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MOSKÖ

REMA

EYEWITNESS

Revised
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A docu-drama series
for television

Script by
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EDITION NO. 1

- An airliner crashes
- A man charged with prostitution
- Karen Quinlan: life or death
- Four assassins speak

OSWALD

OSWALD

1. STUDIO

(The camera cuts to a different angle of the EDITOR in the control booth.)

EDITOR

We turn now to four people: Lee Harvey Oswald, who assassinated President John Kennedy; Sirhan Sirhan, who killed presidential candidate Robert Kennedy; Arthur Bremer, who attempted to kill President Nixon and succeeded in shooting presidential candidate George Wallace; and Sarah Jane Moore, who tried to shoot President Ford. Four puzzling and enigmatic figures.

What in the lives of these people led them to inflict such scars on American history? Thousands of words have been written on the subject. But the most revealing are those of the assassins themselves. Perhaps it's time we listened to them.

2. STUDIO

(The camera cuts to a close-up showing pages of the writings of Oswald, Sirhan, Bremer, and Moore.)

EDITOR (voice over)

Their thoughts, jotted ungrammatically in diaries or transcribed from spoken statements, show the assassins' motives were a confusion of irrational perceptions that seem bizarre--and rational resentments and frustrations familiar to each of us. On occasion, everyone of us might feel the same anger they felt, directed at men of power and prominence.

But not everyone picks up a gun. Why these four did may be clearer after we have listened to what they have to say.

3. STUDIO

(EDITOR lays some photostats of handwritten sheets on the desk. The camera zooms in on the diary pages.)

EDITOR

Moscow. October, 1959. A young American arrives on a tourist visa that will expire in five days. In the solitude of his hotel room he records his thoughts in a diary that will become important some four years later. These are the words of Lee Harvey Oswald.

(The camera holds on the diary pages as Oswald's voice is heard.)

OSWALD (voice over)

~~October 16. Arrive from Helsinki by train, am met by Intourist representative. And in car to Hotel "Berlin."~~

4. OSWALD'S HOTEL ROOM

(Scene dissolves to close-up of Oswald's handwriting in diary on desk. Camera pulls back to reveal OSWALD talking as he writes.)

OSWALD

Registered as "student"--5-day luxury tourist ticket. Meet my Intourist guide Rimma.

5. HOTEL LOBBY *Room*

(RIMMA looks at OSWALD in amazement and tries to explain.)

OSWALD

I explain to her that I wish to apply for Russian citizenship. She is flabbergasted, but agrees to help.

6. USSR GOVERNMENT OFFICE

(A stout, bald man in a black suit sits at a plain table covered with papers. He is shaking his head with a scowl. Pictures of Krushchev and Lenin on an ochre wall.)

OSWALD (voice over)

October 21, morning. Meeting with single official. Balding, stout, black suit, fairly good English, asks what do I want? I say Soviet Citizenship. He asks why. I give vague answers about "great Soviet Union." He tells me U.S.S.R. only great in literature. Wants me to go back home. I am stunned. I reiterate. He says he shall check and let me know whether my visa will be extended. It expires today.

7. OSWALD'S HOTEL ROOM

(The door to the hallway is open. OSWALD'S face has a stunned expression as he receives a written notice from a uniformed POLICE OFFICIAL.)

OSWALD (voice over)

Evening, 6 o'clock. Receive word from police official. I must leave the country tonight at 8 o'clock p.m., as the visa expires. I am shocked!! My dreams!

(The POLICE OFFICIAL leaves. OSWALD slams the door and thrashes about his room. He looks at the clock, checks his visa, counts his money--all with a desperate violence.)

OSWALD (voice over)

I have \$100 left. I have waited for 2 years to be accepted. My fondest dreams are shattered because of a petty official, because of bad planning. I planned so much! ~~7~~ 7 o'clock p.m. I decide to end it!

(He disappears through the bathroom door. The sound of water running is heard.)

OSWALD (voice over)

Soak wrist in cold water to numb the pain. Then slash my left wrist. Then plunge wrist into bathtub of hot water.

I think, "When Rimma comes at 8 to find me dead, it will be a great shock."

8. OSWALD'S HOTEL BATHROOM

(Close-up of OSWALD'S arm plunges into bathtub full of water, which turns red. OSWALD'S arm dangles in the water. A violin is heard playing in another room.)

OSWALD (voice over)

Somewhere, a violin plays as I watch my life whirl away. I think to myself, "How easy to die" and "a sweet death (to violins)."

9. OSWALD'S HOTEL BATHROOM

(RIMMA enters. She screams and tries to drag him out of the tub. Then she runs for help.)

OSWALD (voice over)

About 8 o'clock Rimma finds me unconscious. The bathtub water is a rich red color. She screams--I remember that--and runs for help. An ambulance comes; am taken to hospital where five stitches are put in my wrist.

10. HOSPITAL BED

(Close-up of OSWALD'S handwriting. His left wrist is bandaged. Camera pulls back to reveal RIMMA sitting in a chair against a white curtain.)

OSWALD (voice over)

Poor Rimma stays by my side as interpreter--my Russian is still very bad--far into the night. I tell her, "Go home." My mood is bad. But she stays. She is "my friend." She has a strong will. Only at this moment I notice she is pretty.

11. USSR GOVERNMENT OFFICE

(Green walls. Soviet flag. A group of three officials at a long table. OSWALD sits facing them.)

EDITOR (voice over)

After his recovery, Oswald is granted a hearing at the passport registration office.

OSWALD (voice over)

They ask me about the lone official with whom I spoke in the first place. Apparently he did not pass along my request at all, but thought to simply get rid of me by not extending my Soviet visa at the time I requested it. I describe him. They make notes. What papers do you have to show who and what you are? I give them my discharge papers from the Marine Corps. They say, "Wait for our answer." I ask, "How long?" "Not soon." Later Rimma comes to check on me. I feel insulted and insult her.

12. OSWALD'S ROOM

(OSWALD writes at a table. Dirty plates are stacked on a tray.)

OSWALD (voice over)

October 29. Hotel room 214, Metropole Hotel. I wait. I worry. I eat once. Stay next to phone. Worry. I keep fully dressed.

13. OSWALD'S ROOM

(Another view of the hotel room, three days later. It is in some disarray.)

OSWALD (voice over)

Hotel Room. I have been in hotel three days. It seems like three years. I must have some sort of a showdown!

(OSWALD continues writing.)

14. U.S. CONSUL'S OFFICE

(OSWALD sits beside Consul SNYDER's desk. SNYDER handles OSWALD's passport)

EDITOR (voice over)

The next day Oswald decides to dissolve his U.S. citizenship. He goes to the American embassy, and speaks to Head Consul Richard Snyder.

OSWALD (voice over)

*POSSIBLY
CUT.*

~~Snyder takes down personal information, asks questions, warns me not to take any steps before the Soviets accept me, says I am a "fool," and says the dissolution papers are a long time in preparing. In other words, refuses to allow me at that time to dissolve U.S. Citizenship. // I state,~~

~~"My mind is made up. From this day forward I consider myself no citizen of the U.S.A." I spend 40 minutes at the Embassy before Snyder says, "Now unless you wish to expound on your Marxist beliefs you can go." "I wish to dissolve U.S. citizenship." "Not today," he says in effect. I leave the Embassy, elated at this showdown. Returning to my hotel I feel now my energies are not spent in vain. I'm sure the Russians will accept me after this sign of my faith in them"~~

15. OSWALD'S HOTEL ROOM

(The door of hotel room. There is a knock. OSWALD opens it, and reporter GOLDSTEIN asks him questions.)

OSWALD (voice over)

2:00; A knock. A reporter by the name of Goldstein wants an interview. I'm flabbergasted: "How did you find out?" "The Embassy called us," he said. I send him away. I sit and realize this is one way to bring pressure on me, by notifying my relations in the U.S. through the newspapers, although they would say "it's for the public record."

16. HOTEL

(Another angle of door. OSWALD opens it. MISS MOSBY stands in the hall.)

OSWALD (voice over)

A half hour later another reporter, Miss Mosby, comes. I answer a few quick questions after refusing an interview. I am surprised at the interest. I get phone calls from TIME. At night, a phone call from the States. I refuse all calls without finding who it's from. I feel non-plussed because of the attention. 10:00 I retire.

POSSIBLE
CUT

17. OSWALD'S HOTEL ROOM

(OSWALD is on phone.)

OSWALD (voice over)

November 1. More reporters, 3 phone calls from brother and mother. Now I feel slightly exhilarated, not so lonely.

18. OSWALD'S HOTEL ROOM

(OSWALD stares out window)

OSWALD (voice over)

November 2 to 15. Days of utter loneliness. I refuse all reporters, phone calls. I remain in my room. I am racked with dysentery.

19. OSWALD'S HOTEL ROOM

(Close-up of OSWALD writing in his diary.)

OSWALD (voice over)

January 4. I am called to passport office and finally given a Soviet document.

20. USSR GOVERNMENT OFFICE

(RUSSIAN OFFICIAL hands OSWALD a document. They talk.)

OSWALD (voice over)

Not the Soviet citizenship, as I so wanted, only a residence document. Not even for foreigners, but a paper called "for those without citizenship." Still I am happy. The official says they are sending me to the city of Minsk. I ask, "Is that in Siberia?" He only laughs.

21. TRAIN CAR

(Close-up of OSWALD writing a letter to his mother.)

OSWALD (voice over)

January 7. I leave Moscow by train for Minsk, Bylorussia. My hotel bill was 2200 rubles and the train ticket to Minsk 150 rubles, so I have a lot of money--hope. I wrote my brother, mother letters in which I said, "I do not wish to ever contact you again. I am beginning a new life, and I don't want any part of the old."

POSSIBLE
CWT

22. TRAIN WINDOW

(Close-up of OSWALD staring out window. EDITOR's voice resumes. Then the scene returns to the EDITOR in the control room.)

23. STUDIO

EDITOR

Two and a half years later Oswald, with his Russian wife, Marina, and their baby, left the Soviet Union for the United States. His life for the next 18 months followed many twists and turns. He visited Cuba. He held several jobs. He participated in protests against American foreign policy. He moved to Dallas, Texas. Throughout 1963 an FBI agent had been keeping an eye on his wife, Marina. In November, she was called in for questioning, and the experience upset her. Later Oswald appeared at FBI headquarters and left a letter in which, apparently, he threatened to take action if he was not left alone.

(Behind the EDITOR, the tv monitors show film clips of the JFK assassination and the murder of OSWALD.)

EDITOR

A few days later, at 1:33 p.m. on November 22, 1963, from a warehouse window, Oswald took aim across Dealey Plaza at a presidential motorcade. Firing with speed and accuracy that many find incredible, he shot and killed President John F. Kennedy. Some 48 hours later, while in police custody, he was himself gunned down. Oswald's threatening letter was destroyed by the FBI a few days later. Any other full explanation of his motives may have died with him.

COPY - SYLVIA MEAGHER

ABOUT EYEWITNESS

Eyewitness is a 90-minute docu-drama pilot which will reenact a variety of news stories and events drawn from authenticated documents. It is a joint production of KERA-TV (Dallas) and Thomas McCann & Associates. The program will be produced during June, July and August, 1976, and will be ready for airing in September over the Public Broadcasting System. The pilot program will consist of seven segments which will include the recreation of tape-recorded conversations, courtroom transcripts and the recreation of diaries.

One of the major segments in the pilot will deal with the case of Karen Ann Quinlan, the young woman terminally ill and in a coma who made medical-legal history recently when a New Jersey court ruled that her doctors, the hospital and her guardians are not subject to either civil or criminal prosecution provided the attending physicians and a hospital ethics committee agree that there is no reasonable possibility that she will return to a cognitive, sapient state. The case is a deeply moving, personal tragedy and also one involving significant legal, medical and ethical issues and is a test case for euthanasia.

The Eyewitness concept is a development of Thomas McCann and Associates of Boston and the pilot will be produced for KERA-TV by the McCann firm which also produced the highly successful "Watergate Cover-up Trial" broadcast over many PBS stations earlier this year.

Directing the Eyewitness pilot will be Webster Lithgow who, together with McCann, produced the award winning docu-drama, "The White House Transcripts," which brought to life for millions of Americans the most significant portions of the historic tapes made by former President Richard Nixon. "The White House Transcripts" was originally produced for CBC and later successfully syndicated in the United States.

The Eyewitness programs will dramatically reenact a wide variety of current news stories and events and we will draw only on authenticated documents which tell a significant story that has not been fully treated by conventional media.

It is anticipated that the Eyewitness series will be produced on a monthly basis with each program being 60 minutes in length and containing an average of four segments. The segments will be drawn from stories and events in the fields of government, medicine, crime, law enforcement, politics, international affairs and science.