

RECORDED PHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN AMBER FREY/SCOTT PETERSON:
(January 6, 2003 at 2302 hours)

PETERSON: ...the worst thing in the world.

FREY: Okay.

PETERSON: And I'm so sorry that this has happened and I am so sorry I going to hurt you in this way. I don't want to do this over the phone. I want to tell you this, I want to be there in person to tell you this. But I'm sure that's why Sauki called you.

FREY: What?

PETERSON: I'm sure that's why Sauki called you.

FREY: Why...why would Sauki...what are you talking about?

PETERSON: It's the worst thing. I'm sorry, Amber. Um...well, I'll just...I'll just tell you.

FREY: Okay.

PETERSON: Uh...you haven't been watching the news obviously?

FREY: No.

PETERSON: Um...I have not been traveling during the last couple weeks. I have...I have lied to you that I've been traveling.

FREY: Okay.

PETERSON: The girl I'm married to, her name is Laci.

FREY: Uh-hum.

PETERSON: She disappeared just before Christmas.

FREY: Uh-hum.

PETERSON: For the past two weeks I've been in Modesto with her family and mine searching for her.

FREY: Okay.

PETERSON: She just disappeared and no one knows...

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FREY: Okay, now...

PETERSON: ...where she's been.

FREY: Scott?

PETERSON: And I...I can't tell you more because I...I need you to be protected from the media, and Ayianna.

FREY: Okay.

PETERSON: Okay, they are amazing.

FREY: Scott, are you...are you listening?

PETERSON: I am.

FREY: You came to me earlier in December and told me that you lost your wife. What was that about?

PETERSON: She...she's alive.

FREY: What?

PETERSON: She's alive.

FREY: Where? She's alive? Where?

PETERSON: In Modesto. Now, I know I...this is the hardest...I...I wanted to tell you in person. I...you need to protect yourself from the media.

FREY: Okay.

PETERSON: Okay. If you even watch the news at all...well, you haven't. Um...the media has been telling everyone that I had something to do with her disappearance. So the past two weeks I've been hunted by the media. And I just...I don't want you to be involved and that's to protect yourself. I know that I am, you know, I'm destroyed. And God, I hope...I hope so much that this doesn't hurt you.

FREY: How could it not affect me?

PETERSON: It does. And I just...

FREY: How...how can you possibly think this would not affect me?

PETERSON: Amber, I know it does.

FREY: (sigh)

PETERSON: But I...I...I know I had...I...I have just been torn up the last two weeks wanting to tell you and I'm so weak that I haven't. And I just...I just hope that uh...I had...I had to call you and tell you that.

FREY: You never...you never answered my question, Scott.

PETERSON: Sweetie, you don't...you don't...I can't...I can't say anymore.

FREY: I think I deserve...

PETERSON: You deserve so much better. There is no question you deserve so much better.

FREY: Yeah, and I deserve to understand an explanation of why you told me you lost your wife and this was the first holidays you'd spend without her? That was December 9th you told me this, and now all of a sudden your wife's missing? Are you kidding me? Did you hear me?

PETERSON: I did...I...I...I don't know what to say to you. I...

FREY: I think an explanation would uh...be a start.

PETERSON: I know you absolutely deserve an explanation.

FREY: Yes, I do. I do.

PETERSON: And I want to give you one.

FREY: I'm listening.

PETERSON: I...I can't now. I mean you don't understand.

FREY: But I...I...I don't understand why...

PETERSON: You don't understand the situation.

FREY: Then why don't you fill me in on the situation and...and make me understand?

PETERSON: I can't now. I'm so sorry for that.

FREY: Why can't you? Why?

PETERSON: It's...it's to protect all of us.

FREY: To protect all of who?

PETERSON: Everyone involved.

FREY: So where is she?

PETERSON: That's what we are trying to find out. We have...it's a nationwide search. We have...I mean it's a half a million dollar reward for information leading to her safe return.

FREY: Okay. So, again, you never answered my question. Why did you tell me it would be the first holidays without her?

PETERSON: I can't. Sweetie, I can't explain anymore now.

FREY: When can you...?

PETERSON: I'm so sorry. You should be so angry at me and God, I hope you are. I just...

FREY: Yeah, isn't that what you told me before, "*Oh, I wish, you know, it'd be so much easier if you'd just hate me and not want to talk to me.*" And of course the...the person I am, of course I'm gonna say well, you know, you told me you lost your wife. You sat there in front of me and cried and broke down. I sat there and held your hand, Scott, and comforted you and you have lied to me.

PETERSON: Yeah.

FREY: Again, you're lying to me about lying.

PETERSON: I lied to you about traveling, yeah.

FREY: That's among everything else, that's just an added...

PETERSON: Yeah.

FREY: So, again, are you going...is it that you're just not gonna answer me?

PETERSON: I want to.

FREY: And what's stopping you?

PETERSON: I do.

FREY: And what's stopping you from answering why? Why, why would you tell me this on March 9th that you have lost your wife and I'm sorry I can't tell until after I get back to Europe and about this tragedy. And I asked you are you ready for me? *"Oh, absolutely. This will be the first holidays without my wife. I'm gonna spend 'em...em...with my family in Maine."* Is this not what you said?

PETERSON: It is.

FREY: It is?

PETERSON: It is and I...it is.

FREY: And how do you explain all of a sudden you tell me it's a national search?

PETERSON: It is, yes.

FREY: How is that just not such a coincidence?

PETERSON: If you think I had something to do with her disappearance, that is so wrong.

FREY: Really?

PETERSON: Yes, it is.

FREY: And how is there such a coincidence to that story from what you're telling me right now about what...?

PETERSON: Well, no, sweetie. I...oh, God!

FREY: And you still have the audacity to call me sweetie right now? First, let's see first Dave...

PETERSON: Amber?

FREY: ...my friend Dave lies to me about his wife and I cried to you and tell you about this.

PETERSON: I know, I know it. I'm...

FREY: And then you have the audacity to say how do you handle something like this? Are you kidding me? And to put me in a position and you want to protect me from the media. Why did you involve me in this? What role did I play?

PETERSON: I...I haven't.

FREY: How long were you looking for me, Scott?

PETERSON: I'm sorry?

FREY: How long were you looking for me?

PETERSON: Looking for you?

FREY: Yes.

PETERSON: I don't understand, Amber.

FREY: Weren't you looking for me? Isn't that what you told Shawn you were looking for me or someone like me?

PETERSON: I want to...

FREY: How is...I...I...I am just such at a loss right now.

PETERSON: I know.

FREY: You say you can't tell me, you want to tell me in person. At what point are you gonna tell me in person, Scott?

PETERSON: Once we find her.

FREY: What was that?

PETERSON: Once we find her.

FREY: Once we find her what?

PETERSON: And that will be, I mean resolution that I will be...I will be able to explain everything to you.

FREY: When you find her?

PETERSON: I know you can't trust me, I know you can't trust me.

FREY: Uh-huh.

PETERSON: I could never ask you to do that.

FREY: Okay, so how...

PETERSON: I could never ask you, but I...I just...I had to tell you.

FREY: But didn't you...didn't you say, "*Amber I will do anything for you to trust me. Uh...baby, we have...I feel we have a future together.*" What...what was that about?

PETERSON: I've never said anything to you that I didn't mean.

FREY: You never told me anything you didn't mean?

PETERSON: I lied to you about things I did.

FREY: Uh-hum. So uh...how am I going to stay out of this? How...and...and uh...how do you see that happening? How do you see that I'm going to stay out of this or I'm not going to be dragged in or involved into this? How is that, Scott, can you answer me that?

PETERSON: I don't know. But you...I don't know, but you don't deserve to be.

FREY: No, I don't deserve to be. You're right, I don't.

PETERSON: Right, exactly. You do not deserve to be.

FREY: So why did you drag...

PETERSON: And you don't deserve the things that I've done to you. But...there's no but. Hey, I agree with that. I want to explain everything to you, but I can't.

FREY: Why?

PETERSON: Um...primarily...well, I've got a lot of reasons. Primarily protection for everyone.

FREY: Protection of who?

PETERSON: Everyone.

FREY: Who is everyone?

PETERSON: Everyone is...is you, me, our families.

FREY: Everyone that would possibly look at you a little bit differently because who the hell am I? I...I...you know, you're telling me that we're...you know, I asked is there anybody else? *"Oh, no, I'm monogamous as far as I'm concerned."*

PETERSON: I never cheated on you.

FREY: Ha, ha, ha (chuckling)

PETERSON: I never did.

FREY: You're married. How do you figure you never cheated on me? Explain that one to me?

PETERSON: I want to explain it to you Amber.

FREY: And?

PETERSON: Honey, I can't.

FREY: You want to, but it doesn't mean you're going to right?

PETERSON: I can't.

PETERSON: I will. No, no, I will.

FREY: When?

PETERSON: I hope...God, I hope to hell that you will listen to me and that I can. I want to explain it to you so badly, but I can't now. And I...I hope and I can never ask you to...to trust me or to even listen to me again.

FREY: There's no way I possibly can.

PETERSON: I know it. I can never ask you to do that for me. And I...I just hope that sometime in the future you will let me tell you the whole story. And I cannot ask you...

FREY: You know what that...that makes a lot more sense to me now, Scott.

PETERSON: What's that?

FREY: Of course you couldn't tell me the story about your wife because it hadn't happened yet. And you were hoping to resolve it in January, that it would be resolved and you'd have a story to tell me.

PETERSON: Sweetie, you think I had something to do with her disappearance? Amber, do you believe that?

FREY: Well, let's see how can I believe that? How could I believe that? How could I believe anything for...?

PETERSON: I am not evil like that.

FREY: I would hope not.

PETERSON: I am...oh, my God!

FREY: You know you've lied to me now and, you know...you know uh...actually, you know, I was thinking um...do you know how many people I've given your picture to or of us in Christmas cards? So you're telling me that you want to keep me out of this and Ayianna and you want to protect me from that. How...I'm...I'm just...I'm just so at a loss. I...how...

PETERSON: Amber, I...I...I had to tell you. I've been wanting to tell you. I hope in the future I can tell you everything if you'll let me. I can never ask you to trust me and I am so sorry that I have...that this has happened and this is happening to you. And that is uh...it's the truth. And...

FREY: You know when I met you...

PETERSON: It hurts...

FREY: It hurts me.

PETERSON: ...it hurts me to believe that I could have something to do with her disappearance.

FREY: But, you know...

PETERSON: But I understand your anger.

FREY: You know what actually...I...I've never...I have not said that, those words have not come out of my mouth, Scott, now have they?

PETERSON: No, but...

FREY: No they haven't.

PETERSON: ...everyone has been pointing a finger at me and I just...

FREY: No, those came out of your mouth. And I'm not one to judge. There's only one.

PETERSON: I know you aren't. But yeah, that's very true.

FREY: But isn't that ironic how Scott when I first met you on our date how you told me you were going to Maine with your family and you were going to Paris and Europe and all these things. And then you came to me after Shawn had found out that you were married and you came and told me this elaborate lie about her missing and this tragedy and that...

PETERSON: No.

FREY: And that...that this will be the first holidays without her?

PETERSON: Sweetie, I never said...Amber I...

FREY: Yes.

PETERSON: I...God, I don't want to fight with you. Um...you know that I...I never said tragedy or missing.

FREY: Oh, yes, you said you've lost your wife.

PETERSON: No. That...that...yes.

FREY: You said obviously without me saying much, but we were...

PETERSON: I said that I lost my wife.

FREY: Yes, you did.

PETERSON: I did. And yes...

FREY: How did you lose her then before she was lost? Explain that?

PETERSON: There's different kinds of loss, Amber.

FREY: Then explain your loss?

PETERSON: I...I can't to you now.

FREY: When can you?

PETERSON: I can once there's...

FREY: When my name has been smeared all over tabloids and everything else because I'm the...the...the lover, I'm the girlfriend when you have...when you've been married to this woman?

PETERSON: You don't deserve that.

FREY: No, I don't deserve this. And you say you've been faithful to me. Oh, I...some people I tell I've been married and other people I say I never have because it's so painful for me.

PETERSON: I've lied to you.

FREY: Oh, more than many times apparently. You know when you sat me down, remember I said, "*Oh, I thought you were gonna tell me you were married*"?

PETERSON: Right.

FREY: So, Scott, Scott, what about your baby? Laci's a missing woman, pregnant, is that what you just said?

PETERSON: Yes.

FREY: Really? So is that why...?

PETERSON: And I want...I want...

FREY: Yes.

PETERSON: I want to explain all of this to you now.

FREY: Yes, I'm listening.

PETERSON: And I...I just am not able to.

FREY: Why?

PETERSON: I can't ask you to trust me, but you will...if you give me a chance later to explain it.

FREY: Later when?

PETERSON: You will thank me for...what's that?

FREY: I will thank you for what?

PETERSON: You will thank me for not explaining it now.

FREY: Really?

PETERSON: Not thank me, but you'll understand. And I can't ask you to ever listen to me. I can't do that.

FREY: Well, I...

PETERSON: And this is the hardest thing. And you can't even believe that, I understand.

FREY: Yeah, is that why you said you didn't want to have any children and Ayianna was the only child you ever see of having and...and at that point assuming we're together she would be...you would have her as your own? Why would you tell me that when you were expecting a baby?

PETERSON: Sweetie, I...I'm so sorry that I can't tell you everything now.

FREY: Why can't you tell me everything? Why?

PETERSON: There is simply...it just has entirely too many repercussions and they're not all for me. Okay, there's a lot...and all the repercussions don't deal with me.

FREY: What repercussions?

PETERSON: If I was to explain everything to you...

FREY: Yes.

PETERSON: ...and you, you know, the media started attacking you or anything else, so many people would be hurt.

FREY: You think?

PETERSON: I know it. And I am so sorry that you're being hurt by this.

FREY: (sigh)

PETERSON: But I mean I...I can understand that you could never believe what I'm saying. I pray to God I just...I hope you do, but I...I can understand. I'm so sorry.

FREY: Tell me the coincidence of Laci, your wife, disappearing and your stories earlier in December? And then you...you're carrying on this elaborate lie with me that you're in Europe and you're in Maine with your folks. Explain that to me?

PETERSON: I wanted to tell you about this.

FREY: Really?

PETERSON: It...it shouldn't have happened.

FREY: But of course you couldn't because you were in Maine with your folks, huh?

PETERSON: No, I didn't make that trip.

FREY: So, you know, you and I...

PETERSON: Are destroyed...

FREY: You and I, assuming we'd be together, how would you have explained a new baby that you brought into this world?

PETERSON: I'm trying.

FREY: How would you explain your baby to me?

PETERSON: Sweetie, you don't know everything.

FREY: No, I don't. So what...what is it...?

PETERSON: I want to tell you everything, but I can't.

FREY: Okay, are you listening to me?

PETERSON: I am.

FREY: How...again, you were assuming we would stay together and you talk about all these future things with me. How would you explain a newborn child of yours, that I mean I would assume she would want you to have regular visits with this child, right?

PETERSON: Sweetie, I'm so sorry but I can't tell...

FREY: Why can't you?

PETERSON: ...you about those things right now.

FREY: Why? Why? Why not right now?

PETERSON: They would...it would hurt entirely too many people.

FREY: Well, is this child yours?

PETERSON: Sweetie...I'm sorry, I keep saying that. You asked me not to. Amber, I...I cannot tell you.

FREY: Is this child yours?

PETERSON: I can't tell you all these things now.

FREY: Why?

PETERSON: The only...the only things I just...I needed you to know and I hope that...I hope that um...you are not...you know, God, I...I...I know I hurt you.

FREY: You hope what?

PETERSON: Amber?

FREY: Yes.

PETERSON: Amber?

FREY: You hope what?

PETERSON: I just hope that I mean you don't get hurt more by this than I'm doing.

FREY: You don't know what I've gone through. And for you to have no compassion for me.

PETERSON: I hope you don't think that's true.

FREY: You know actions speak louder than words?

PETERSON: That's true.

FREY: That's one for you to ponder on for a while.

PETERSON: It's true. I deserve anything you say. There's no question Amber.

FREY: So tell me, Scott...

PETERSON: Yeah.

FREY: Why should I not go to the police with this?

PETERSON: It's your decision.

FREY: Really?

PETERSON: Of course.

FREY: And at that point uh...I go to the police um...(sigh) with this um...what do you see happening?

PETERSON: I imagine that...

FREY: Go ahead, what?

PETERSON: Well, I mean they would, you know, um...I don't know. I don't know if they would release it to the media or, you know, obviously they would question you, they would want to know everything.

FREY: Uh-hum.

PETERSON: Uh...I don't know. I mean it is your decision of course. Um...I...I wanted to tell you what has happened and I wanted to tell you that I lied to you.

FREY: And what stopped you from...from this?

PETERSON: Previous to now?

FREY: Yeah.

PETERSON: You know I could make excuses how to justify it to myself.

FREY: You're not doing too great right now.

PETERSON: Well, I know I'm trying. I justify it to myself by saying no, no, she just found out about Dave, and she just had a fight with her sister, don't tell her. No, no, it was probably just weakness and hoping that I could hold onto you.

FREY: Just a weakness and...and holding onto me?

PETERSON: And longing to hold onto you.

FREY: Longing to hold onto me?

PETERSON: And not being able to tell you about me traveling. Amber?

FREY: Yes.

PETERSON: Are you there?

FREY: Yeah, I'm here.

PETERSON: I deserve everything that you want to say to me.

FREY: Well, again, you know Shawn said...

PETERSON: I'm sorry, Amber?

FREY: Are you forgetting things you had discussed with Shawn? If you're not serious about a relationship, don't call Amber. She...she's been through too much already. Do you not remember having this discussion with Shawn?

PETERSON: Yeah, I do remember that.

FREY: Oh! But you still went ahead and went through. Why? Why? Are you there? Hello?

PETERSON: Amber?

FREY: Yes.

PETERSON: Amber?

FREY: Did you hear me? Are you driving? Hello? Hello? Are you driving? Hello? If you can hear me, call back. (beep)