to be able to prosecute? Is there a federal law violation here? As an FBI agent, if there's no allegation of a violation of federal law, there's nothing I could do.

**Halima:** The FBI has to go to Kenya and conduct their own interviews. Even with Magi and Memo's binder as a roadmap, there's no telling how long their investigation will take.

**Chris:** Nothing in the federal government moves quickly. That's just the reality of how it works.

**Halima:** Magi and Memo go home empty-handed. By this point, Magi is hearing from victims in Kenya every day.

**Magi:** They want updates. "What's going on? I thought you said you're going to pursue him. We've not heard anything." So, I have so much pressures, pressure from everywhere.

**Halima:** Greg is still free, just out there in Lancaster, 10 minutes away. One day, Magi grabs her keys, walks out the door, and drives to his house.

**Magi:** I just wanted to-- I want to see this untouchable man. "Yeah, let me go see him. I just want to be on his face." I try to look at the window, and I was looking up to see if there was any movement.

**Halima:** No one answers the door.

**Magi:** I was so disappointed they were home. I mean, the cars were there.

**Halima:** Months later, on a hot summer night, Magi is trying to sleep. She's restless.

**Magi:** Finally, I lay downstairs in the couch a little bit. And then in the morning, Lindsey called me and she said, "If I were you, I would watch Facebook Live."

**Halima:** Magi opens up Facebook and goes to the Lancaster Online's page, where she sees a federal attorney standing in front of a podium.

**Federal Attorney:** On July 11th, 2019, yesterday, my office charged Gregory Dow of Lancaster County by federal indictment for sexually abusing young girls residing-- [voice fades away]

**Magi:** I had my phone in my hand. I grabbed my car keys. I was sitting in pajamas. I ran outside with no shoes, got in my car. I was flying. I don't remember how I got to my sister's house. I just pulled in and I knocked on my sister's door so hard. I'm like, "Oh, my God. I think they're about to arrest Gregory now."

[pensive music]

**Glynn:** When we return, will Greg finally face consequences for his crimes? Stay tuned.

[pensive music]

Welcome back to Snap Judgment, the Road to Boito. My name is Glynn Washington. Our story today does refer to child sexual abuse and the death of a child. Sensitive listeners are advised. Now, Greg has been arrested. Magi is still trying to get justice for his victims. What does justice mean in this case? Is it even possible? Snap Judgment.

**Judge:** Good morning. The court is called to order in the matter of the United States of America v. Gregory Dow.

**Halima:** February 2021, nearly two years after his arrest.

**Judge:** Present in the courtroom is the defendant, Gregory Dow. Good morning, sir.

**Halima:** Greg is led into a courtroom by US marshals.

**Magi:** In handcuffs. I think he also had shackles and he sat there.

**Halima:** Magi had attended almost every one of his court dates.

**Magi:** So, this court hearing was different.

**Attorney:** I would note that Mary Rose Dow, which is Mr. Dow's wife, is present in the courtroom behind me.

**Halima:** Mary Rose was there, just 20ft away from Magi.

**Magi:** We're on the same bench.

**Halima:** Next to Mary Rose were her three daughters.

**Magi:** And the audacity to bring the girls. I could not believe it. [scoffs] I just kept shaking my head, like, "Wow, she really brought her girls."

**Judge:** -of the indictment that is engaging in illicit sexual conduct in foreign places in violation of Section 2-- [voice fades away]

**Magi:** When the judge started reading the charges, that's when it really hit me really hard that it was finally happening.

**Chris:** They had given us a lot of names of different people.

**Magi:** To build the case, FBI Special Agent Chris Bean traveled to Kenya with a small team to conduct forensic interviews, armed with Magi and Memo's three-ring binder full of information.

**Chris:** That helped us out further down the line, like, "Oh, this person worked for them. This person was a social worker." We had a lot of background before we even went over there.

**Magi:** Four sexual abuse victims came forward in the case against Greg Dow.

**Chris:** I think there are victims we never found and may not ever know about too.

**Judge:** I also note that there is a pretrial agreement in this case, a guilty plea agreement pursuant to Section 11(c)(1)(C).

**Magi:** Their case was strong, and instead of going to trial, Greg folded. After years of denial and evasion, he pled guilty to illicit sexual conduct in foreign places. This allowed the government to avoid a lengthy trial. They would have had to find victims from Kenya and subject them to cross examination by Greg's lawyers. Here in this hearing, the judge was going to announce Greg's sentence. Before he made the decision, everyone's attention turned to a monitor in the courtroom.

**Attorney:** Are you able to hear me okay?

**Joy:** Yes, I can hear you clearly.

**Attorney:** Can you see the judge in front of you?

**Joy:** Yes, I can.

**Halima:** Joy appeared. She was speaking from the American Embassy in Nairobi.

**Attorney:** I'm just going to ask you a few questions.

**Joy:** Yes.

**Magi:** I was caught off guard. Like, I mean, I actually gasped when she came on screen.

**Joy:** The first time I met Greg Dow was in 2008, where a pastor came to our home.

**Halima:** When Joy first came to the home, she felt so much love from Greg and Mary Rose, who she called mom and dad.

**Joy:** I could describe that life as the life that I had always dreamed of.

**Attorney:** Did that change at some point?

**Joy:** Yeah, it changed at some point dramatically, in a way that I didn't even expect it to change.

**Attorney:** Did it get better, or did it get worse?

**Joy:** It got worse.

**Attorney:** Did it get worse for the reasons that bring us into the courtroom today?

**Joy:** Yes.

**Attorney**: Now, we don't have to go into the specifics of what those things are. The court has been made aware of what Gregory Dow did.

**Joy:** Hmm.

**Attorney:** I just want to talk to you, and if you could tell the court how those actions affected you.

**Joy:** Those actions affected me in a lot of ways. The first one is when I'm with family, I don't feel like family to them because they see me different. They treat me weird because they say that I was brought up by a white person and that I'm not one of them anymore.

**Halima:** Joy and the other kids had been so secluded at the home by Greg and Mary Rose that she never learned to speak her tribal language. So when she moved in with her grandmother, they struggled to communicate. Everywhere she went, people knew her as "that girl."

**Joy:** They just keep making fun of me everywhere I go. They keep saying that, "If you had chosen to stay with your own kind, this stuff wouldn't have happened." I was dreaming of becoming a lawyer once I grew up. But now, those things are not possible, because here, to be a lawyer, you need to have high grades. Right now, I can't concentrate in school. I'm about to drop out of school because I'm not doing well. I don't see myself getting anywhere with the grades that I have. I keep getting headaches. The implant that I had that keeps making me sick.

**Halima:** The birth control implant that Mary Rose had forced her to get was still wreaking havoc on her body.

**Joy:** The doctor keeps telling me that thing wasn't good for my body, because it was at a young age that I got that in.

**Halima:** The courtroom in Pennsylvania was silent. At one point, Magi walked out. It was all too much.

**Magi:** I just wish I was there with her, to sit with her and just give her the support that she needed.

**Attorney:** Is there anything else you'd like to tell the court?

**Joy:** No.

**Judge:** Thank you very much, ma'am. Thank you for your courage in coming here to testify today. I'm very sorry for what happened to you.

**Joy:** Thank you.

**Halima:** How did you feel? Like the moment that one leading up to it, how did you feel?

**Joy:** Okay. I was kind of nervous a bit, but then, I just encouraged myself that I'm doing this not for only my good, but for the good of many.

**Halima:** When she sat down at the embassy to give her statement, Joy could only see the judge. She couldn't see Greg, but she knew he was there.

**Joy:** A lot of things that happened to me I never wanted to happen to anyone else. I heard that there was one time he raped his own daughter. That is somebody who shouldn't be out in the community at all. I wanted to become a voice in the desert, like for those people, like Magi. Right now, she's been a voice for me. She was a voice for all the kids at the Dows. I just want to be a voice for those people that can't be heard.

**Judge:** Mr. Dow, you have an absolute right to present any evidence you believe--

**Halima:** After Joy signed off, Greg spoke.

**Judge:** You may proceed. You're welcome to remain seated if you're more comfortable seated.

**Halima:** He apologized and asked for mercy. Then, it was time for the judge to make his decision.

**Janice:** I listened on the phone during the proceedings. It seemed like the judge went on forever.

**Halima:** Janice, Greg's first wife, who suffered for years after he abused their daughter, wanted to hear the moment he was sentenced.

**Janice:** The judge, he started talking about Greg being a special kind of evil.

**Judge:** You were evil disguised as hope. It's unfathomable.

**Janice:** He just let him have it. It was pretty good. Pretty good moment.

**Judge:** You spoke about mercy. What mercy did you show to these children? But you ask me for mercy.

**Halima:** The judge announced that he was adopting the terms of Greg's plea agreement.

**Judge:** You've earned a lifetime of incarceration. You've earned a lifetime sentence. You're not going to get a lifetime sentence. You know already you're going to get 188 months.

**Halima:** Almost 16 years.

**Judge:** This matter is adjourned.

**Bailiff:** All rise.

**Halima:** And like that, it was over. As the marshals took Greg out of the courtroom, they walked him right past Magi. Magi watched as he turned to Mary Rose.

**Magi:** He said, "I love you." And then, his wife responded, "I love you too." Ugh.

**Halima:** When Greg gets out, he'll be 76, assuming he serves his full term.

**Magi:** I was satisfied. The court of public opinion may not understand, but I was satisfied with the outcome. I know the US government did their best.

**Memo:** I felt like it was something, but it was not enough. Like, from here, what do we do next?

**Magi:** Memo, Magi's sister, didn't feel like their work was over.

**Memo:** Now this guy has been arrested, what are these kids getting? We should find a way of doing something for these kids because nothing has been done. Nothing.

**Halima:** In 2021, months after Greg's sentencing, Magi goes back to Kenya. She's walking past a mud house to a small cornfield beneath a tree full of weaver birds. In the cornfield, there's a small, bare patch of ground.

**Magi:** Yeah. So, this is James' grave.

**Halima:** James, the 19-month-old boy who died at the Dow Children's Home. Magi spent months working through the Kenyan legal system to get his body exhumed and reburied with his family. She helped pay for a proper funeral. Standing at his grave, she pulls up a video on her phone.

[Kenya band singing]

**Magi:** This is the actual funeral. There's a lot of people that came. There was a band. We were dancing, just celebrating his life.

[somber music]

**Halima:** Since the sentencing hearing, Magi has gotten a degree in criminal justice. She was hired by a law firm in Philadelphia to go back to Kenya and reinterview victims.

**Magi:** When the victims get compensated, then that will be the end for me. But as far as the relationship that I've established along the journey, that will continue.

**Halima:** In these days, how often do you speak with her?

**Joy:** Every time I feel so low or every time I just need someone to talk to.

**Halima:** Have you ever had somebody like that in your life who you could speak openly with?

**Joy:** No. She's really the first person I can talk to. She was really the very first person I can openly talk to and explain everything I was going through, I had gone through.

[laughter]

[background chatter]

**Halima:** When Magi and Joy were reunited in 2021, the first thing that Joy did was tease Magi about her hair.

**Joy:** But it's not that bad.

**Magi:** Let's not sweeten things here.

**Joy:** [laughs]

**Magi:** Don't make me feel good.

**Joy:** [laughs]

**Halima:** She had dyed it pink, but her roots had grown out.

**Magi:** I liked it when the color was still intact. Now the color, it's turning orange. Okay? I'm not trying to be a Trump, all right? [laughs]

**Halima:** Joy had left school and gotten a job as a server at a hotel in a nearby city. For the first time in a long time, she was doing really well.

**Joy:** There's five specific customers. They will not be served by anyone else unless me.

**Halima:** I hope they tip well.

**Joy:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Halima:** She's older now, with long, beautiful braids. When I spoke to her, she no longer wanted to be a lawyer. Instead, she dreamed of opening a hotel.

**Joy:** Starting off with a small hotel till it grows like a big restaurant, but I have to start slow. I feel I can do it. I don't even have a doubt about that. If she can do what she's done until now, I do believe I can do it too.

Very grateful. You're one of the people, by the way, you're my role model. You never know that much. I look up to you a lot.

**Magi:** Oh, my God.

**Joy:** Right now, I look up to you as my mom, my sister, my closest friend, and everything.

**Halima:** When it was time to say goodbye, Magi dropped off Joy by the side of the road where she could wait for a matatu.

**Magi:** Bye. I love you.

**Joy:** Love you too.

**Magi:** You take care. All right? We'll talk, okay?

**Halima:** As she pulled away, Magi rolled down her window.

**Magi:** Can you call me when you make it home? All right. Thanks, babe. Bye.

[pensive music]

**Glynn:** Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much to everyone in this story. To Magi and Memo, thank you for sharing your lives with us over the past two years. To Janice, and especially to Joy, kongoi for your courage and your strength. Kongoi as well, to Geoffrey Ng’tich, Beatrice Korir, and Joshua Abudoh. Translation for this piece was by Caroline Chebet. Recording engineers were Josh Wilcox, Ryan Geesaman, and Coconut. The original score was by Renzo Gorrio. It was produced and reported by Halima Gikandi and John Fecile.

[upbeat music]

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