## [00:00:00.712]

Hi, it's Phoebe here to say that we have some new merch up in the criminal store that you might like, there's a brand new hatchet baseball hat.

# [00:00:09.472]

I'll be wearing that. And we have a criminal water bottle. And there's also criminal T-shirts and sweatshirts. Lots of things. You can find out more by going to our website. This is criminal dotcom and clicking on shop. Thanks very much. Support for criminal comes from making amends. A new podcast series from the University of Washington. How do we atone for the worst thing we've ever done? Many people inside prison wrestle with this question every day, but their struggles and successes go unnoticed.

## [00:00:39.662]

Making amends follows prisoners who travel the path towards atonement and rehabilitation, despite an environment that chips away at their humanity from behind the bars. These are their stories. Find making amends wherever you get your podcasts. There's a Soviet short film from 1975 called Hedgehog in the Fog. It's only ten minutes long, it's been called the best animated film of all time. For the children. You're at your committee room, Texasville. And that was truly actually Russian animation is a kind of an art form.

## [00:01:22.652]

The cartoons there, they are made without the restrictions that your typical American cartoons are like. They don't have to be twenty six minutes long, you know, for space, for commercials. They don't have to have these continuation of a story once the episode is over.

### [00:01:39.152]

Back in the Soviet Russia, the cartoons were made purely as a way to sort of entertain the kids, of course, but also as a kind of as a kind of art. They were only as long as they needed to be the only told the story, the way it ought to be told without anything else. And I think people who have seen them, they would easily agree with my statements is really something to be seen and appreciated.

#### [00:02:09.392]

In May of 1928, Mickey Mouse was introduced by Walt Disney.

#### [00:02:14.402]

Within a few years, Disney animations were so popular that they were being shown around the world, including at a film festival in Moscow in 1933, Soviet viewers, including Joseph Stalin, fell in love.

#### [00:02:30.092]

The slogan Give US a Soviet Mickey Mouse became popular.

#### [00:02:34.172]

And three years later, in 1936, the animation studio so used moult film opened in Moscow.

#### [00:02:41.762]

A version of it still exists today, and many of the films are admired for their sophistication and lack of violence. As one director put it, in our films, there's always been less aggression.

#### [00:02:54.992]

We staked out all night on action, but on psychology, humor and a dialogue with the viewer.

#### [00:03:01.472]

It came out of the tradition of Russian folktales.

#### [00:03:06.422]

Hedgehog in the Fog follows a worried seeming hedgehog who gets lost in a thick fog. He's surprised by all of the animals he encounters highly.

## [00:03:20.492]

He writes a fish even by the end, when he's safe. It doesn't feel like a happy ending. Definitely not a Disney ending. In the final frames, the hedgehog is still anxious, it's slow and dreamlike and kind of scary. These films are brilliant and they're beautiful and they're very they're varied. I don't even know where to start.

# [00:03:50.372]

My name is Joan Boorstin, but I'm also known as John Borst and Veenhof Veto is the name of my late husband, who was the Robert Redford of Russia and defected in nineteen eighty five. Joan Boorstin, metabolic Vertov in Rome. She'd grown up in Los Angeles, but she'd gone to Rome to work as a journalist. Joan had arranged to stay temporarily with an American actor named Richard Harrison and his wife. When John arrived to his apartment, Oleg Vedova was already staying there.

#### [00:04:26.672]

She knew that he was an actor, but she remembers that the first time they met, he had such a terrible sunburn, she didn't understand how he could be famous.

## [00:04:36.142]

A few days later, when his sunburn faded, she realized how handsome he was. Jones says she wasn't looking for romance, but Olczyk followed her around. He wanted to tell her his life story, even though he didn't really speak English. When we asked how they fell in love, Jones said it just kind of happened. He convinced her to move back to Los Angeles where they got married. Oh, they found work in Hollywood.

# [00:05:06.362]

There were headlines everywhere. He was the first major Soviet actor ever to defect. However, Hollywood was still in the Cold War era, and most of the parts that were written were mean KGB officers. And my husband was a very good looking leading man. So the first role he did was in Arnold Schwarzenegger's red heat. And then he did Wild Orchid with Mickey Rourke. Later on, he did 13 days with Kevin Costner. But there weren't a lot of parts for actors who looked like Oleg and had a Russian accent.

#### [00:05:40.232]

After the Soviet Union dissolved and Gorbachev stepped down in 1991, all the evidence was worried about what would happen to the Animation's. He said Soviet cartoons had always been my weakness and now they were in danger of complete disappearance. Jones says he immediately got on a plane to Moscow and approached the heads of the animation studio. My husband had grown up on this beautiful kind Soviet animation and now he wanted to share it with the world. So five months later, in May of 1992, he sent me to Moscow by myself.

#### [00:06:16.252]

I didn't speak Russian. I had never been to Russia to negotiate a contract in a country that, you know, they hadn't even woken up from the Soviet era.

#### [00:06:26.272]

Jones says that working with a translator, she negotiated the rights to distribute a number of films outside the former Soviet Union. According to the BBC, they paid 500000 dollars for a 30 year contract.

#### [00:06:40.942]

They found that some of the films were very badly damaged and had been taped back together with Scotch tape.

#### [00:06:47.692]

The BBC reported that in some cases the films were in such bad shape that they cost 10000 dollars per frame to restore.

## [00:06:55.792]

Getting the rights wasn't the problem. The problem was that the Soviet Union put very little effort into keeping these films that were produced beginning in nineteen thirty six in good condition. So what we didn't know when we signed the contract was that we would have to digitally restore all the films, we would have to revoice them and we did it with famous American actors and we would have to do new music in some cases because the Russian language and the music was married together.

#### [00:07:31.402]

Jones says it was a monumental task, not to mention that a lot of the films were in violation of all kinds of copyright laws, which Joan and Oleg had to muddle through.

## [00:07:43.972]

The Soviet studio had used music and the stories from all over the world without permission, for instance, that use the love theme from The Godfather in a 1978 animation about a space alien.

# [00:07:58.002]

But I bet the people would love them was paying off the movies were picked up by HBO, Bravo and PBS. Jones says these English language dubbed versions were one aspect of the arrangement with the studio in Moscow, but there was another part to the deal. Joan and Oleg would also clean up the Russian language versions of the films. Jones says they invited one of the original guys from the Soviet animation house to come help with restoration's, and then they distributed them and sent a cut of the profits back to the studio in Moscow.

### [00:08:36.042]

They released a themed collection called Animated Soviet Propaganda. Jones says it was a huge hit in one of the cartoons called The Millionaire, an American woman leaves a million dollars to her bulldog. The dog lives on Fifth Avenue, eats steaks and eventually is elected to the Senate. The final scene shows the dog in a tuxedo standing on a pile of bags of money. The narrator says now that's what crooked money does. Jones says that right from the start, everything was more expensive and more complicated than they'd expected, the Russian government even tried to undermine the legitimacy of the deal.

#### [00:09:20.642]

Joan and Oleg pushed back and a U.S. federal court affirmed their right to distribute the film's. And then in December 2005, the shops who normally stop the Russian language films suddenly stopped ordering as much as they were before some stopped ordering altogether. It didn't seem likely that customers had suddenly lost interest. So Joan decided to go look around.

#### [00:09:48.802]

She visited a store in Studio City and claimed she was shopping for cartoons for her adopted Russian grandchild.

#### [00:09:56.032]

That wasn't a complete lie. Joan really was a grandmother. And on the shelves, she saw animations that she'd personally negotiated for in Moscow.

#### [00:10:06.252]

But they didn't look like the DVD she and Oleg were producing, the cases were different. The covers seem to be photocopied and the films were priced at ten dollars, about half what her sold for.

### [00:10:21.462]

When you found out that this was happening, did you go to the police, to the authorities?

#### [00:10:26.442]

No, because we'd already learned that we weren't Paramount studio. We weren't Colombia. They were going to do anything for us. It was just a small business, which is why I had to take things into my

own hands.

# [00:10:39.092]

She asked a Russian friend to drive around and buy all the animation DVD she saw.

#### [00:10:44.712]

The friend agreed and then told Joan that one shopkeeper had invited her to return in a few weeks because they were expecting a lot of new inventory.

### [00:10:54.852]

Joan decided she needed to find out who was behind this.

## [00:10:58.872]

So I started to search for the the big video pirate who was selling to all of the little stores in Los Angeles who didn't want to buy from us because our what we were selling them was more expensive, of course, than what he was selling them.

## [00:11:15.252]

So what did you decide to do?

### [00:11:18.492]

I decided to put together a team, a team of Russians.

## [00:11:24.102]

Some were actors. She wrote back stories for each of them. She asked one actress to play a woman named Natalia Natalia's backstory was that she and her husband were opening a Russian video store in Palo Alto.

## [00:11:38.342]

Natalia was described as a, quote, unscrupulous, hard edged businesswoman looking for bootleg tapes at the cheapest possible price. I wrote a script and I was on a mission. I was on a mission to find out who he was. I'm Phoebe Judge. This is criminal.

#### [00:12:08.252]

I'm a person who over my life, I have a history of taking situations I'm faced with into my own hands and taking the initiative to get things done. And this was one of those times. And at that point, I hired Jake Schmidt, who used to be a CIA guy in in Eastern Europe and now had a business in Los Angeles called Spy for Hire. And it to be honest, it sounded like it was just a small deal. Jake Schmidt, I was sort of dismissive, I think in my mind that this was a serious problem.

#### [00:12:42.962]

And I said, well, what do you want to do from here? Where do you want to go? And she explained that she wanted to start a full blown undercover operation with a buyer, someone posing as a buyer to try and make large scale purchases. It's like, OK, great, I could walk into this DVD store and buy a counterfeit copy or for counterfeit copies of different films. But she wanted to send somebody in to talk to the owners to say, hey, I'd like to buy 200 copies.

#### [00:13:13.292]

Where do you get your product from? So her plan was sound. I mean, that is the right way to do it.

### [00:13:20.852]

Jake Schmidt says Joan asked him to follow a Russian actress around and take pictures as the woman made conversation with shop owners. Joan gave them a list of stores, quite a list.

#### [00:13:31.522]

As I recall, there were 25 or 30 different stores on the list. I kind of winced, but I think she was smart enough to know what she wanted. And so we went around and hit at least a dozen at the stores. And

by then the girl that was walking in and documenting what the owners were saying kept hearing the same name, which was a guy we only had. The first name was Dimitri.

## [00:14:10.232]

We'll be right back. Support for criminal comes from progressive saving money on your car insurance is easy with progressive, it's an average savings of over seven hundred fifty dollars for customers who switch and save.

## [00:14:24.922]

In fact, customers can qualify for an average of six discounts on their auto policy with progressive discounts just for starting a, quote, online or having multiple vehicles on their policy. Get your quote online at progressive dotcom and see how much you could be saving national annual average auto insurance savings by new customers surveyed in 2019. Potential savings will vary. Discounts vary and are not available in all states and situations.

## [00:14:58.372]

Thanks to simply safe for their support, Simply Safe is an award winning 24/7 home security system was simply safe.

### [00:15:05.542]

There's no long term contract, no hidden fees or installation costs. And it's easy to customize. You can easily choose the exact sensors you need or get help from one of their experts.

## [00:15:16.192]

Plus, it's easy to set up yourself in less than 30 minutes, which I think is great right now. You can go to simply safe dot com slash criminal today to customize your system and get a free security camera that's simply safe. Dot com slash criminal today. Now that Joan Boorstin had a name, just a first name, Demitry, she said on the actress playing Natalia to try and get closer to Dimitri. Natalia using her story that she and her husband were opening a shop of their own in Palo Alto and seeking cheap DVDs, was able to get a phone number for Dmitry.

## [00:15:56.742]

Joan directed her to call and persuade him that she and her husband were serious and ready to buy. Now, it was time for the next phase of Jones plan. Natalia's husband or the man pretending to be Natalia's husband stepped in. His name was Andre and he did a really good job. Well, my name is Andre. I'm a software engineer by training located there in Southern California, Los Angeles. Why did she pick you? I just happened to speak Russian, she just needs somebody to be able to converse with them in Russian, that's all.

# [00:16:38.692]

Joe knew Andre violent because he'd gone to school with her stepson, Sergei. And even though Andre wasn't an actor, he agreed. What was your first impression of Joan? Oh, she's a very sharp lady, in my opinion. She could have been a senator if she wanted to, but she's very smart and she's very driven, like if she sets her goals on doing something so she can get it done. Andre called Dimitri and read him a list of titles he said he wanted to buy.

#### [00:17:11.912]

He says Dimitri told them to go to a Russian store in Rasheda on April 30th, 2006, to buy Russian books and souvenirs and to call him immediately after he left the store. Joan told Andre to go ahead and do it and to spend fifty dollars. At 130 on April 30th, Demitry called, wanting to know why Andre hadn't gone to the store yet. Andre said he'd be there in an hour. At the time, I just thought this is just a little favor that I'm doing for John and Aleg, and I didn't think much of it, it was just to help them do the right thing.

#### [00:17:54.772]

And frankly, I didn't even think of much of what the consequences of is going to be and what they're going to be the actual implications of actually having it done. But being pretty young at the time, I

thought of that. Right. What's the worst that could happen? When he got there, he told the store owner that Dmitri sent him. They talked and Andre told the story. Joan had written out for him that he was currently renting a shelf in an existing store in Palo Alto.

## [00:18:30.062]

The shopkeeper asked how much he was paying per square foot for the shelf and he had no idea what to say. He told the man he was paying 30 dollars per square foot.

## [00:18:43.712]

That number I came up with on the fly only because just a few days ago, I happened to talk with my cousin who was looking for some office space, and he mentioned something about 20 dollars per square foot.

### [00:18:56.222]

And so then I figured, well, OK, Palo Alto is a more expensive area. And so just to show, there is probably more than that.

## [00:19:01.622]

So I just cooked up 30 dollars per square foot of the bed.

## [00:19:06.992]

But really, if it wasn't for that, I remember thinking, well, how else would you come up with a number like that? You'd have to think about, OK, what is the square footage of your apartment, how much you're actually paying for it and, you know, divide one number by the other and then adjust for it being a business and so on, so forth.

### [00:19:22.862]

You could never say it's the right number, you know, in in mid-flight.

#### [00:19:28.442]

And I feel that well, you know, I almost got cut on that one. If it wasn't for my cousin's tip, this would have been ugly.

#### [00:19:37.932]

The man didn't say anything. They continue talking and Andre bought 12 sets of nesting dolls. He left the store and called Dimitri.

#### [00:19:48.372]

I was definitely a little nervous and. Part of it is because I've never done anything like this before, so I just had to call in and be in character and hope that he wouldn't probe me too much about Natalia, which was my pretend wife. So my initial instinct was essentially try to be, you know, friendly with the guy, because after all, we're trying to do business here and I'm trying to get him to buy into this whole scheme.

#### [00:20:22.162]

But he was getting more and more nervous, and I remember at some point feeling that this isn't going well. He's really looking for something to cut the conversation short and drop this whole thing.

#### [00:20:38.212]

And he just kept asking me these probing questions that were making me more nervous. And I could tell that he was getting more and more nervous himself.

#### [00:20:47.512]

And finally, I kind of I kind of realized that I need to get mad at this guy, that if I really was doing this for real, this is the point that I need to get mad at him. And mind you, not having had any sort of acting classes or any sort of experience doing this sort of thing, I was little. I was questioning myself, can I actually do this or not?

## [00:21:12.532]

But, you know, I took a breath and curse them out in Russian. The best I could remember. I don't remember exactly what I told them, but it was something in the order of, you know, having had enough my leash being jerked around and that we are going to do this or not. And let's stop wasting my time.

## [00:21:31.792]

And I remember that as soon as I said that, it immediately sold it to him like he that he immediately changed his tone of conversation and he totally bought it.

## [00:21:44.812]

And the next thing I know, he's telling me when to meet him at what time. And that's how things are and that's where to go from there, essentially.

## [00:21:57.592]

Did you immediately call Joan and say Joan at work? I'm actually going to meet him. Yeah, exactly.

## [00:22:03.002]

And I hung up on the phone. I called you the call and she was yeah. She was really excited that this is working. And her husband, Oleg, was also on the phone.

## [00:22:15.262]

He kind of congratulated me and I felt like he would be proud of me for being able to pull this off. And especially the whole getting mad at the military was that was the key to getting it done at the beginning of this.

#### [00:22:30.802]

Did you tell your friends ever what you were planning on doing? Did you let anyone know what you're doing?

#### [00:22:36.142]

Yes, my mom was a little nervous about it. And to this day, I'm somewhat perplexed by the duality of the situation of both being, you know, kind of fun to do. But at the same time, you know, a very serious and possibly even dangerous business. You know, from my perspective, it was it was kind of fun. I could just pretend to be that I'm somebody else and I'm doing a favor to somebody. And it's just like in the movies right now.

### [00:23:08.572]

You're being undercover here. It was both exciting and scary at the same time.

## [00:23:14.572]

I wish that someone would ask me to do something like this. I would jump at this chance. This sounds like a fun thing to do, right?

### [00:23:22.792]

Right. It's fun. Until you realize that, well, you know, people's lives are kind of at play here. It may be fun for me, but it's certainly not fun for the pirates once they get caught, even for fajon rights. And while the crime itself is not violent, it's just pirating DVDs. Right. Don't need you to copy DVDs. Who's to to say that they might not turn violent at some point towards you?

#### [00:24:00.682]

On Sunday, April 30th, 2006, Demitry told Andre to meet him at the intersection of Highland and Sunset at five p.m. As Andre approached, Demitry called and told him to turn to the parking lot of a Carl's Jr., as I imagine every self respecting DVD deal will do.

#### [00:24:22.702]

He showed up in this black SUV and I pulled in my car and he came out with his, uh, what I presume to be was his wife. And after a quick exchange of hellos, he opened up the hatch and there was this big box of DVDs. And there he told me that there were 400 DVDs in there. We did a quick count. I even complained a little that, you know, why is it that the DVDs are not even Shrink-wrapped to which he replied that, you know, if I'm going to be selling DVDs, I might as well just invest the money and buy a shrink wrapping machine because customers take the shrimp wrapping off all the time.

## [00:25:05.902]

So I'm going to be doing this anyway. And so then after a bit of haggle, we essentially settled on the price. I pay them in cash, who shook hands and off I was with the whole box worth of pirated DVDs.

# [00:25:22.432]

But then Dmitri called Andre again. He had more DVDs to sell. Andre didn't know what to say. So we called Joan and she told him to meet up with Dmitri again and make the. By this time they met at Dimitri's office on the Brayer. There are photos of Dmitri Andre walking out of the building. Andre is holding a paper bag and you can see them standing there chatting for a while.

## [00:25:51.102]

Joan was there, too, watching the whole thing from the back of private Detective Jake Schmidt's surveillance van, the buy went down, her contact left.

#### [00:26:01.572]

Dmitri went inside for a minute, and then I saw him exiting the small parking lot in his I believe it was a black BMW. And the only way I was going to find out who he was was to get the plate and to tell him. So I burned out and didn't stop to check if Joan had been buckled in in the back of the van. And I heard a thump, thump, groan, and my heart sank and I remember yelling through the curtains in the back of the van.

#### [00:26:31.362]

Joan, are you OK? She grunted a little bit and she goes, I'm good. I'm good. Get them, Jake. Get them.

#### [00:26:38.832]

Had you ever been on a stakeout before? No.

#### [00:26:45.342]

And I assume definitely not. He never chased another car before.

### [00:26:50.522]

No one at any point. I kept saying to Jake, keep going. Don't lose him, don't lose him. And I'm sure we were just lucky there wasn't a policeman around because I know he went through a couple of red lights.

#### [00:27:01.722]

I continued to tell the guy through Hollywood to an apartment building on Doheny, which is a main thoroughfare that separates West Hollywood from Beverly Hills. And I got the plate. I immediately ran the plate. And of course, I started looking for everything, any relatives, contacts, et cetera. And there was just nothing. He was like he was a solo institution, couldn't trace him to any businesses, any business licenses. He was just an anomaly, as it were.

#### [00:27:34.752]

He was just average looking guy, not too tall, not too short, just average build. You know, your your your next door. You would never guess that there was anything going on suspicious with him.

#### [00:27:50.212]

Jake Schmidt parked outside of Dmitri's apartment for several days, and if Dmitri went anywhere, Jake followed and he only did one thing of significance, which was on about the third day, I tailed him down towards Los Angeles International Airport, LAX. And it seemed unusual. It's it's a bit of a jaunt

from Hollywood. And there's an old saying in L.A., when you move here, don't make friends, because sooner or later somebody is going to ask you to take them to the airport.

## [00:28:20.542]

So nobody likes driving to L.A. So but that's where we were headed. And I thought it seemed unusual. Anyway, I told him to a hotel and I watched him enter the hotel on foot. He was inside for about ten minutes. He came out carrying two large plastic bags like grocery bags with long cylindrical shapes in them. They looked like stacks of DVDs. So a few days later, we headed back to the same hotel. At this time, I got in a better position.

## [00:28:55.162]

I waited, got very close to the front door. Dmitri parked and sat in his car and as he was waiting, a service van pulled up a large shuttle bus vehicle from the airport and it was carrying an entire flight crew from an Aeroflot flight. The Russian airline and I watched all of them get off the bus and they all went into the hotel. About 10 minutes later. The man I had earlier recognized as probably the captain or navigator from that flight crew came out dressed in civilian clothing and he was carrying several large grocery bags with cylindrical shapes in them.

## [00:29:42.172]

He stood out in front of the hotel. Dimitri came up, they shook hands. They talked. No money was exchanged at that point from Dimitri. But the what I believe was the pilot handed Dimitri several large bags, these bags with cylindrical shapes. And I got video and photographs. It was absolutely obvious that this flight crew had smuggled or brought in otherwise this product.

#### [00:30:23.882]

We'll be right back. Support for criminal comes from Vertue, a company on a mission to give everyone the best here scientifically possible.

## [00:30:33.842]

Eight years ago, a group of scientists working in restorative medicine discovered an incredible protein called Alpha Keratin Secu, which is able to bind directly to damaged areas of our hair and fill them in.

#### [00:30:46.952]

I've been using Virtue's shampoo and conditioner for years now, and I can really and truly see a big difference. Each vertue formula was created to address specific concerns like color, vibrancy, friz and hair thinning. Try it for yourself and see what you think, visit virtual Forbes.com and use the code criminal 21 to receive 20 percent off, plus free shipping on your vertue order. Thanks to Squarespace for their support, Squarespace has everything you need to create a beautiful and modern Web site with Squarespace, you have the ability to customize the look and feel settings, products and more with just a few clicks.

# [00:31:29.042]

They have everything you need to grow your presence online, whether that is promoting your business or selling products or announcing events and projects.

### [00:31:36.952]

I've made a number of Squarespace sites and I found them all to be incredibly easy and with 24/7 support. If I needed any help, it was always there.

#### [00:31:45.442]

Go to Squarespace dot com slash criminal for free trial. And when you're ready to launch U.S. offer code criminal to save 10 percent of your first purchase of a website or domain.

#### [00:31:59.772]

Joan, with her attorney, contacted the U.S. Marshal Service to go search Dimitri's facility. Jake Schmidt says everyone met beforehand at a Russian restaurant across the street. The group included two court appointed Russian interpreters and the head of the U.S. Marshals task force. Five U.S.

marshals knocked on the door, Dmitri's where Jones says they found hundreds of counterfeit DVDs of Russian animated films.

## [00:32:26.832]

She says they were overwhelmed. It was crazy.

#### [00:32:30.522]

Her attorney came out and said, we found lots of product. He's not being difficult. He's claiming he doesn't know that he was doing something illegal. He was given a chance to cooperate.

#### [00:32:42.502]

And from there on, it was a matter of just the legal proceedings. So we went to court a couple of times. I didn't actually have to testify in person, but I did submit my affidavit and my declaration and that statement.

## [00:33:00.072]

Next thing I know, John called me and said, hey, there's an article coming out in the L.A. Times about this story. And it was nice, except for the way they described me.

### [00:33:11.322]

The reporter described Jake Schmidt as a, quote, stocky former U.S. Army intelligence analyst.

## [00:33:18.022]

I would have preferred extremely handsome former section chief for the CIA. But, you know, they they decided to call me a former intelligence analyst who was stocky. Anyway, it was a good article. It was a good story, and that was it. Now I tend to get long winded. The real hero of this story is Joan. Joan is the is probably the most tenacious, intelligent, driven client I've had in 20 years. And I've had Mel Gibson as a client.

## [00:33:54.192]

I've had Halle Berry as a client. I've had billionairess clients. None of them compare to Joan. Not even close. You do not want her after you ever because she won't stop. You will turn around and her teeth will be in your butt. At any point, did you think to yourself, I've gotten myself in too far, this is I am I am sinking here, my my head's underwater. No, I knew that we could solve this.

### [00:34:27.462]

It just was going to take time and some creative thinking in order to be able to find out who it was that behind closed doors was running this whole operation and ruining the market. And he he ran a very kind of slick operation. Joan had filed an 11 million dollar copyright infringement lawsuit against Demitri and eight of the stores, the book counterfeit DVDs from him. Dmitry offered her a financial settlement and she accepted, but she's never disclosed the specifics. She says her number one priority was to just get him to stop and that as far as she knows he did, she told us she hasn't seen or heard from him since.

#### [00:35:14.642]

Was this expensive, this whole sting operation, hiring actors?

### [00:35:18.672]

I mean, to put to this put you out a lot of money.

#### [00:35:24.332]

You know what? My when my husband decided that we were going to buy the international rights to about 50 hours of this Russian animation library, I thought he was nuts.

# [00:35:37.902]

And when he first came back with it and, you know, he was sure that Disney wanted to buy it right away. Disney didn't want to buy it. Nobody wanted to buy it. And the costs were tremendous. I mean,

it was horrible. And then we had all of these legal costs as well because of piracy, not just in the United States, but all around the world. But in the end, one of the oligarchs, the very, very wealthy, wealthy Russians, came and bought the rights back.

## [00:36:05.272]

He says he took them back to Russia, which is fine. And so he paid us a lot of money and we were out of the business. Many people have credited Jonan or lack thereof, with helping to popularize Russian animation all around the world.

## [00:36:21.342]

Oh, they died in 2017. Obituaries made liberal mention of his good books and his nickname, the Soviet Robert Redford. Andre Violent have told us that these days he enjoys showing the old Soviet animations he grew up watching to his own children, especially, he says, hedgehog in the fog.

## [00:36:45.132]

But really, there are dozens and dozens that are just absolutely wonderful and magical to watch. I definitely would recommend to anyone who's never seen them before. Joan Boorstin says her granddaughter watches them all the time, but on YouTube. Criminalist created by Vaughan S'pore and me, Lydia Wilson is our senior producer, Susanna Roberson is our producer, audio mix by Rob Byers.

## [00:37:28.932]

Julian Alexander mix original illustrations for each episode of Criminal. You can see them at this is criminal dotcom. We're on Facebook and Twitter at Criminal Show. And you can learn more about John Boorstin, late husband, the Soviet Robert Redford in her new documentary based on his autobiography.

### [00:37:47.892]

It's called The Black Widow.

## [00:37:49.422]

Story Criminal is recorded in the studios of North Carolina Public Radio WNYC, where a proud member of Radio Topia from Prick's, a collection of the best podcasts are out. I'm Phoebe Judge. This is criminal. Radio to pick from your ex.

#### [00:38:25.872]

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#### [00:38:35.892]

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#### [00:38:45.902]

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#### [00:39:02.362]

Before we go, we've got an update from another show in the radio, topia family Uracil is back a year after the pandemic lockdown. California prisons. Your household is excited to bring listeners back inside. Host Nigel Poor and Alan Woods will be joined by a co-host inside Rhasaan, New York.

#### [00:39:20.722]

Thomas bringing us news stories about life during and after incarceration, including stories about the dos and don'ts of prison visiting rooms, about experiencing gender transition in an after prison, and the story of a woman who spent decades behind bars for her role in a notorious crime. That's all coming up this season on your hussle.