

PETERSON: Obviously um, obviously the relationship I had with Amber was inappropriate and unfair to a lot of people. And I owe a lot of people apologies for that and have no question that that's the case. I'm uh, I'm very glad that she came forward, Amber did, in the press conference. Um...I had told Laci about it in early December. Um, I also, uh, called Amber shortly after Laci's disappearance, a few days after. And told her that I was married and told her, uh, you know, about Laci's disappearance so she knew. And then shortly after that she had a meeting with the police.

ROWLANDS: What's your level of cooperation in this?

PETERSON: Uh, it's complete, um, I know that Laci's family doesn't feel that and that's unfortunate. Um... and I think the police did make a statement at one point, um, "somewhat cooperating" I think was the exact wording if I'm mistaken there, um, and I know, I don't know, I think they regret that and since then they simply don't comment. But, I've sat down with detectives on numerous occasions including the night of her disappearance, including the next days, um and continued to, you know, receive phone calls from them and, and talked to them on the phone.

ROWLANDS: How angry are you at the Modesto Police Department?

PETERSON: I had a little bit of anger at first, um with accusations.

ROWLANDS: It's been a month.

PETERSON: Well...

ROWLANDS: If they're any good and you're innocent...

PETERSON: They are, I think, have done a very good job. They were out here that night, helicopters, dogs, um numerous officers, they were out here that next morning, six o'clock, with, you know, hundreds of officers. Um they have, they continued to invest, you know, work on investigation, tips. Um I don't know if they're searching anywhere and frankly I don't...um...I'm not interested if they're searching, because they're searching for a body if they're doing the searches, which is not an acceptable resolution to this for us. Um I know that they continue to investigate all the leads. And I know they dedicate a lot of man-hours to this and hopefully they'll bring her home.

ROWLANDS: Some of those man-hours are still dedicated to you, too.

PETERSON: Certainly.

ROWLANDS: How can you stop that and why isn't there anger? I, you know, I can't put myself in your position, but I think I would be livid if the local police department, a month later, and I had nothing to do with this, is still dedicating one hour of their efforts on looking at me when my wife is out there.

PETERSON: Yeah, well, I mean it seems like, it's a waste of manpower in that pursuit and that's unfortunate. It makes me sad more than it does angry. Um you know when they're out there in the marina and I heard there's eighty-eight officers, those are eighty-eight officers which could have been following up on investigative leads. Um and I know that is the

productive way to go is to be following up on the other things. But, they have done a great job in continuing to work very hard at finding Laci.

(End of Part One, Start of Part Two)

ROWLANDS: Laci, you met her in San Luis Obispo?

PETERSON: Uh huh, Yes.

ROWLANDS: What was it that attracted you to her?

PETERSON: Um, you always look for someone that completes you. You know, the harmony. Um, the easiest thing and easiest way to answer that is you've seen her picture on the fliers with the big ol' smile. And that tells you everything you need to know about her. If that doesn't attract you to someone then, you know...

ROWLANDS: Was that this house? Happy, smiling?

PETERSON: Oh, definitely, yeah, yeah, I mean you've seen interviews with her friends, the way that, you know, like to entertain here and-and have people over. Yeah, it's...it's very quiet now and it shouldn't be. And it won't be when she gets back, it'll be...

ROWLANDS: Do you have some Christmas presents to open still? Have you kept those? (Unintelligible)

PETERSON: Yeah, no, no, they're in the corner. Luckily, um, a friend who came up and you know, was helping, um, took down the tree and things like that, things that I wouldn't be able to do. And it was very kind of her to do that when I was gone one day. Just because it's a difficult reminder.

ROWLANDS: How about Conner, the approaching due date?

PETERSON: Yeah.

ROWLANDS: And then...

PETERSON: That's why these next couple of weeks are so critical, February 16th is the due date. That's why we need to get the fliers out there to all the medical offices that we can. Um, the nursery is ready for him. That door is closed I can't look, you know, in that door.

ROWLANDS: You worked on it. What was the sort of preparations did you do?

PETERSON: Yeah, it's a, it's completely outfitted. I mean the furniture is there, it's painted, it's ready. You know, all the little itty bitty clothes and all those wonderful things we have for him, it's ready for him.

ROWLANDS: Would you describe yourself as a proud father to be? Was it, what...

PETERSON: I can't, I don't, it's too difficult to even...

ROWLANDS: Was that accurate? What was it?

PETERSON: Yeah, actually in the back of my truck, I put some of these umbrellas that we have, these big umbrellas. Um, it started to rain and I was taking them to storage. So yeah, I did load some umbrellas in the back of my truck that day.

ROWLANDS: Was there a blue tarp involved in that? Did you have a tarp over it?

PETERSON: Yeah...Yeah. They were wrapped up in the tarp.

ROWLANDS: And then the blood in the car was mentioned today as well and that was something that's been mentioned around...

PETERSON: Uh huh, I'm sure there's, you know, my blood everywhere in that truck. I work on farms with machineries and every one I've done media with has looked at the scars and cuts on my hands. And I'm afraid, you know, men, we cut each other and we bleed. So yeah, there, that's in there.

ROWLANDS: And Laci's too?

PETERSON: Oh, I don't know. I wouldn't assume so. You know ladies don't cut themselves.... What's that?

ROWLANDS: But she drove the car, it was not as if it was just your car?

PETERSON: Right, no, we were both in both vehicles continually.

ROWLANDS: And some sort of cement making at the warehouse is that part of your work or?

PETERSON: Sure, uh, home and work, I mean uh, you know, we could walk out and, you know, I'm stepping past the kind of rules we set about not talking about the investigation here um, but you know, I can take you out and show you all the brickwork and cement work in the backyard. So yeah, cement is real common thing around here.

ROWLANDS: You told Laci about the affair, explain what her reaction was to that. Was that something that really did put your marriage in jeopardy or not?

PETERSON: No. It did definitely not put the marriage in jeopardy. Um, obviously not a positive thing. Um, and, you know, I think the real question that you're getting at and that everyone wants to know is, you know, did that precipitate to me being involved with her disappearance. And, no, it did not. And I had absolutely nothing to do with Laci's disappearance.

ROWLANDS: Could it have precipitated in Laci leaving voluntarily?

PETERSON: No. No. No. Certainly not. You know, I mean when we get to the root of, you know, what the question is and that's did I have something to do with her disappearance and, no, I had nothing to do with her disappearance. And please help all of our families, all the grieving

families you've seen on TV, and help yourselves, more importantly help Laci because she's out there being held somewhere and she needs to be home with her family.