

Chelise Ann Cole - Deyahn - Marge Kirkpatrick - 7/2/68

Q Sunday, June 30.. Am I right?

A. Hmm. June 30.

Q. Can we get a little bit closer?

A. UmHm.

Q. Can you say you name so I'll be able to check the level on it.

A. It's Chelise Ann Cole.

Q. Coles? C O L E S/

A. Cole.

Q. Cole. Now we're going to check the level, Chelise Ann.

Now, just in your own way, Chelise Ann, say what you started to tell me before. It was in the summer -

A. It was in the summer, and I think I was in the 11th or 12th grade. I was in the 12th grade. I'd just started.

Q. By the way, where are we? Put the location down.

A. Man - Mandeville, La.

Q. And we're at the gas - Cono

A. Conoco Service Station.

Q. Owned by your -

A. Nick Case's Conoco(?)

Q. Go ahead.

A. I met this boy or man or whatever you want/- ^{to call him} I just don't know exactly how old he was - but he asked me out and I introduced him to my grandmother because I was living with my grandmother - so we supposed to go out to dinner. And then we went out to dinner and he got a telephone call. He says, would you mind - I can't bring you home, but would you mind going with me? So at least, you know, I - I didn't pay too much attention, so I says, all right. So we went up towards Lacombe. We turned off - he said, he said - when we started to turn off ~~xxxxxxx~~ on this dirt road, then he stopped. He said - he handed me a gun. He said, ~~now~~ you hold this, and if the FBI stops us, stop screaming and crying and ~~they'll~~ I'll take you home. I says, wait a minute. I don't want to go. He says, it's too late now. We're too far from home. I said, we don't have to worry about me making believe I was going to cry and scream cause, boy, I really coulda done some screaming.

Q. Who was this boy, by the way?

A. His real name - he call - he told me his name was Richard Davis. But in the paper that wasn't the name that was given.

Q. What name was given?

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A. I don't remember. But anyway -

Q. Can you describe him?

A. Yes, well, he was -

Q. Was he a boy or was he a man?

A. He was a man. He must have been at least 27. Or maybe older.

Q. Right.

A. Yes. But he was - well, I'm 5 foot 7. He was about 3 or 4 inches taller than I.

Q. You weren't 5 foot 7 then.

A. Yes. I've been the same size since I was -

Q. Okay. Did he speak with an accent?

A. Who? The man? Yes.

Q. Yes. Just a little trace of a Spanish accent?

A. Yes. Yes. My grandmother noticed that, too.

Q. Did anybody ever call him Ricardo?

A. No, I've never met any of the people. Nobody spoke Spanish but he spoke Spanish -

Q. How did you meet him?

At. At the Frost Top where I worked. Frost Top. Kern's Frost Top.

Q. Are the people still there who owned it?

A. No, Mr. Kern - he's been out of business about a year or maybe better -

Q. Do you know where I could find him?

A. He was supposed to open a business in New Orleans.

Q. What was his first name?

A. Rudy? Rudy Kern?

Q. Do you remember his name, Jimmy?

J. Who - yes; Ruby.

A. Ruby?

Q. Ruby Kern.

A. Ruby or Rudy. I don't know which.

Q. Let me turn it down just a minute.

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Q. What kind of a pistol did Richard give you?

A. Well, I don't know too much about guns, but it wasn't a long one. It was a little short one. It would have fit in just good in my hand. It had a -

Q. Automatic pistol or revolver?

A. It was ^{n't} automatic, so I guess you'd call it a revolver.

Q. Right.

A. Well, I took it, and I spread my dress open and I put it under my dress like this and put my hand through the trigger and sat there and prayed and we drove and we drove and - I ~~was~~ didn't know they had that many little dirt roads in LeCombe.

Q. Could you find it?

A/ No. No, sir, I couldn't -

Q. Do you know anybody who could?

A. I - I really don't know. But -

Q. Jimmy, do you know any young men who might?

A. Now, Jimmy didn't know that it was there. Matter of fact, I think I was about the only one in Mandeville at the time.

Q. That's right.

A. And so - finally we get to this old -

Q. Excuse me. Let me ask you a question. Is there a swimming pool there?

A. I don't know. It was dark - it was at night when we was there. I was really just frightened. I was - what really frightened me was we were just coming down this last little dirt road, two men - 17, 18, maybe older, maybe younger, cause I was scared - jumped out in front of us with these great big guns. Looked like machine guns to me because they were so big; poked them in our noses, and they spoke Spanish and the boy spoke Spanish. You know, when he spoke to them. None of them had shirts on but they had those belts that went like this with the bullets in them?

Q. Umhm.

A. And uh - so he - they he drove and they let us pass. Well, we drove on and we came to this old wooden house with a bunch of windows in it, and
o it was - there were no curtains up and I could just see lots, lots, lots of boys in there, just walking around, you know, and when we drove up there was a bunch more of these guys came out with these guns poking them in our noses, you know, so I was - I was just terrified.

Q. Now, let me ask you about that house. Was it an old kind of rundown house?

A. Yes, it was. Real long.

Q. Did you go into it?

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A. No, sir.

Q. Did you notice - was it light enough so you could notice whether the screens were in bad shape?

A. Some of the windows didn't have screens.

Q. And how about some of those that did; did you notice - did it have a screened porch on it?

A. I don't know; I don't remember. All I remember is seeing is the side of a house, it was real long, and I was looking at the windows because when Richard got out of the car - he told me his name was Richard -

Q. You've got a ... he was the man in charge of that camp.

A. Oh. That's his real name?

Q. I've spoken to him. That's his real name.

A. He had a scar on his face.

Q. A scar where?

A. On his face some place. I don't remember where, but I remember -

Q. Was it near an eye?

(Glenda?)

A. Yes, it was. Wasn't it, ...?

A2.

~~Qx~~ Near the bridge(?).

Q. Do you remember Richard, Glenda?

A2. Uhhuh.

A. Yes, he come back looking for me.

Q. Come on in closer so the microphone will pick you up, too, then I won't have to remember what you say. Don't be afraid. It won't hurt you.

A2. No, Uh - uh - I mean, I just met the boy, you know -

Q. Come on in. Don't be afraid. This is Lynda, Chel - It's my sister,

A. ~~That's~~ Glyndia

Q. Lyndia.

A. Glyndia. G L Y N D I A. Glyndia Case.

Q. Would you move over just a little bit so Glyndia can sit down. The microphone will pick it up better if she's closer to you. Now, you said you met Richard once?

A2. Well, I just talked to him -

Q. You saw him.

A². I just saw him.

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Q. Now between the two of you, tell me what he looked like. Uh -

A. Very dark complected -
A2 Tall

Q. Cuban?

A. I guess you'd call him Cuban or Spanish or something like that.

Q. He was only half Cuban.

A. Oh, I see. He didn't - he had real dark brown eyes.

A2. He was very well dressed, too.

A. Very well dressed. Very, very polite. Nice, nice manners.

Q. Smooth way of talking?

A. Very, very.

Q. Now, what were you saying about how he dressed?

A2. He was well dressed, in suits, every time I seen him.

Q. Was he dressed in a business suit every time you - did you see him also at the Frost Top?

A. We used to pick her up, you know, just at night, downtown.

A2. One time at the Tastee-Freez.

A. Yes. And this was about a year later, we took over at

A2. The Tastee-Freez.

A. He come back. I was married, and I was home. I wasn't feeling - him and some other ... had come back and he asked for me, and mama wouldn't tell him where I lived and I wouldn't talk to him because I was afraid -

Q. At that time you knew about the camp.

A. The next day I knew about the camps. Well, after -

Q. You mean the next day - the day of the raids?

A. Yes, sir. Because that was what the telephone call was. He told me -

Q. Excuse me. What telephone call?

A. One that he had gotten for us to - when we went up there.

Q. Before he picked you up, he had just gotten a telephone call.

A. I imagine so.

Q. Because when he - he told you about this telephone call, in other words.

A. Yes.

Q. Go ahead.

A. Well, anyway, when we was up there -

Q. What did he say, by the way? About the telephone call. Is there anything you can remember at all?

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- A. ... No, we didn't talk much about that, you know, uh, he was just very polite, and we talked about different -
- Q. Did he seem impatient or in a hurry to get there?
- A. Yes, sir. When we was on our way there, he was in a hurry.
- Q. What kind of a car did he have?
- A. What kind of a car. I don't remember. It was nice, I remember that, but that's all. I don't remember the color or anything. It wasn't a real new car -
- A2. No, it wasn't a new car.
- Q. Did it have La. tags?
- A. I really don't know.
- Q. Okay.
- A. I don't know.
- Q. That's all right. Go ahead.
- A. Well, then, after that he went inside and he talked to these men and then he come back and he, uh -
- Q. Talked to the men ^{at} ~~inside~~ this house.
- A. Yes. He went inside and I locked all the doors -
- Q. Let me interrupt you for just a minute. Was this house in a grove of pine trees?
- A. Uh, it was just in the middle of a woods. I don't know what kind of trees you want to call it, but -
- Q. You took so many twists and turns on this road to get there you haveno way of knowing how to get there now.
- A. No, sir. I don't even know -
- Q. Can you remember where you ~~where~~ started - turned off of what road? What is the identification of this road?
- A. Was it past Big Branch? It was past Lecombe. It was somplace around LeCombe because I ~~remember~~ remember the town of Lecombe.
- Q. This side of Lecombe or the other? Now, let me ask you -
- A. It was close - it was after we passed Lecombe.
- Q. Was it toward the causeway from Lecombe?
- A. No. Sort of towards Slidell.
- Q. Towards Slidell from Lecombe.
- A. Umhm.

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- Q. Now, you know, if you're coming this way from the causeway, there's a sign says Big Branch. Is it this side of that sign on the other side of the road, the side you're on now?
- A. I really couldn't give you accurate answer -
- Q. Now you see what I'm trying to do. The reason I interrupt you is to try and get the location as good as we can. Now, girls don't walk in the woods like boys do, but maybe Jimmy will hear this and maybe he'll know. You know where the state hospital is.
- A2. I worked there.
- Q. You worked there. You know where there's a food warehouse behind - what might be a food warehouse - and behind that a firebreak, Jimmy? You know what I mean by a firebreak? The place where they got a patch of trees cut off so if the woods ever catch fire it'll be hard to jump it? Well, if you don't know, that's all right. I just wanted to ask you cause that would help me locate it.
- A. ...
- Q. Well, now, you got to the house and he went in and you said they closed all the doors.
- A. No, well, they couldn't close much. There was so many windows I could see inside.
- Q. Yes.
- A. I didn't see him - you know, he must have been inside talking to somebody I figured that -
- Q. Could you hear the talk?
- A. I could hear everybody talk, I couldn't hear -
- Q. But it was Spanish, you couldn't understand it.
- A. I couldn't understand a word of it. And one guy stayed by the car with me, I guess so I wouldn't get out and run away because if they'd a let me, I would have.
- Q. Was he white or black?
- A. No, these were all Spanish fellows. They looked Spanish to me.
- Q. Did you see any men who could have been Negroes?
- A. Not - not -
- Q. In the dark it would be hard to tell, I realize that.
- A. Not to my memory.
- Q. What time of the night was it? 9 o'clock? 8 o'clock?
- A. We got home a little after 10 or 10:30.
- Q. You mean after it was all over, it was 10 or 10:30. He took you right home.

- A. Yes, he took me right home. Cause he told me - well, after he says - when he comes back and I asked him, says, what is going on? I wanted to know. And he says, well, he couldn't tell me anything, so uh - I just wanted to go home - right - right home. That's where I wanted to go. But he did. I can't remember exactly how he said it, but I did know, he said something - he was talking to me or was talking to himself but I didn't ask any more questions and he didn't talk much, either. But I do know he said something about he had to go back 'cause he had to go get a schoolbus from a friend - a bus; he didn't say schoolbus, I just said that, but a bus. And then I did. I said, what do you want a bus for? He said, to move the boys. And - so I didn't ask any more questions, and that was it. So he brought me home, ... we had a swimming date. I told my grandmother, I said, I told mama, I said, Mama, I hope he never comes back, but I wouldn't tell them why, because my parents are real old-fashioned and funny, you know.
- Q. Where did you used to go swimming?
- A. We used to go out here in the lake. And -
- Q. Was there a bridge on that lake or did you cross a bridge going to that camp? to the camp where the men were?
- A. Not on dirt roads.
- Q. Okay.
- A. I might have - we might have. I was -
- Q. Continue in your own words.
- A. And uh - so he never did come back. So the next day, mama said, Chelise Ann, did you read this? I said, read what, mother? She showed it to me and I just went all to pieces and told mother - cause I didn't tell th - I wasn't going to tell anybody. I was scared.
- Q. What did you read?
- A. It was just in the paper that in - I don't remember where they picked him up - but I remembered what he had said about the bus and the Cuban boys, and then reading in the paper that they had picked these boys up and what it was for and everything and I -
- Q. What paper was that?
- A. The Times-Picayune.
- Q. Right. Go ahead.
- A. And uh - that's about it. And then about a year later I - I was married and I was pregnant with my first child -
- Q. What is your last - what is your husband's name?
- A. Steve Cole.
- Q. C O L E S.
- A. No. C O L E.
- Q. C O L E. And what was your maiden name?

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A. Necaise.

Q. Would you spell that?

A. N E C A I S E.

Q. Well, go ahead. A year later, Ricardo Richard came back -
he come back - and

A. And so, he come over to the Tastee-Freez - well, he must have asked, that's how he found out we was over there; but anyway, he asked for me, and I believe my sister said he had two other gentlemen with him, and he asked where was I and where could they find me. And Glyndia wouldn't tell them and mama wouldn't tell them, so right away they called me up on the telephone and they said -

Q. How'd they know how?

A. Me? My mother?

Q. No. Oh, you mean your mother called.

A. Yes. Mother called. And she said - told me that Richard was looking for me. I said, well, mama, don't tell him where I am because I'm scared to death, you know, I didn't want to - because I didn't ~~know what~~ want to see him, because I didn't know what ~~their intentions~~ - what they were going to - you know, their intentions may have been just marvelous but I was - I was just too scared cause after all that had happened, I thought he went to jail or something, but apparently he didn't and - cause he was driving the bus if I'm not mistaken. I believe he was driving the bus.

Q. Uh - when did he come with the bus, do you know, do you remember what the paper said or what the people said?

A. No, I - they left that night, I think. I'm no - you know, I'm not sure, it was an awful long time ago.

Q. Right.

A. I have very poor memory. But I remember that much of it cause that'll stay with me in my mind for the rest of my life. Nobody knows how terrified I was.

Q. Do you remember about when you first met Richard? This ~~will~~ will help me place the period of time he was in this neighborhood. You see, he's not from around here at all.

A. I thought he's from the city.

Q. He's not.

A. The impression I got was that he's a business man from New Orleans. that was my impression.

Q. How did you first meet him, do you know?

A. Uh, yes. It was at the Frost Top and I waited on him. And uh - I talk a lot, You know, just to customers - just friendly, you know. I started to light a cigarette, and he said, oh, no; ladies don't ever light cigarettes, and he took his cigarette lighter out and he lit it for me. And

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then we just sort of - you know, I commented on, you know, you don't see guys doing this for people any more, and we just started talking and he come back again and we talked, and I really liked him. He was so sweet and so kind, he -

- Q. He was very well-mannered.
- A. Oh, he was so polite. It was yes, mam, no mam, he'd stand up, open the doors, close the doors for you, fix the chairs, and - he was just something out of a storybook, you know, he was just real sweet -
- Q. Well, did he ask you to go out the first time or did he come back?
- A. He come back. And he asked me, you know -
- Q. How many times did he come back before he asked you to go out?
- I think
- A. I don't know if/~~the~~ it was the second time - the second or the third time.
- Q. And do you remember about how many times you migjt have gone out with him.
- A. Just once. That was the first time, and that was the last time.
- Q. You see what I'm trying to do, Glyndia, is trying to establish how long Richard could have been in this neighborhood. Now I know the date - I know the date that the men left; that was Aug. 1. The FBI got a whole bunch of munitions, you may remember, not far from here on July 31 and Richard told me once by telephone that when he found out about that he also got word to move the men out real quick and he did.
- A. Yes, he did. Cause, boy, I mean, he flew -
- Q. So, you see, we know the last date. That would have been the end of July or the first of August. Now, I'm trying to ask you to go back from that. You were out of school; you remember that.
- A. It was oduring summer time.
- Q. So we know it was after school closed. Now how long would you say after school closed was the first time you saw him? Or was the time he came to get the frozen custard?
- A. I'd say the end of July - the last part of July, because I believe it was in August I got sick and had to quit work.
- Q. In other words -
- A. So it had to be the middle or the end of July.
- Q. When he came back the second time was right close after the first time.
- A. Oh, yes. uh-huh.
- Q. Yes.
- A. Just maybe - I lose track of time. It may have been a day, or may have been two days later.

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Q. Yes. Afterwards, did you hear any talk about any of the girls going out with any of the boys from that camp? Did anybody ever see any -

A. No. none of the boys ever left that camp, I don't believe. Richard was the only one I would know who went in and out.

Q. Yes.

A. But I don't think ~~the~~ any of the boys ever left the camp. But I - one thing I remember the very most, it really frightened me to think I was in the middle of this, but I was looking at those boys - they all had on something like blue jeans, you know, and none of them had shirts on. It was real hot and the mosquitoes were terrible. I just couldn't understand it, how in ~~ga~~ the world they could of - without their shirts on. And they all, I think, very few of them didn't have uh - those gun straps -

Q. Bandoliers? Bandoliers of bullets -

A. Yes. I don't know what they call it -

Q. Yes.

A. - but they had those two straps -

Q. Straps.

A. - yes. Belts, like. But they all had big guns. I mean the first two who stopped us had great big old guns, and the rest of them just had, I called them rifles, -

Q. Yes.

A. I never seen so many guns in all my life. They was just all over the place. And I was - I was just frightened to death. Nobody knows how terrified I was. I was just frightened.

Q. How old were you then?

A. Let's see. I was about 18. I guess about 18. Wait a minute, I was 17.

Q. Anything else you can think of.

A. I don't think so.

Q. If you can remember, and I know that after all this time you might not remember clearly, about how long did it take you after you left the main road before you got to the camp?

A. About 15 minutes?

Q. It was that far off the main road.

A. Ye - it was real rough, and we couldn't go that fast, either. It was just bumpy, bumpy, bumpy, you know, - oh, and they were very narrow. Two cars couldn't have passed.

Q. Do you remember anything except they were dirt roads?

A. It was extremely dark and it was just a dir - I remember the dirt roads.

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The first road was a gravel road and we went off to a dirt road -

Q. Gravel or shell? Shells or stones?

A. Well, I - I'd say it's gravel cause all the roads up there are -

Q. No, they're all the same.

A. I'm pretty sure they aren't -

Q. Go ahead.

A. Mightn't - might not be.

Q. ~~XXXXXX~~ That's all right.

A. But uh - it was real holey - real dark and it was just - I didn't even know -

Q. Pass any houses?

A. Oh, heavens, no. If there was any out there, you sure couldn't see them.

Q. Was it all trees?

A. All trees, and underbrush^{rush}, and this road - and part of the road wasn't used because the underbrush still scraped, you know, the bottom of the car.

Q. Right. Now let me stop the tape recorder for a minute. I want to show you some pictures.

~~IM~~ I've just shown Chelise Ann a picture of a house in a woods, and the house has - it looks like a U-shaped house with a row of windows like from a screened-in porch in between them. As you look at it -

A. Excuse me one second. That house looks white. But the house I seen wasn't white.

Q. Do you remember what color it was? It was just dark.

A. It was just a dark color.

Q. Yes. Uh - and this house a lot of - it looks like it could be a screened-in porch, the picture's not clear enough - or windows. And as you look toward the back of the picture on the right-hand side near a large tree which is behind one edge of the house, it looks like what could be an opening that could be a road.

A. Yes.

Q. Now, I make it that you can't - that you don't think this is the house.

A. It could be. Because when you're afraid, you don't see much.

Q. Right. And you had no reason to remember this.

A. No. I - I - it's been a long time ago. But if this could be the place, now, because when we, when we come in, let's say we was coming in there, all these windows here remind me - npww here, just what it looked like - as far as these points and all this here, these roof points, I don't

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remember seeing that. But I could have - I could have missed an elephant standing right beside me - beside me because I was real afraid.

Q. Right. Now, do you remember you went in what looked like a front door or could it have been a back door?

A. I'll tell you the absolute truth about it, he got out of the car, shut the door, and I locked it, and ~~the man turned around and looked at me~~ I didn't even turn my head back. I didn't even follow him. So I wouldn't know if he went in -

Q. You locked the car from the inside.

A. Sure .m. can believe ~~the~~ I locked the car.

Q. How many locks?

A. just locked all the doors and just sat there and ...

Q. I understand ...

A. Cause I was afraid that ...

Q. Is there anything else at all that you can think of about this - you hold the microphone ...

A. I remember there was a lot of boys.

Q. ...

A. Well, I couldn't see ^{who had} one/~~that~~ stopped - there was two who had stopped us by the house, they couldn't have been over 18 or 19 years old. They was just awful young-looking for their age. And there was about 40, maybe 50, of them.

You think

Q. /There was that many - 40 or 50.

A. ~~Yes~~ Cause the house was big and they was just crowded in there.

Q. Uh, yes. Well, let me ask you this now, and I want to tell you what Richard told me. He said he had 27 men. Does that sound right?

A. It could have been.

Q. Did you see any trucks around there?

A. Uh -

Q. Any other vehicles of any kind?

A. I don't remember. I -

Q. Yes. Is there anything else you can think of that might have any value to have a record of for the future?

A. No, sir. I don't think there is.

Q. Well, have you heard any people talk about this since then?

A. No, s -

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Q. As though they knew anything about it. I know it was kept a big secret.

A. No.

Q. You know it, too.

A. No - well, afterwards, everybody was saying - well, I didn't know it was that bad; I never did tell anybody about it. Matter of fact, you're the first person I think I've ever told that I knew about it, and I didn't want any questions asked -

Q. If I were going to ask any people around here if they might know about it, is there anybody you think might know anything about it? You know, it's pretty remote -
town

A. There's the ~~LNE~~ police, you know, uh -

Q. Is there any policeman you know who's not afraid to talk?

A. Not really. No, all I could tell you is that Mr. Garrett, he's lived here - now Mr. ... I don't know if he was here or not -

Q. Who's Mr. Garrett?

A. Mr. Garrett. He's one of the - I don't know if he's still a policeman or not, but he used to be a policeman -

Q. ...

A. Mr. Alfred Knight. He lives here, yes.

Q. He's a policeman, too?

A. Yes. Well, /just part time, really.
he's not any more;

? No, he's not.

Q. Let me write this down. Just a minute. See what I mean.