



the  
**SERIAL**  
DYNASTY

**Episode 19: Suspect - Don**  
**09/05/2015**  
**Speaker: Bob Ruff**

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**EPISODE DESCRIPTION**

In this episode, Bob investigates Don.

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**Today's episode of *The Serial Dynasty* is sponsored by Shaun T Fitness.** Next week, Shaun T will relaunch his podcast, *Trust and Believe*. Shaun speaks about motivational ways to believe in yourself no matter where you are in your life. Whether it's about weight, relationships, job, or confidence, Shaun takes you on a different journey to remind you that you have the power to be you. And don't forget to go check out [ShaunTFitness.com](http://ShaunTFitness.com). And before I begin the show today I wanted to take just a couple of minutes to fill you in on my progress through T25 and answer a few questions that some listeners have been emailing into me.

This will be the only ad today for Shaun T, we won't have an interruption in the middle of the show. But I wanted to make sure to let all of you know how incredibly effective T25 is. This week I started the Beta program and on Monday it really hit home to me how effective this program is. The Speed 2.0 workout, which is part of the Beta program, is very fast and very intense. What amazed me after completing that workout was that I absolutely nailed it. When I finished it, it all of a sudden occurred to me that I was working my butt off for 25 minutes straight and I could breathe the whole time. Shaun's workouts always build on themselves as you progress. And taking that next leap and stepping up the focus and the intensity of the workout was a great litmus test for me to see how well I've progressed since the beginning.

I'm now down 17 pounds and I feel great. All lot of listeners keep emailing me and tweeting me asking me what's a good program to start with and my answer to that is simple. You can start with any of Shaun's programs. My personal experience with T25 is there's three different levels, you start with the Alpha, and then Beta, and then Gamma. In every level, there's always that modifier option and if you're really out of shape, like I was when I began this process, you struggle at the beginning. You have to revert back to the modifier, you have to take a couple of breaks and get a drink of water and catch your breath. But if you just keep doing what Shaun is telling you to do and you keep following the schedule and going with the program, week by week, you get stronger and faster and healthier. You learn the moves, you condition your body and right about the time you get to the point where you're perfecting the Alpha workout, it's time to move on to the Beta, and so on and so forth.

So the major point that I really want to get across to anyone that's interested in any of Shaun's programs are: don't be afraid, you can do it. There's no one out there that cannot do these programs. If you get the program, you follow the schedule, you do what Shaun tells you to do, you will see results. For more information on all of Shaun T's workouts, go to [ShaunTFitness.com](http://ShaunTFitness.com) and dig deeper.

### **[00:02:46] iTunes Ranking**

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Hello everybody and welcome back to *The Serial Dynasty*. Before I get into the content of the show, I want to send out a huge heartfelt thank you to every single one of you listening to this right now. Moments before coming out to the studio to record this episode, listener Darla Garrett, whose Twitter handle is @\_darbg, tweeted a shout out to me that we were ranked #66 on the iTunes charts. A little while later another listener, Amy Keating Veugeler—sorry Amy, I hope I got that right—whose Twitter handle is @Amoson, tweeted that we're now at 52.

For the first time in months I jumped onto iTunes to check and see where we were at and indeed, this show, our show, all of us, cause as I hope you realize the show isn't just about me. It's not my show. All of the ideas and content come from all of us. Our show has moved up to the ranks to be ranked #52 out of nearly a million podcasts on iTunes and we're ranked #5 in our category. I am absolutely stunned, honored, and humbled by this all at the same time and I want to express my deepest gratitude to every one of you who have helped spread the word about our show and have built our audience to this level. A bigger audience means more minds, more ideas, and gets us closer to the truth. And now with all that being said, let's find some truth.

### **[00:04:22] Mental Image of Don**

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Last week at the close of the show, I asked all of you to do an exercise for me. As you'll remember, I asked you to close your eyes and picture in your mind who you thought Don was. And the reason that I did that is because in researching for this episode, I've learned a lot more about Don: his looks, and his personality, and his history. And one of the first things that struck me was: this is not the person that I imagined after listening to *Serial*. And not that it necessarily makes it different in the case, but I just found it really interesting how easy it is to put a mental image in someone's mind just by speaking a few words.

Don has been a mystery to all of us. He was one of those people in this case that we should know a lot about. He was Hae's boyfriend. You would think he would have been right in the middle of all of the discussions about this case. And in the middle of the investigation at the time. But still he remains a mystery to all of us. Since Don didn't go to Woodlawn High School and wasn't really connected to the students there, very few people have a real perspective about who Don really was. As far as I know, there were only five people from Woodlawn that ever had any contact with Don at all. Of course Hae, his girlfriend, and Adnan, who had met him once when Hae's car broke down. Aisha, who had went on a double date

with Don and Hae. Debbie, who spoke with Don for several hours on the phone. And lastly, Krista. Many of you might not know this but Krista actually had the opportunity to spend several hours with Don. This is what Krista had to say about the experience:

**[Krista Speaking]** *The first time I ever met Don was the second trial, which he testified, or was due to testify, the same day that I was. He showed up about halfway through the day. I can remember he had a girl with him. I think I remember asking Aisha like, "Who is that?" because he was not anything what I pictured him as, in the way that Hae described him as being this dreamy, out-of-the-ordinary, to-die-for guy, and he—you know, back in the day, I guess for anybody that grew up in the '90s, like Zach Morris from Saved by the Bell, he just wasn't. He was kind of like just an average guy. Nothing completely appalling about him. Just a regular Joe.*

*No, I don't even think that I really exchanged words with him and if we did it wasn't anything very memorable. He just kept to himself, he didn't really make eye contact. When we were put in holding, if you will, before we testified, they put us in the old homicide room that had like a bunch of file cabinets. We were all sitting at a table. But, you know, everybody else was kind of chitchatting, or you know, doing their thing but he kind of kept to himself and didn't really look at anybody. Pretty much, all I remember about him. You know, all I had were mental images of how Hae described him. The only one who met him while Hae was still alive was to my knowledge Aisha when they went on a double date like a week before Hae was murdered. There was a memorial service at school mid-March and Hae's family came and a couple of people from outside the school, but Don did not attend as far as I know.*

So Krista had a very similar reaction to me when she met Don, or got to see Don, for the first time. One thing that's obvious is that Hae was absolutely infatuated with Don. At least that's the way it appears from her writings in her diary. And now, sadly, her diary is the only source we have to hear Hae's words. Hae was an amazing girl who seemingly always found the best in people. She saw beauty in everything that was before her eyes. My reason behind pointing out that the reality of Don didn't necessarily fit Hae's impression of Don, possibly in some other people's eyes, really isn't about Don at all, it's about Hae. It's so sad to think about such a talented, wonderful human being losing her life so early.

The more that I dig into this case, the more I realize what a bright and shining star Hae Min Lee really was. Making this tragedy all that more heartbreaking. And to be clear about the shift in tone and focus of this show, the direction that we're going now is about Hae. It's all about Hae. It's about truth. It's about justice. It's about finding the person that took this bright and shining star away from us. So for those of you that may be uncomfortable with exploring other theories, and investigating other suspects, I'm sorry that you feel that way. As I mentioned a few episodes ago, I spent months upon months and fifteen weeks on this show investigating Adnan. If I still believed there was any chance whatsoever that he had anything

to do with this murder, I would still be focusing on Adnan. But I believe that he had nothing to do with this. I believe that he's innocent. And that means someone else is guilty.

### **[00:09:04] Don in High School**

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So besides Adnan, we've looked deeply into Jay, we've gathered as much information as we could about Roy Davis, and the next person to look into would be Don. So in today's episode, much like the Roy Davis episode, I won't be drawing any conclusions. I'll just be presenting evidence for you to consider. After today, hopefully we can decide whether Don is a suspect that can be ruled out, as he was by the Baltimore Police Department, or maybe he's someone that requires a little more looking into.

So who was Don? Like Krista, after listening to *Serial*, I pictured Zach Morris. I pictured some kind of a surfer guy, flowing blonde hair and blue eyes, very popular, girls constantly fawning over him. And that may not be the way you pictured him, but that's just the mental image I had in my mind. As it turns out, I've had a really hard time finding out who Don was. I first started with high school. And when I looked through his class photos, the first thing that I noticed, the first thing that struck me, was that my mental image of Don could not have been any more wrong. Not that Don was a polar opposite of all that or anything like that, but it's just that he was completely different in appearance than the way that I pictured him.

So then I started reaching out to Don's classmates. I sent messages to 46 of Don's classmates, fourteen of them got back with me. And what was amazing to me, was that only one out of the fourteen remembered Don, remembered any personal interactions with Don. Thirteen out of the fourteen students that I spoke with either said that they didn't remember him or that they knew who he was but they literally don't think they ever spoke with him during their entire school career. I sent them yearbook photos to try and jog their memory and I got a lot of, "Oh yeah, I remember that guy. But I don't think I ever talked to him. And I don't know who his friends were or who he hung out with." And I couldn't believe that not one single person in a relatively small class really knew Don or at least knew who his friends were.

As I mentioned, I did have one student who did remember Don. They weren't friends but he said he spoke with him once and he remembered it very specifically. This classmate didn't want me to say his name but he agreed to let me read what he had written me on the show today. This is what the classmate wrote after I asked him if he was in any clubs or sports, he replied with, "No, definitely not a club or sport type. He would have been under the 'emo' stereotype back in school. Also he wasn't really from Bel Air so he distanced himself from most. I remember one conversation I had with him and he said he had been friends with a Klan member in the past, which is why I stopped talking to him."

That was the only person that I was able to get a hold of that had any personal experience with Don. While I don't know what to think about the Klan member reference, it could have been a joke, or who knows, the rest of what this guy told me seemed to fit with what I was hearing from all of the other classmates. In high school, Don seemed to keep to himself and wasn't really close to anyone. Now that doesn't mean that that's exactly accurate.

He could have just been in different circles and those might have just been the people that I didn't get through to or didn't get back to me. But the goal as we progress through the show today is to present you with all evidence, good or bad, that I've been able to find. I'm only going to tell what I know. After high school in 1997, Don got a job at LensCrafters. After that, I really don't know much about him until 1999 when Hae Min Lee went missing. It's not that there's any information that's good or bad. It's just that we don't have any.

### **[00:12:17] Don's Timeline**

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So getting back to what we know, let's walk through Don's day on January 13, 1999. And we'll start that timeline when Hae Lee's family contacted the police. We all know that Hae didn't show up to pick up her cousin at 3:15 at the Early Learning Center. It was about 5:00 in the afternoon when her family got worried and they called the police. Around 6:00, Officer Adcock, from the Baltimore County Police Department, reported to the Lee residence. We know that he made a couple of calls to Adnan. We know that he called the Owings Mills LensCrafters store, the one where both Don and Hae worked. And we know that he called Don's house.

Reading from Adcock's police report, it says, "Mr. Lee advised me that his sister is dating Don from her work. I attempted to call him at his home number but had negative results." And it's in another report where he says that he also called the LensCrafters location at Owings Mills. Later that night, Officer Adcock made another report. It says, "I spoke to victim Lee's boyfriend Don. He advised me that he does not know the whereabouts of Ms. Lee. Don advised that he talked to Ms. Lee last on January 12<sup>th</sup> the night before. It should be noted that I spoke to Don on 1/14/99 at 0130."

1:30 in the morning. So what we know for sure is that Officer Adcock tried to call Don at home and tried to get a hold of him at LensCrafters and then Don got back with him at 1:30 in the morning. And that's also all that Adcock knew at the time. The next day, later on January 14<sup>th</sup>, a different officer, it's hard to read the writing on the report, it looks like Officer Waters, got in touch with Don again. His reports says, "The victim's boyfriend Don advised he has not seen the victim since the 12<sup>th</sup>. Harford County Sheriff was requested to search the area surrounding his neighborhood for the victim and/or her vehicle. At this time, with negative results. No further at this time."

So at this point, we have a call to Don's house, a call to LensCrafters, Don gets in touch at 1:30 in the morning and then later that day he speaks to Officer Waters and he tells him the same thing, that he hadn't seen her since the 12<sup>th</sup>. One thing that I found interesting while trying to piece this timeline together is the fact that it seems inconsistent from what Don told Sarah on *Serial*. Sarah stated that Don told her that when he got the call from the police, he immediately recalled his day. He made sure he noted everywhere he was that day and basically alibied himself. One thing that I see that's missing from both of these reports is Don telling the police officers that he was at work at LensCrafters that day. Now in his defense, it doesn't seem like they asked him. Neither of these reports indicate that they asked him where he was during that day. But I just found it an odd inconsistency with the statement on *Serial*.

The next appearance of Don in the investigation happens on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. So, eight days have passed since his last contact with the police. At this point, it's Detective O'Shea that's contacting Don. In this interview, Don reiterated that he hadn't seen Hae since the 12<sup>th</sup>. He mentioned that she had a fight with her mom. Then the reports says, "Hae did not indicate to Donald that she was planning to go anywhere." And then here now in Don's third contact with the police is the first mention of him working that day. The report says, "On January 13<sup>th</sup>, Don went to work at the Hunt Valley LensCrafters store. Don did not speak with Hae while he was at work. Don worked until approximately 1800 hours. Donald arrived home at 1900 hours." And for those of you that don't understand military time, he got off work at 6:00 p.m., arrived home at 7:00 p.m. And it says he was advised by his father to call the Owings Mills store. Don called the store and he was told that Hae Min Lee was missing.

So according to Don's statement in this report, around 7:00 he called the store and he was aware that Hae was missing. Also a point of reference, remember that Hae was supposed to meet Don after she got off work at 10:00 that night. As the report goes on, Don recalls meeting Adnan and said he was polite and cordial. He also told the police that Hae had told him that she spent the summer of '97 or '98 in California with her father and that Hae had also said she would like to live in California. The last note says, O'Shea "met with Don in person on February 4<sup>th</sup> at the Owings Mills LensCrafters store and the information obtained was the same as provided in this correspondence." So if that date doesn't stick out in your mind, February 4<sup>th</sup> was the day of the press release, the news report, its five days before Hae's body is found, and it's also the day where the NCIC search hits were made on Hae Min Lee's license plate up near Bel Air. Between the two interviews that were noted on that report that was generated on February 11<sup>th</sup>, which another point of reference, February 11<sup>th</sup> was two days after the case had been turned over to the Baltimore City Police Department. And this was a Baltimore County officer closing out his report.

This next report was dated February 14, 1999, also by Detective O'Shea, also created five days after the case had been turned over to Baltimore City. But on this report, O'Shea writes that on February 1<sup>st</sup> he interviews the manager at the Owings Mills LensCrafters. The manager said Hae Lee was scheduled to work at 6:00 p.m. on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Hae did not show up for work, nor did she contact anyone. She said Don was working at the Hunt Valley LensCrafters location on the 13<sup>th</sup>. She advised that he had arrived for work at 9:02; he took a lunch break from 1:10-1:42; and he left work at 6:00 p.m. Now it's worth noting that Don was working at the Owings Mill location on February 1<sup>st</sup>, the day the call was made. You may also want to note that according to sources that I'll discuss here in just a little bit, only the general manager of a particular store will have any access to employee records from their store. And that'll come into play later.

Now at this point, this is the last contact that the police have with Don or LensCrafters or anything surrounding Don. Nothing else, never again, nada. These were all Baltimore County officers, who are closing up their investigation of the missing persons case. The Baltimore City Police Department never made any attempt whatsoever to confirm any of this. And another item that I hadn't realized until just recently when researching this, there was never any mention to the Baltimore County Police Department and subsequently the Baltimore City Police Department that the general manager at the Hunt Valley store was Don's

mother. We of course all heard about it on *Serial*, but that fact wasn't known to the police ever and wasn't pointed out to the prosecution until October, just before the first trial.

So a lot of us may have assumed that the cops really did a terrible job of looking into Don knowing that his alibi was corroborated by his mother but the fact is they didn't know that his alibi was his mother. To sum up their investigation from beginning to end into Don: was a phone call the day Hae went missing, they get in touch with him at 1:30 in the morning, he says he hasn't seen her, he talked to her the night before. The next day they follow up and get the same story. Eight days later they check with him again and he tells them that she didn't have any plans to go anywhere but also that she had talked about wanting to live in California and that he was working at the Hunt Valley LensCrafters that day. A week or so after that, O'Shea called LensCrafters when Don was at work one day and confirmed with the manager that he was indeed working in Hunt Valley on the 13<sup>th</sup>. At that point, they close the book on Don and set it aside. And had him ruled out effectively as a suspect.

Now I'm not saying that any of this points towards Don's guilt but I will say that it is very frustrating when you draw the comparison between the way that Adnan was treated and the way that Don was. As many people have said, the statistics would show you that the most likely culprit in a violent crime against a woman is usually the boyfriend or the ex-boyfriend. So certainly they both deserved a look. They kept digging and pulled out any information they could find about Adnan to make him look guilty: a teacher that said she thought that he faked a catatonic state, a witness that said she thought she heard him ask for a ride. But they ignored Debbie's statement when she told her she was leaving school to go see Don at the mall. Now you and I know that it's very likely that Debbie had the wrong day in regards to all of this, as was explained in *Undisclosed*, but the point being that didn't matter when people gave inconsistent statements about Adnan. But these statements about Don were ignored. So that's not necessarily a comment about Don's innocence or guilt, it's a statement as to how one sided this investigation was.

Many of you may have seen copies of Don's timecard on both the *Undisclosed* website as well as Susan Simpson's [blog at The View From LL2 about Don](#). And at a glance, you may assume these were things that the police used to corroborate Don's alibi. When the fact of the matter is the police never even asked for these timecards. They never looked into this alibi any further than a phone call. The timecards didn't come to light until October when Christina Gutierrez filed for them, and subsequently so did Kevin Urick, which will get into in a minute. With Adnan, the police looked at every little piece of circumstantial evidence to build a case against him. And never gave Don a second glance.

Other documents you can find on [The View from LL2 blog](#) are Don's performance reviews. He had several negative performance reviews and I'm not going to go through them and read them on the show. If you want to know what they say, you can always go to Susan's blog and check them out. But I'm also not saying that they matter. My point is had those been performance reviews about Adnan, they most certainly would have been presented at trial. The fact of the matter is that the police already had their guy on February 1<sup>st</sup> and so they were never interested in Don or anyone else. So what we're doing here on this show, like it or not, is the job that the police department should have done sixteen years ago. And I think we owe it to Hae to do so.

So way back at the beginning, before the anonymous tip came in, why wasn't Don looked into? And the answer to that is that Don had an alibi. In March of '99, the defenses' private investigator, Andrew Davis, went to the Owings Mills store. The manager told Davis that only the general manager could provide the information he was looking for and told him to contact O'Shea. Davis' next note in his report says that he spoke to a police department official involved in the investigation. It doesn't say who. I'm assuming that it wasn't O'Shea because his note right above it says they told him to contact O'Shea and he says he talked to a police official involved in the investigation. So I'm assuming this was a Baltimore City cop. But it's just an assumption. The report says the police department advised Davis that Don's alibi was confirmed and they were confident that they had an air-tight case against Adnan. So that was the state of mind of the police in March. Don had an alibi, it was confirmed, and they had an air-tight case against Adnan, so it didn't matter.

So in my investigation, from here I went to the only logical place I could go – check out Don's alibi and see if it really was confirmed. The confirmation of Don's alibi lies in one sheet of paper. A timecard that says that he was at work at the Hunt Valley store from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on January 13, 1999. That one sheet of paper is the confirmation of Don's alibi. They might say there's some confirmation from the manager working at Owings Mills when O'Shea called them back in February. But as I read in the notes, the manager didn't say that she remembered him working or, yes, she could confirm that he worked. She gave specific times down to the minute, which means she was reading off of something. What she was reading off of had to have been Don's timesheet because the exact times that she gave are the exact same times that are listed on his timesheet.

So let's take a look at the timesheet. The first appearance of Don's time records was on October 4<sup>th</sup> when Gutierrez received them from LensCrafters. What Gutierrez got from LensCrafters was a timesheet that showed on Wednesday, January 13, 1999 Don did not work. Zero hours that day. Now at the same time the defense got these, Urick also got them. Somehow he had figured out that Gutierrez had filed for them even though she filed them in a way that was supposed to keep them sealed from the prosecution. She requested this from the judge, the judge approved for them to be sealed. Yet at the same time she filed for them, so did Urick. So Urick got the same report. Don wasn't working.

Two days after that, Gutierrez got another timesheet for Don from LensCrafters with a note that said, "Please find enclosed an additional time keeping record." This timesheet shows that Don punched in on January 13, 1999 at 9:02 a.m., took a lunch break from 1:10 to 1:42, and punched out at 6:00 p.m., which confirms the times that were given to O'Shea back in February. Case closed... or seemingly so. But there's still a little bit more to this story. The next day Urick received another packet from LensCrafters as well. In Urick's packet, there was a cover letter written directly to him. The letter reads, "In response to your subpoena requesting Don's time keeping records, please find enclosed an additional record. As stated in our telephone conversation, Don was loaned out from store number 143," which is the Owings Mills store, "to store number 128," the Hunt Valley store on January 13 and January 16.

So you can tell from the letter that Urick called LensCrafters after he received the first timesheet and what I draw from that is that he asked to them to search further for another timesheet. So LensCrafters obliged. They found the second timesheet, they sent it along, and



then they included another paragraph. It says, "Also enclosed is the weekly schedule for the Hunt Valley Mall location." It notes the employees who worked on January 13<sup>th</sup>. In particular, Charles, the lab manager, Deborah, the sales supervisor, and Anita, the general manager and also Donald's mother. Donald's mother is written in bold font. So I found this interesting. Urick gets the timesheet that shows that Don wasn't working and asks for them to look for another timesheet. Gutierrez didn't ask for this, Urick did. So the response was to send this extra timesheet along when they found it. But then they decided on their own to send along with it the work schedule for all of the employees at Hunt Valley for that week, the timesheets for the managers, and made sure to point out in bold letters that the General Manager was Donald's mother.

None of us can know why they did this, but it feels to me like it could mean they were saying, "Okay, here's another timesheet, but you may want to check with all these employees and by the way Don's mother and look he's not on the schedule." That absolutely does not mean that that's true. That's just the impression that I got from it. So that made me look a little deeper into these timecards. First of all, why are there two? When I read Susan's blog, she had pointed out a couple of inconsistencies. For starters, and the most notable, Don's name is spelled differently on the two timecards. On the Owings Mills timecard, his name is listed as Don. But on the Hunt Valley timecard, his name is listed as Donald. Now that may not seem like a big deal, but these are computer generated timesheets, which means however your name is stored into the computer is how it's going to come out on your timesheet. So it almost looks like we're looking at timesheets from two different people. Susan had noted that the associate ID number on the two timesheets were different. On the Owings Mills timesheet, Don is listed as associate number 0162. But in the Hunt Valley timesheet, his associate ID number is listed as 0097. Well that definitely seems odd but it doesn't really say anything unless we know what those associate ID numbers mean. So my next step was to try to figure that out. Which I did.

But before I explain how, I want to point out a couple of other discrepancies. On the Owings Mills timecard, it says that Don worked 33 ½ hours during that week. And on the Hunt Valley timecard it says that he worked 12.2 hours that week at Hunt Valley. So that's 45.7 hours in total that week. Yet on the timesheet, there's a spot for regular hours, overtime hours, and total hours. Both timesheets list all of the hours as regular hours and zeros for overtime hours. So I found that odd as well. How did he work over 45 hours in a week and not get paid five hours' worth of overtime? So I thought maybe the pay between the two stores weren't connected. I considered the fact that LensCrafters may be a franchise, which for those of you that don't know the way a franchise works is, a corporation or an individual owns the store and they pay a franchise fee to the company they brought the franchise from. So if you work at that franchise location, your paychecks would come from the company that owns that location. So for example, and I don't even know if this is the case, but say McDonalds was a franchise, and I believe it is. If the McDonalds in your hometown was owned by ABC Incorporated, your paychecks would come from ABC Incorporated. They wouldn't come from one source that owns all the stores. The stores are individually owned. So this made some sense to me. But I had no confirmation of how that worked.

So I got on the phone with LensCrafters. I first called the Hunt Valley store to ask about some of these procedural things. They cut me off mid-sentence, said they were familiar

with the case and they're not to talk about it, that I would have to call corporate. Well it turns out that LensCrafters is a subsidiary of a larger corporation called Luxottica. Luxottica owns LensCrafters, Pearle Vision, Target Vision, several different vision places. So I called Luxottica and told them what I was looking for and they were happy to help and transferred me to the LensCrafters Division. Once on the phone with LensCrafters Corporate, I explained that I was researching this for the podcast and the gentleman I spoke with was happy to help. I explained to him the difference between the two timesheets. How the hours from one didn't carry over to the other. The names were spelled differently and both timesheets had a different employee ID number on them. What I was told by LensCrafters Corporate shocked me.

LensCrafters is not a franchise. They're corporate-owned, Luxottica Incorporated owns every store. All of the pay comes from the same location. He explained to me that the way that employees clocked in now and back in 1999 was they logged into a computer with their associate ID number. He said the associate ID number is their link to getting paid. I asked him if it was possible for an employee to have two different associate ID numbers if they worked at two different stores. And his answer was absolutely not. He said people bounce around from store to store all the time because they own all of the stores and they can do that. He said that it didn't matter which store you were working in. He gave the example that you could get transferred out to a store in Texas, and when you walked in on your first day, you would login to that computer with your associate ID number and clock in. And it would all still go to the same place.

I asked him if there was any reasonable explanation for one employee having two different associate ID numbers. And his exact words to me were, "If you're looking at two timesheets for the same employee with two different associate ID numbers on them, one of them has been falsified." I asked him again if there was any other possible explanation for this and he said, "Absolutely not." No employee can have more than one associate ID number.

I also asked him about the overtime and the hours being spread across two different timesheets. He again confirmed that these must be a forgery because you login with your employee ID number and every employee has one, no matter which store you work at, all of the hours will appear on the same timesheet and yes, anything over 40 hours would have been put into the overtime hours column. Don's entire alibi was wrapped up in this one piece of paper. It was just confirmed to be false.

### **[00:31:44] Checking Other Sources RE: Timesheet**

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After I got off the phone with LensCrafters Corporate, I wanted confirmation. I wanted to make sure that he wasn't just mixed up or confused about how things were done back then. So I reached out to two employees of LensCrafters that were both working on January 13, 1999. Both of them were managers. I first got ahold of the retail manager that was working on January 13, 1999. I explained to him who I was and that I was investigating this case. He remembered it right away. He said he remembered the situation and he said that he vaguely remembered Don and from what he could remember he seemed like a nice enough kid.

And then I asked him about the procedures with the timesheets. Again I asked him, “Would it be possible for one employee to have more than one associate ID number?” And he confirmed that no, he had worked for LensCrafters for a long time and had worked at several different locations and he only had one associate ID number. He also told me that during that time, he would bounce from store to store. And yes, the way that you clocked in was to login to the computer at the store you’re working at with your associate ID number and log your hours. He pointed out that he was management and was salary, so he didn’t time stamp when he came in and out, he just had to enter his hours. But for the hourly employees, the process was the same. And of course I asked him if he remembered if Don worked that and of course he couldn’t remember from sixteen years ago.

So then I asked him, “Would it be possible with a computer-based system like this, to go back in and change the hours on a timesheet from weeks or months before?” And this was his response, verbatim, “His mother was the general manager and yes, she could have made the changes.” Now I want to point out that I didn’t ask him if Don’s mom could’ve made the changes. I just asked if it was possible for anyone to make the change. And that was his response. That it could only be done by the manager. And the manager was Don’s mom.

So after him, I got ahold of the lab manager that was working on the day Hae went missing. As a point of reference, Don was the lab tech, so this would have been his boss on the day if he was there. I asked the lab manager if he remembered if Don was there and just like the other manager, he couldn’t remember that far back. But again, he said that he did remember the situation. So I asked the lab manager a series of questions. I again asked if he would confirm that the way employees clocked in and out was using computers with their associate ID. He confirmed that yes, that’s how it’s done.

I also asked him if he knew how the employee ID numbers were assigned. I wanted to know if they were like most places where the numbers are sequential based on hired date, meaning that if I get hired in January and I’m employee number 52, and you get hired a week later, your employee number is 53. He said that he’s not positive but he’s fairly certain that the employee ID numbers were sequential. And the reason that I asked that was this: I had compared Don’s timesheet to his mother’s timesheet for the same period. The timesheet that showed that Don was working at Hunt Valley on the 13<sup>th</sup> says he was associate ID number 0097. Don’s mother’s timesheet shows her associate ID as 0110. So Don’s mother, the general manager, who had presumably worked there for years, her associate ID number was number 110. Whereas Don who had only been working there for two years, his associate ID number was number 97, an earlier number than mom’s.

Now, again, I want to point out that this lab Supervisor did not confirm that that’s the way the associate ID Numbers are assigned. He said he’s not positive, but he believes that’s the way they were done. Which to put into perspective, Don’s actually associate ID number listed on his timesheet from his normal store was number 162. The last question that I asked the lab supervisor was, “Can you think of any possible reasonable, innocent explanation as to why these two timecards would have the different ID numbers?” And his answer was, “No, I can’t think of any explanation for different ID numbers.”

So if you're keeping track, that's three sources: LensCrafters Corporate, the retail supervisor that was working on the day of the crime, and the lab supervisor that was working on the day of the crime. All three say that there is no reasonable explanation as to why these two timesheets for Don would have different associate ID numbers. And again, I'll remind you of the quote from the rep at LensCrafters Corporate. "If those two timesheets are supposed to be for the same person and have different ID numbers on them, one of them has been falsified."

But I didn't stop there. As I mentioned way back when this show began, my method of investigating is once I have a theory, to search for evidence that might contradict the theory. So the next thing I did was look at the employee's schedules. Now obviously Don is not on the schedule for January 13<sup>th</sup> in Hunt Valley. His statement was that he was covering for a shift for someone there. But it's important to note that on these schedules, there are handwritten notes all over them. You can see where people didn't show up to work or needed to change their schedule because there's handwritten notes on the schedule to change them. But on Wednesday the 13<sup>th</sup> there were two lab techs scheduled to work that day. One of them was scheduled to work from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. The other was scheduled to work from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. Don's alibi and his timesheet say that he was working from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. because he was covering someone else's shift. The question is: whose shift was he covering for? There is no one scheduled to work from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Not just on January 13<sup>th</sup>, but not any day that week other than Friday. But the important date is the day in question on the 13<sup>th</sup>, there was no shift scheduled for Don to cover for that day.

For the record, I did try to get a hold of Don and I actually did make contact with him and he responded to me. I told him that I wanted to get his side of the story. That there were some abnormalities and come concerns with these timesheets and I wanted to know if there was a reasonable explanation. And he declined to talk to me. My intention going into this was to spend one short episode on Don. Find some witnesses, fill in the gaps that were missing, and move on from Don. But at this point, I haven't even begun to scratch the surface. Moving forward from here, until I find answers, this investigation will continue.

## **[00:38:18] Credits**

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Next week on *The Serial Dynasty* we'll be continuing this investigation.

I want to thank [Jonny Rose of Slightly Subversive Music](#) for creating all of the music for the show.

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I want to thank all of you again for listening. And remember if you want to send in any thoughts or theories to me, you can reach me at [theories@SerialDynasty.com](mailto:theories@SerialDynasty.com). You can catch me on Twitter [@SerialDynasty](https://twitter.com/SerialDynasty).

And for those of you that don't have a Twitter, you should take a few minutes and create one. It's a good quick way to keep in touch and also Twitter is linked to a newer app called Periscope, where I can live stream video and answer questions in real-time. I haven't set a date to do this yet but it's something that I'm considering. So if you're interested in participating in a Periscope with me, shoot me a message and let me know.

For now, I'm signing off and until next week, this has been *The Serial Dynasty*.

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Transcription by

