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The Black Dahlia Case is one of the most mysterious cases of murder. 'The Black Dahlia's' Name was Elizabeth Short. She was 22 when she died. She was quite young and she had just been attempting to start her career as a model (which was the reason she moved to California).

How Was She Found?

Elizabeth was found on the morning of January 15, 1947. She was found by Betty Bersinger while she was pushing her three year old to the shoe repair shop. Elizabeth was found naked, mutilated and severed in half. After finding Elizabeth Mrs. Bersinger called the police. Because of profound facial injuries, the body would be difficult to identify. Perhaps a good set of fingerprints would help? Meanwhile, as reflected in the FBI file on the case, a sketch artist from the Los Angeles Examiner did the best he could to render a likeness of the victim. They had to do many other things before they found out who she was. After they fingerprinted the body. They would soon learn the name of the victim when the FBI matched fingerprints of the body with those of a teenaged girl once arrested, in Santa Barbara, for underage drinking. Jesse Haskins described the visual of the body when it was found he said:

The body was lying with the head towards the north, the feet towards the south, the left leg was five inches west of the sidewalk. . .The body was lying face up and the severed part was jogged over about 10 inches, the upper half of the body from the lower half. . .there was a tire track right up against the curbing and there was what appeared to be a possible bloody heel mark in this tire mark; and on the curbing which is very low there was one spot of blood; and there was an empty paper cement sack lying in the driveway and it also had a spot of blood on it. . .It had been brought there from some other location. . .The body was clean and appeared to have been washed.

Who are the Suspects?

According to "Black Dahlia" The way the body was severed indicates that the murderer was someone that had been previously experienced in medical work. In the Black Dahlia Case there were many suspects, and people who "came clean" but all of them were proven to be wrong. Such as: Daniel Voorhies [Voorhees], an Army veteran, "confessed," allegedly saying: "I can't stand it any longer - I killed Beth Short." He passed a lie detector test. Minnie Sepulveda also said she was guilty of the crime. Max Handler (also known as Mack Chandler) - with Homicide Detective Ed Barrett - was the 25th man to confess to the murder. When he took a lie detector test, however, the truth came out. Apparently, he "wanted to get away from a gang of men who have been following me constantly." Carol Marshall said she could identify the killer. Nothing reliable ever came from her "evidence." No suspects were convicted. There have been "likely killers" which include Bugsy Siegel, but further investigation proved it to be incorrect. Many relatives also have "given up" names of family members to police. However, all of them lead to nowhere.

Where Does the Case Lie?

The case is a cold case which means that it is an unsolved criminal investigation that is still open to gathering new evidence. Many people think it is "doubtful the murder will ever be solved.' It says, Perhaps, if all the records were made public, that situation would change. But until that day happens, the murder of "The Black Dahlia" is, in a way, the Los Angeles equivalent of "Jack the Ripper." There, too, police

believed that someone with medical knowledge was involved. The case of "Jack the Ripper" was another gruesome cold case. Although if you look for pictures of the victims you will see the clean cuts, sewing, slashes, and removal of organs. It also talks about a new law that was made after her murder. It tells me that, **A change in the law was directly related to the unsolved crime. The month after Elizabeth Short died, California became the first state in America to require registration of convicted sex offenders.** Which is good.

There have been many gruesome and cruel cold cases. The murder of Elizabeth Short was one of these many cases. It is upsetting that people related to these victims have had to live their life knowing that the monster who murdered their family still roams freely. According to many of her family and friends, Elizabeth was beautiful, funny, intelligent, friendly, and "unforgettable". Short was a good person in everyone's eyes, and no one knows how anyone could do that to her.

It's been 70 years since Elizabeth's murder and to this day no one knows what happened the week she was found.

Footnotes:

- 1) Keri Blakinger, Nearly 70 After Her Murder, Here are the Things We Still Don't Know About The Black Dahlia, <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/don-black-dahlia-article-1.2498088>, Jan/15/2016, May/24/2016, <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/don-black-dahlia-article-1.2498088>
- 2) Bos, Carole, Black Dahlia, Awesome Stories, Sep/01/2006, May/25/2016, <https://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Black-Dahlia>

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/The-Black-Dahlia>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/The-Black-Dahlia>

Media Stream



Elizabeth Short - The Victim

Image online courtesy the Crime Library.

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View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Elizabeth-Short-The-Victim>