



Original Night Stalker

Suspect Believed Responsible For String Of Attacks

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LOS ANGELES -- Newlyweds Keith and Patrice Harrington were just about to start their life's journey together. He had just finished medical school. She was a pediatric nurse. Their journey ended Aug. 19, 1980.

The couple, in their early 20s, never locked the door to their Niguel Shores home.

Detectives believe the killer simply walked in, wearing a long-sleeved jacket, a mask over his face and gloves on his hands. His victims' bodies were left with care in their own bed and were discovered by Keith Harrington's father.

"Hands were tied... heads towards each other... tucked under the sheets," said the victim's brother, Doug Harrington.

In hindsight, investigators say the attack on the Harringtons was the ultimate sign of power. He not only killed them in their own home, but in a community that is gated with guards around the clock.

Now, more than two decades later, Orange County investigator Larry Pool is searching for the man he calls "the original night stalker." The Harringtons, it turns out, were not his only victims.

"I like to see what they looked like in life... just for me," said Pool.

There were, by Pool's account, 10 murders from Orange to Ventura to Santa Barbara counties that date back to 1976, when it's believed the same suspect terrorized women near Sacramento as a serial rapist who struck dozens of times.

"He was prolific," said Pool. Pool believes the man may have struck up to 50 times by July 1979..

No one has ever seen the suspect's face. He's described as just under 6 feet tall, medium build and Caucasian. Investigators think they have, however, heard his voice. A chilling phone call was recorded by one of the rape victims, a year after she was attacked.

On the tape you can hear a man breathing heavily. He tells the rape victim, "I could kill you... I could kill you."

Then suddenly in 1986, the killings stopped.

"Now he's either doing life or facing parole. He could get out next week for all I know," said Pool.

Pool wonders if the night stalker is already behind bars. Last month, 619 death row inmates were forced to give blood to have their DNA analyzed. The State Department of Justice creates a profile from the samples. The information is then entered into the combined DNA index system -- called CODIS.

Pool has the night stalker's DNA. He's hoping for a cold hit -- a match.

"To date, I've looked at 8,000 subjects," said Pool.

Doug Harrington fears the system may let him down, because analysis can take six months.

Profilers suggest the night stalker is an angry man, abused by a girlfriend or mother. Or, they say, it's possible he disappeared because he's just like the guy next door.