

COLUMBIA MAJOR CRIMES UNIT
VIDEOTAPE INTERVIEW
OF
CHARLES ERICKSON

MARCH 10, 2004
5:01 P.M. - 5:23 P.M.

INTERVIEWER: JEFF NICHOLS

COPY

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LISA M. HENNON, RPR, CCR, CSR
1718 JANICE COURT
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101
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COLUMBIA MAJOR CRIMES UNIT
VIDEOTAPE INTERVIEW
OF
CHARLES ERICKSON
MARCH 12, 1994
3:01 P.M. - 3:23 P.M.
INTERVIEWER: JEFF NICHOLS

TRANSCRIBER FROM VIDEOTAPE BY:
LISA M. HENSON, RFA, COP, WSP
1718 JANICE COURT
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 64101
(873) 659-7609

1 given Miranda, your rights?
2 A. Yeah.
3 Q. You understand those rights?
4 (Mr. Erickson nodded his head in the affirmative.)
5 Q. Yes?
6 A. Yeah.
7 Q. Any questions about those?
8 A. No.
9 Q. No? You okay for me to talk to you?
10 A. Yeah.
11 Q. Okay. I wanted to start off by just telling you
12 a little bit about what -- what I've learned. And that is
13 that, you know, the officers, they've gone to Kansas City,
14 and they've gotten in touch with Ryan. And to make a long
15 story short, Ryan is saying, "I don't know anything, wasn't
16 there. I don't know what Chuck's talking about. He's
17 crazy. You know, if it happened, if it went down the way he
18 said, obviously, he did it himself." And pretty much that's
19 what's happening. Now --
20 A. I mean, I don't know.
21 Q. I think Detective Short probably explained to you
22 earlier when you visited with him that, you know, pretty
23 much Ryan's story could come out in any form or fashion. I
24 don't know specifically what he told you.
25 A. Yeah.

3

1 (The following questions were propounded by
2 Mr. Jeff Nichols, and answers were given by
3 Mr. Charles Erickson unless otherwise indicated.)
4 Q. You still doing okay?
5 A. Yeah.
6 Q. Do you need a drink of water?
7 A. Just a cigarette.
8 Q. A cigarette?
9 A. Yeah.
10 Q. Okay. Hang on just a minute. I don't have a
11 lighter. I'll have to go find a lighter. You didn't have
12 one that they got from you, did you?
13 A. No.
14 Q. Okay. I'll be right back.
15 (Mr. Nichols left the interview room.)
16 (Mr. Nichols reentered the interview room, and the
17 interview resumed.)
18 Q. Got a cigarette. If you can hang on to it. I
19 can't find a lighter.
20 A. That's okay.
21 Q. Everybody quit smoking, and nobody's got a
22 lighter. You think you can hang on for a little bit?
23 A. No problem.
24 Q. Okay. Well, now that we're back from our car
25 ride, I just need to briefly go over the fact that you were

2

1 Q. But, you know, Ryan could say anything from,
2 "That was his entire idea." to "I wasn't there. I have no
3 idea what he's talking about. Man, the guy must be flipped
4 out.", you know, to, "Well, hey, I was there. But, you
5 know, I didn't know we were gonna do anything like that.
6 And first thing I know Chuck's over there beating up on some
7 guy." So you never know what kind of -- what form their
8 story's gonna take. And certainly from what you explained
9 to us, it's -- it's bottom line not true.
10 Now, with that, here comes the importance of our
11 conversation. And that is to go back from the very
12 beginning to the point that -- that it was even merely
13 suggested that you guys leave and --
14 A. I don't know. I mean, I don't even -- It's just
15 so foggy. Like, I could just be sitting here and
16 fabricating all of it and not know. Like, I don't know. I
17 don't.
18 Q. Well, now, let me go back one step further. You
19 don't know exactly who brought it up initially, because --
20 A. Yeah. I --
21 Q. Because, now, like Detective Short told you,
22 Ryan -- And I don't think you and I have even gone there.
23 There's specifics about this whole thing that you have
24 provided that there is no way for anyone, including
25 yourself, to even know. Bottom line, there would be no way

4

1 if you hadn't been involved and been there. So my angle to
 2 you is I need to know as much information about what Ryan
 3 said to you and what Ryan did.
 4 A. That's the best I can tell you. Like, I don't --
 5 Q. Okay. Well, let's start -- You started -- You
 6 were at the club, right?
 7 A. Yeah.
 8 Q. And my understanding is -- And I'm just gonna try
 9 to briefly explain to you what my understanding is. -- is
 10 that you guys needed money --
 11 A. This is -- All right. This is after reading the
 12 newspaper article in October.
 13 Q. Uh-huh.
 14 A. And this is kind of put together with -- I mean,
 15 I don't know if I'm just flipping out or whatever. But, I
 16 mean, this is kind of what I put together with what could
 17 have happened. I remember we were at the club, we ran out
 18 of money. Like, he had been asking his sister to borrow
 19 money. And then from there on, I'm just kind of presuming
 20 what happened. I'm making presumptions based on what I read
 21 in the newspaper.
 22 Q. Well, you're making accurate presumptions that --
 23 like I said, that you would only know if you were there.
 24 A. Like what? The lady, the cleaning lady?
 25 Q. That's one.

5

1 A. That was in the newspaper.
 2 Q. Well, no. About what was specifically said to
 3 that lady.
 4 A. She went to get help? I mean --
 5 Q. You explained -- I'm not --
 6 A. I mean, you understand, like, I wouldn't be here
 7 if I didn't feel guilty about it. But it's just I don't --
 8 I can't recollect. I mean, it's just a trip for me to have
 9 to sit here and try to look at something that happened that
 10 I read about and try to base what I remember off of that,
 11 you know? It's a mind fuck, you know.
 12 Q. Let's just stop right here. Okay? Now, one
 13 thing I'm not gonna do is I'm not gonna sit here and listen
 14 to this kind of gibberish. Okay? I'm not gonna waste my
 15 time doing that.
 16 A. I'm not trying to --
 17 Q. No, no, no, no. Wait. Wait. Wait. Wait.
 18 Wait. Now, listen. I'm gonna start talking --
 19 A. I'm sorry.
 20 Q. -- and you're gonna start listening. Okay? All
 21 right. I'm gonna be point blank with you, pal. Right now
 22 your hind end is the one that's hanging over the edge, and
 23 Ryan could care less about it.
 24 A. Okay.
 25 Q. Okay? Do you understand me?

5

1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. Okay.
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Now, you better start thinking very clearly.
 5 A. Okay.
 6 Q. Because it's you that is on this chopping block.
 7 A. Okay.
 8 Q. Am I clear --
 9 A. Yes.
 10 Q. -- to you?
 11 A. Yes.
 12 Q. Now, do we need to go by -- or go back and go
 13 through this step by step?
 14 A. No.
 15 Q. Well, I think we do. And that's what we're gonna
 16 do. And I don't want to hear, "Oh, all the sudden I just
 17 think I maybe fabricated all this."
 18 A. Well --
 19 Q. No. What I want to hear is exactly what Ryan
 20 told you, because that's what's gonna keep you in a position
 21 to where you're not gonna be the sole individual out here
 22 responsible for what happened to Kent.
 23 A. Okay.
 24 Q. Okay?
 25 A. Yeah.

7

1 Q. I can't be any more clear to you than that.
 2 A. I understand that.
 3 Q. And you need to understand it. Okay. We're
 4 gonna start back at the club. Whose idea was it to go get
 5 money because you wanted drinks, you wanted dope, whatever
 6 you wanted?
 7 A. I wanted to go home. It was Ryan's idea.
 8 Q. Ryan's idea and --
 9 A. To the best of my knowledge, yes.
 10 Q. I don't even want to hear whose idea -- or "best
 11 of my knowledge." Whose idea was it?
 12 A. It was Ryan's idea.
 13 Q. Ryan's idea? And what did he tell you?
 14 A. That we needed some more money for drinks and his
 15 sister wouldn't give us any more money.
 16 Q. Okay. And he said we're gonna do what about it?
 17 A. "We're gonna rob somebody."
 18 Q. You're gonna rob somebody? And so that led up to
 19 you and him leaving together?
 20 A. Yeah.
 21 Q. And you went to where?
 22 A. We went to the Tribune building.
 23 Q. Well, before that you went where?
 24 A. We went to his car.
 25 Q. To his car which was parked where?

8

1 A. Down whatever street that is that By George is
2 on.
3 Q. Where we drove through earlier, you and I and the
4 other two detectives?
5 A. Yeah.
6 Q. On First Street?
7 (Mr. Erickson nodded his head in the affirmative.)
8 Q. It was parked alongside the street?
9 (Mr. Erickson nodded his head in the affirmative.)
10 Q. And you went there for what reason?
11 A. To get something out of his car to --
12 Q. To get something out of the car?
13 A. To get a weapon out of his car.
14 Q. To get a weapon out of his car?
15 A. In case what we tried to do turned --
16 Q. Whose idea was it to go to the car to get a
17 weapon out of the car?
18 A. It was his.
19 Q. His idea?
20 A. Yes.
21 Q. And how did he articulate that to you?
22 A. Basically that we're young, we're in high school,
23 we'll get fucked up if we just go try to rob someone just
24 regularly without anything.
25 Q. So you're young, you're afraid you'll get fucked

1 up because you're not of big stature, and you wanted to go
2 to the car to get something out of the car, a weapon?
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. In order to do what with it?
5 A. If it came down to it --
6 Q. If it came down to it?
7 A. -- to beat someone with it.
8 Q. To beat someone with it, to possibly beat them --
9 A. To death.
10 Q. To death?
11 A. Hopefully --
12 Q. Hopefully?
13 A. Hopefully not, no. I mean, hopefully it wouldn't
14 come to that.
15 Q. But you went there with the knowledge of --
16 A. Yes.
17 Q. -- getting a weapon, and it could come to that?
18 A. And it did.
19 Q. And it did come to that?
20 A. Yes.
21 Q. And who took the weapon out of the car?
22 A. Out of the car?
23 Q. Yes.
24 A. I don't know if I carried it from the car. I
25 don't -- I'm pretty sure that he took it out of the car,

1 but I think I carried it after that.
2 Q. He carried -- He got it out of the car,
3 apparently transferred it to you, and you carried it from
4 the car to the Tribune building?
5 A. Yeah.
6 Q. Is that what you're saying?
7 A. Yes.
8 Q. Okay. What did Ryan carry with him?
9 A. I don't think, anything.
10 Q. And you described that weapon as what?
11 A. I think it was -- It was skinny, so, I mean, I
12 don't think it was a wrench to get the lug nuts off a tire.
13 I think it was something for, like, the jack.
14 Q. Like, a handle for the jack?
15 A. I think it had a handle on it, actually. Like,
16 it was -- looked like a question mark with, like, a long --
17 Like, the top's very small, and then it went like a question
18 mark, so you twist it like this. I can draw -- I can
19 draw --
20 Q. Like -- Like, a ratchet?
21 A. Can I draw you a picture?
22 Q. Sure.
23 A. I think basically it just looked like that.
24 Q. And it was a round piece of wrought iron or --
25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- or steel?
2 A. Yes.
3 Q. And you described it as being round?
4 A. Yes.
5 Q. And about how long?
6 A. I don't -- About that long probably.
7 Q. About that long?
8 A. Yeah.
9 Q. Which is in your estimation how long?
10 A. Something like that, yeah. I don't --
11 Q. Which you would say --
12 A. 2 feet.
13 Q. 2 feet? 24 inches?
14 A. Yeah.
15 Q. 18 to 24 inches, probably close to 18, but that
16 would be pretty accurate?
17 A. Uh-huh.
18 Q. So we're talking about a piece of iron, round,
19 that's 18 to 24 inches. And you carried it down to the
20 Tribune building --
21 A. Yeah.
22 Q. -- is what you're telling me? And when you got
23 there, you walked behind apparently in this area, and you
24 saw what?
25 A. Kent Heitholt.

1 Q. You saw Kent Heitholt doing what?
 2 A. Before we got there, I think -- Like, from what
 3 I read in the newspaper --
 4 Q. No. What do you remember seeing when you got
 5 behind the Tribune building and you saw Kent Heitholt? What
 6 was he doing?
 7 A. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know. I
 8 think he was just standing there, like, about to get into
 9 his car or something.
 10 Q. You had conversation between you and Ryan, did
 11 you not?
 12 A. There?
 13 Q. Yes.
 14 A. I think we did.
 15 Q. And that conversation was what?
 16 A. Basically he just told me to hit him.
 17 Q. He told you to hit him?
 18 A. Yeah.
 19 Q. And you had not approached him at that point?
 20 A. No.
 21 Q. Who was the first person to actually come in
 22 physical contact with Kent Heitholt? Let me step back. Was
 23 there verbal communication with Kent Heitholt before any
 24 physical contact occurred?
 25 A. No, I don't believe so.

13

1 Q. None?
 2 (Mr. Erickson shook his head in the negative.)
 3 Q. It was -- Was it more of an ambush? Was it a
 4 slip up on him behind him? What was it?
 5 A. Yeah, I'd say it was more of the latter. I'd say
 6 it was an ambush or --
 7 Q. You slipped up behind him, or did you face him
 8 directly, or did the two of you go in opposite directions
 9 and come from different directions?
 10 A. I think it was just from behind.
 11 Q. From behind? The two of you approached from
 12 behind; you're carrying the tool?
 13 A. Yeah.
 14 Q. What happened next?
 15 A. I -- I hit him, I think.
 16 Q. You hit him?
 17 A. Yeah.
 18 Q. Was he facing you, or was his back to you when
 19 you hit him?
 20 A. His back was to me.
 21 Q. His back was to you? And why did you hit him?
 22 A. I don't know. I didn't know what else to do.
 23 Q. You didn't know what else to do? Had he turned
 24 and made any threatening actions toward you?
 25 A. It's possible.

14

1 Q. It's possible? What possible actions could he
 2 have made toward you?
 3 A. Just basically defensive actions.
 4 Q. Why would he have done that?
 5 A. Well, obviously -- I mean, it's not like we
 6 were -- I mean, we were there to harm him.
 7 Q. You were there to harm him?
 8 A. I mean, instinctly, yes.
 9 Q. What was Ryan doing at that time?
 10 A. I think he might just been, like, either next to
 11 me or just, like, hiding or something.
 12 Q. Did Ryan ever grab onto Kent Heitholt?
 13 A. I believe so, yes.
 14 Q. And how did he grab onto him?
 15 A. I don't know.
 16 Q. Did he grab his arms or --
 17 A. After -- I blacked out after -- after it
 18 started.
 19 Q. After it started? And starting it you say was
 20 you doing what?
 21 A. Hitting him.
 22 Q. Hitting him?
 23 A. Uh-huh.
 24 Q. And you say, "Hitting him." And that means more
 25 than one time?

15

1 A. No.
 2 Q. No?
 3 A. After the first time. Because I don't remember,
 4 really, anything after that. I remember just, like, sitting
 5 on the ground and then Ryan getting me to get up to leave.
 6 Q. No. Let's go back just a little bit. Because
 7 earlier you had mentioned actually hitting him multiple
 8 times?
 9 A. I assumed, yes, that that's what had happened.
 10 After I blacked out, I just went into a rage, and I didn't
 11 stop until he was on the ground.
 12 Q. So you hit him one time. And you are explaining
 13 you went into a rage?
 14 A. That's my assumption, yeah. I don't know how
 15 else to describe it.
 16 Q. And Ryan was holding him; is that what you're
 17 explaining -- you explained earlier? Did you say Ryan was
 18 holding him?
 19 A. After the first -- I'd say yeah. That's my best
 20 way to put it, I guess.
 21 Q. Your best way to put it?
 22 A. After he was on the ground, after -- Like, I
 23 remember Ryan was over him. I don't know what he was doing.
 24 I don't know if he was grabbing his watch and whatever you
 25 were saying earlier or messing with his belt or whatever.

16

1 But I remember looking over, and Ryan was over him after he
 2 was on the ground.
 3 Q. Were you still hitting him?
 4 A. No.
 5 Q. What had you done with this tire iron?
 6 A. I don't know.
 7 Q. You don't know?
 8 A. I don't.
 9 Q. Okay. Now, I've explained to you already that it
 10 is essential that you remember every detail the best you can
 11 and --
 12 A. I mean, it could be in that park you were talking
 13 about.
 14 Q. Wait. Wait. Wait. Just listen to me. Just
 15 listen to me. Okay? Just listen. Because I need to know
 16 what Ryan's actions were in detail. I need to know what
 17 your actions were --
 18 A. I don't know what they were in detail.
 19 Q. -- in detail --
 20 A. I don't.
 21 Q. -- but I need to know Ryan's also.
 22 A. Okay. Well, you have to ask me specifically,
 23 because there's a lot that I do not remember.
 24 Q. Okay. Well, I'm sure there is. Specifically
 25 when you approached Kent Heitholt, you said you walked up

1 Q. Okay. And then what happened?
 2 A. And then I was just on the ground, and I remember
 3 seeing Ryan hovering over this guy. And I think I asked him
 4 if he was dead. And Ryan said, "Yeah, he's dead."
 5 Q. And then you guys left?
 6 A. Yeah.
 7 Q. Okay. Let's see if I can find you a lighter for
 8 that cigarette. I'll be right back.
 9 (Mr. Nichols left the interview room, and the interview
 10 was concluded.)
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1 behind him and --
 2 A. I think Ryan was hiding, like, behind a car or
 3 something.
 4 Q. You think Ryan was hiding?
 5 A. Yeah. At first, yeah.
 6 Q. And then what did Ryan do?
 7 A. And then he came out. And, I mean, I know he
 8 didn't try to control me or scream to me at all, or else
 9 this wouldn't have happened. I mean, that's -- I guess he
 10 just sat there, and either he let -- he watched it happen
 11 or -- and just tried to cover it up afterwards, just
 12 assuming that I flipped out and I didn't know what I was
 13 doing or what. I don't know.
 14 Q. Okay. But you remember there being a point in
 15 time where you looked down and you saw Ryan --
 16 A. No. I was on the ground too.
 17 Q. You were on the ground?
 18 A. Yeah. That's when I thought that I was --
 19 Because I remember vomiting. Like, I'm pretty sure that I
 20 did. And I thought that that was when that happened. And
 21 then I looked up.
 22 Q. But earlier you said you don't remember if you
 23 vomited -- you remember getting sick, but you don't remember
 24 if you vomited there or vomited somewhere else.
 25 A. I assumed I did there.

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, Lisa M. Hannon, Certified Court Reporter and
 Notary Public within and for the State of Missouri, do
 hereby certify that CHARLES BRICHSON is the person
 represented to me to be the person interviewed in the
 foregoing videotape interview and further that JEFF NICHOLS
 is the person represented to me to be the interviewer in the
 foregoing videotape interview; that the conversation between
 said persons was taken by me from videotape to the best of
 my ability and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me; that
 I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of
 the parties to the action in which this interview was
 conducted, and further that I am not a relative or employee
 of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties thereto,
 nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of
 the action.

Given at my office in the City of Jefferson, County of
 Cole, State of Missouri, this 19th day of February, 2005.
 My commission will expire October 20, 2005.

LISA M. HANNON, RPR, CRR, CCR
 Notary Public, State of Missouri
 (Commissioned in Cole County)

1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2 I, Lisa M. Hendon, Certified Trial Reporter and
3 Notary Public within and for the State of Missouri, do
4 hereby certify that CHARLES EPSTEIN is the person
5 represented to me to be the person interviewed in the
6 foregoing videotape interview and further that JEFF NICHOLS
7 is the person represented to me to be the interviewer in the
8 foregoing videotape interview, that the conversation between
9 said persons was taken by me from interview to the best of
10 my ability and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me; that
11 I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of
12 the parties to the action in which this interview was
13 conducted, and further that I am not a relative or employee
14 of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties therein,
15 nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of
16 the action.

17 Given at my office in the City of Jefferson, County of
18 Cole, State of Missouri, this 18th day of January, 2005. My
19 commission will expire October 30, 2005.

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LISA M. HENDON, RPR, TCR, CTR
Notary Public, State of Missouri
(Commissioned in Cole County)