| **Script for (V.O)** |
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| **Intro:**  This 911 call directed cops to a food store in Milwaukee, where they found 53-year-old Karen Simek dead from a gunshot wound.  As the investigation progressed, the possibility of multiple suspects being involved became increasingly evident.  Caught in a web of conflicting leads and deceit, investigators struggled to identify the real perpetrator until they got this clue. |
| **The Investigation:**  On the morning of January 31, 2017, around 6 a.m. in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, emergency responders received a 911 call from a security guard at the Garden Fresh Foods store, located at South 12th Street and West National Avenue.  When officers arrived at the spot, they made a startling discovery.  Paramedics informed the officers that the victim was initially found on the street outside the food store but had been moved inside a room to receive emergency medical treatment.  It didn’t take long for officers to identify her. Her co-workers revealed that she was 53-year-old Karen Simek. It was shocking that she was attacked just before entering the food store around 5:40 a.m., where she had been working for the past 11 years as a food technologist.  However, despite receiving medical attention, She succumbed to her injuries, dying at the scene from the fatal gunshot wound to the face.  The detectives then interviewed the paramedic to gather details on how and where she had been found. It was during this conversation that they uncovered crucial evidence, strongly indicating a meticulously planned murder.  Detectives suspected that the killer was likely someone close to her, with a clear understanding of her workplace and the exact timing of her arrival.  **Emerging Clues-**  Talking to the 911 caller, the security guard at the facility, officers learned about a pivotal clue.  There were several CCTV cameras located nearby.  Fortunately, the CCTV footage, which captured the entire incident, provided a significant breakthrough in the case.  Unfortunately, while examining the footage, they found that the suspect’s face was too obscure to be identified with certainty. However, the CCTV footage provided valuable insight into the perpetrator’s movements and appearance, information that would prove crucial later in the investigation.  Though the CCTV footage could not reveal the suspect's final destination, it showed the direction he fled after the killing.    However, after reviewing the footage from around 5:23 a.m., approximately 17 minutes before the murder, they discovered a chilling detail about the perpetrator.  Most importantly, the CCTV footage showed the perpetrator smoking, and detectives now hoped that the cigarette stubs could provide a direct link to him.  **The Suspect-**  A few days later, the DNA results from the cigarette came back, revealing a startling discovery. It matched a man named Ralph Algo. As the prime suspect, he was soon brought to the police station for questioning. The detective's initial focus was to uncover why his DNA was discovered at the crime scene.  He denied any involvement in the case, so the detectives showed him the victim's photograph to gauge his reaction.  Feeling nervous and pressured, Ralph started revealing his criminal past, which further confirmed him as the leading suspect.  As the tension escalated, he couldn’t resist his habit and just as observed in the previous CCTV footage, he asked for a cigarette. Without any hesitation, he started smoking in the middle of the interrogation. However, considering his history of drug abuse, the detectives wanted to know if he had ever harmed anyone to secure money for drugs.  The detectives now found themselves caught in a dilemma where the evidence strongly suggested that he had a clear motive to kill her, but he denied everything.  The detectives then shifted their focus to his alibi, questioning him about where he had been at the time of the crime.  He claimed to have been with his wife, Angela, on the day of the homicide, a statement that needed verification. And when detectives spoke to his wife, she confirmed his alibi.  After questioning Ralph and his wife, the detectives were left with no choice but to dismiss their initial suspicions about them.  If Ralph was telling the truth, the cigarette stubs found at the crime scene might have simply been left there coincidentally from the time when he walked by the same area.  This also led to the conclusion that if Ralph wasn't the killer then the specific cigarette the real perpetrator was seen smoking had slipped during the evidence collection.  So, for now, detectives diverted their focus from Ralph and started looking for new leads. To explore Karen's background and determine if she had any known enemies who might be involved, detectives interviewed her husband, Kevin Sasse.  **A New Lead-**  Although he couldn't identify any potential suspects with a motive for his wife's murder, he mentioned that she had a bag with her at the time of the attack, which might have been taken by the perpetrator.  Believing the bag could be the most significant link to the killer, detectives determined their next course of action.  They didn’t have to wait long and shortly after publishing the details of the bag on public platforms, they received a tip from an elderly woman who claimed to recognize it.  Surprisingly, when detectives asked for details about her grandson, they uncovered a strong possibility that he was the perpetrator.  But, little did they know that their newfound hope of catching the perpetrator would soon be dashed.  When cops reached that elderly woman’s house, surprisingly the bag was nowhere to be found and there was no evidence linking her grandson to the murder. It seemed the grandmother had misunderstood the situation, and the news about the bag and the murder had caused her to panic.  Unfortunately, after this incident, detectives were left with no strong leads, and with no significant developments, the case went cold for months.  Then after five months with no significant leads, Karen's husband, Kevin, appeared in the media, urging anyone with information about the murder to come forward.  Still, no new leads surfaced, and at one point, detectives began to consider Kevin as a suspect. However, after speaking with friends and family, detectives learned that Karen and Kevin had a strong relationship, and they found no motive that would have benefited him in any way.  However just as all hope seemed lost, an unexpected lead emerged.  **The Breakthrough-**  On December 23, 2017, David McLaurin, a local inmate who was serving time for unrelated charges, unexpectedly reached out to authorities, claiming he had information about Karen's murder.  He revealed that his former roommate, 26-year-old Carl Knight, might be involved in the murder.  According to him, Carl's girlfriend, Samantha Gustafson, knew all the details about the murder.  After this shocking revelation, authorities began searching for Carl. However, it proved difficult to locate him, as they discovered he had been frequently changing his address. So, the detectives tracked down his girlfriend, Samantha, and brought her in for questioning and first tried to verify the information David had provided by questioning her.  When detectives inquired about Carl's whereabouts, she revealed that she hadn't seen him in a while and had only spoken to him over the phone the last time they communicated. This prompted the detectives to ask for her phone to gather more details, but she claimed that had left it at home.  From her statement, it became evident that she had intentionally left her phone behind to avoid it being searched. However, she had no idea that this decision would ultimately get her into even greater trouble. The detectives then caught onto her plan and took her back to her home to search for the phone, and that’s when something unexpected occurred.  After the incident, detectives became convinced that Samantha was lying and that the mysterious man who fled her house was none other than Carl himself.  It was also possible that she was involved in the crime alongside Carl. Therefore, she was taken back to the police station for further interrogation.  When confronted, she admitted to providing shelter to Carl for a while but insisted that she had no knowledge of his involvement in the homicide.  Meanwhile, authorities continued to track Carl, and on December 27, 2017, they successfully located him in Chicago, Illinois, using his phone's location. By then, detectives had no physical evidence linking Carl to the murder, as neither the gun used in the crime nor Karen's bag had been recovered. The only way to prove his guilt now was to get him to confess.  When the investigators confronted him at his location, he immediately denied any involvement, claiming he hadn’t robbed any old white lady to avoid further questioning. However, in doing so, he unknowingly exposed the secret he had been trying so hard to conceal.  Under pressure, he then admitted that he had been at Samantha’s house when the detectives had visited earlier and that he was the mysterious man who had fled.  Before this, Carl had served time in jail for an unrelated charge and was currently on probation.  After this initial interaction and considering his criminal background, detectives identified him as the prime suspect and brought him to the station for further questioning, where they were prepared to confront him with the information his former roommate, David, had provided.  He kept lying and refused to reveal the truth, but the interrogation was far from over.  Despite their efforts to make him regret his actions and reveal the truth, he denied all accusations and asked for a lawyer. Unfortunately, detectives had to end the interrogation at that moment.  To their surprise, after a while, he requested to speak with the detectives again, and this time, he appeared ready to reveal his long-hidden secret.  He broke down in tears and confessed that his only intention was to steal the bag.  When the detectives pressed him on why he did it, his revelation left them stunned. |
| **The Conclusion:**  His confession made it clear that robbery was the primary motive behind the killing. He stated that he hadn’t specifically targeted Karen or known her personally.  Due to his financial struggles at the time, he was determined to rob that day and was desperately looking for an ideal victim.  The moment he saw Karen, he targeted her, thinking that as an elderly woman, she would be an easy victim to rob which eventually culminated into something so tragic.  After the confession, he was arrested and on July 27, 2018, he pleaded guilty to murder and was sentenced to 31 years in prison.  Samantha also pleaded guilty to one count of harboring a felon as a party to a crime and was sentenced to one year of probation. |
| **Closure:**  After a long wait, Karen's family and loved ones finally received justice. However, this was an unimaginable tragedy that no one could have foreseen.  But her memory would forever live on in the hearts of her loved ones. |
| **Outro:**  Before we conclude we want to extend our heartfelt condolences for Karen Simek and her loved ones.  What are your thoughts on this case? What measures should be taken to prevent such robberies and illegal firearm possession? Is Samantha’s punishment sufficient or does she deserve a harsher sentence?  Share your thoughts in the comment section below; we would love to hear from you. And don't forget to like, share, and subscribe for more such episodes. |