

2022-23

Wisconsin High School  
Mock Trial Tournament  
Case Materials

**State of Wisconsin**

**vs.**

**Maple Mattox**

Prosecution Witnesses:

Peyton Cruz

Shaun Penn

Randy Rick

Defense Witnesses:

Maple Mattox

Connor Bagley

Fran Flick

### **Stipulations/Pre-Trial Rulings**

1. All of the exhibits are authentic and the authenticity of an exhibit is never at issue. All witnesses have authenticated exhibits containing their initials and/or names, and the accuracy of the dates thereon. Authentic exhibits are not necessarily admissible at trial.
2. All witness affidavits have been properly signed and notarized. The electronic signatures on each affidavit's signature line and notary block are to be treated as authentic signatures. This stipulation does not apply to exhibits. Names of the notary publics are not relevant to the presentation of the case. Each witness has reviewed their affidavit the morning of trial, attested that it was true and accurate, and attested that there was nothing that they had forgotten or wanted to add.
3. Each witness affidavit/report is intended to be gender-neutral and should be interpreted as such. All witness affidavits use "they" as a singular pronoun, in order to be gender neutral. Both the Chicago Manual of Style and the Associated Press Stylebook now recognize "they" as an acceptable singular gender-neutral pronoun. Attorneys may (but are not required to) bring this stipulation to the attention of judges in pretrial matters if their teams wish to use "they" as a singular pronoun. In any event, judges are instructed not to downgrade scores due to the use of "they" as a singular, gender-neutral pronoun.
4. After the Criminal Complaint was filed against the Defendant, a preliminary hearing was held at which the Court found there was probable cause for the matter to move forward. The Defendant was arraigned and the State filed an Information which was identical to the Criminal Complaint. For all intents and purposes, the Criminal Complaint contained within these materials may be treated as the charging document in this matter.
5. While defendants in criminal trials have a right not to be compelled to testify at trial under the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 8 of the Wisconsin Constitution, Maple Mattox has chosen to testify in this matter. Outside the presence of the jury, Mattox's attorneys have properly informed them of the pros and cons of testifying and the judge has properly questioned Mattox and determined that Mattox's decision is knowing, voluntary, and Mattox's alone.
6. The parties stipulate that Tam Casper died on May 13, 2022, and the cause of death was "exsanguination due to internal hemorrhaging as a result of blunt force deceleration trauma to the head and abdomen," which is the cause of death noted by the medical examiner. The parties stipulate that this cause of death is consistent with Randy Rick's testimony regarding the state of Tam's body when they found it. This stipulated information may be entered into evidence without need for additional documentation or exhibits to support the same.
7. The Defendant, Maple Mattox, while in high school at the time of the incident, was eighteen and and thus was charged as an adult. Mattox underwent a competency evaluation and was deemed competent to stand trial. Mattox is not claiming that they are not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect.
8. No motions to suppress were filed with respect to the exhibits obtained by the State and included

in these materials, so no team may object to the exhibits on the basis that they were improperly obtained. However, this does not preclude objections to admissibility on any other grounds.

9. In being compelled to testify regarding matters which may incriminate them, Peyton Cruz has been granted immunity for their testimony.
10. Outside the presence of the jury in this matter, the Court has determined that the jury will be instructed on First Degree Intentional Homicide—the crime charged—and the lesser included offense of First Degree Reckless homicide. The State requested the lesser included offense and must argue for a conviction on First Degree Intentional Homicide and for an alternative conviction of First Degree Reckless Homicide, and the Defense must argue for acquittal on both.
11. The Mayo Clinic articles referenced in the Flick Affidavit were properly submitted as Learned Treatises in advance of trial and no objections were received regarding their use. Therefore, they may be used as exhibits in accordance with Rule 803(18).
12. The defense filed an “other acts” motion pursuant to Rules 404(b) and 609, seeking to introduce evidence of the prior conviction of Randy Rick. The Court held a pretrial hearing and determined that testimony regarding the fact of Randy Rick’s prior conviction would be permitted. More specifically, the Court instructed as-follows:
  - a. If Rick is asked “have you ever been convicted of a crime?” They should answer “yes.” If Rick is then asked “how many times?” They should answer “one.”
  - b. The Court withheld ruling on the defense request pursuant to Rule 404(b) to elicit testimony on the circumstances of the incident giving rise to those adjudications.
13. Any individuals named in this problem but not identified as witnesses are *not* unavailable witnesses: the attorneys handling the case simply chose not to call them as witnesses at trial.
14. This problem refers to “Nudge,” a social media platform. Much like Clearwater, Wisconsin is a fictitious city in which mock trial problems take place, “Nudge” is the fictitious social media platform as a part of the same mock trial universe.

### **Disclaimer**

The 2022-23 mock trial case is a hypothetical case. All names used in the mock trial case are fictitious and were created to be gender-neutral. Any similarity to an actual event or to the name of an actual person is strictly coincidental.

### **Exhibits**

Please note that exhibits are pre-marked. The pre-marking of exhibits is solely a convenience. It is not intended to suggest the order in which exhibits should be used nor is it intended to suggest anything about their admissibility. In addition, the pre-marking of exhibits is not intended to suggest that all exhibits must or should be used. Some may be marked in sub-sections. Those may be used independent of one another, subject to the rules regarding foundation and admissibility.

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Plaintiff,

-vs-

Case No: 2022-CF-76

MAPLE MATTOX

6596 Clearwater Point Drive

Clearwater, Wisconsin

Defendant.

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**CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

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The undersigned, being first duly sworn, states that:

**COUNT 1: FIRST DEGREE INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE**

The above-named defendant, on or about May 13, 2022 in the City of Clearwater, Clearwater County, Wisconsin, did cause the death of Tam Casper with intent to kill that person, contrary to sec. 940.01(1)(a), Wis. Stats., a Class A Felony, and upon conviction shall be sentenced to imprisonment for life.

And furthermore, invoking the provisions of Wisconsin Statute 973.046(1r), if the court imposes a sentence or places a person on probation, the court shall impose a deoxyribonucleic acid analysis surcharge, calculated as follows: (a) For each conviction for a felony, \$250 (b) For each conviction for a misdemeanor, \$200.

And furthermore, invoking the provisions of Wisconsin Statute 973.047(1f), if the court imposes a sentence or places a person on probation, the court shall require the person to provide a biological specimen to the state crime laboratories for deoxyribonucleic acid analysis. The court shall inform the person that he or she may request expungement under s. 165.77(4).

**PROBABLE CAUSE:**

AND PRAYS SAID DEFENDANT WILL BE DEALT WITH ACCORDING TO LAW; AND THAT THE BASIS FOR THE COMPLAINANT'S CHARGE OF SUCH OFFENSE IS AS FOLLOWS:

Complainant, Officer Sam DuGoode of the Clearwater Police Department, is a sworn law enforcement officer who is presumed to be truthful and reliable. Complainant bases this Complaint upon their reports created and evidence collected in the course of investigating the death of Tam Casper, as well as upon the statements of Randy Rick, Connor Bagley, and Peyton Cruz, who are presumed to be truthful and reliable as citizen witnesses, as well as the statements of Maple Mattox, which statements are presumed to be truthful and reliable as they were made against their penal interests.

Complainant reports being dispatched to the Clearwater State Forest. At approximately 2405, Randy Rick, a ranger at the forest, called and advised that there had been a death at the forest. Complainant was the closest unit to the scene. Complainant proceeded to the location described by Ranger Rick, and arrived on the scene at approximately 2409.

#### *Contact with Randy Rick*

Complainant first made contact with Randy Rick upon arrival at the scene. They explained that it was Clearwater High's Senior night. They further stated that around 2315 they arrived at the campsite where all of the students were staying. Ranger Rick continued by stating that about 15 minutes later, there was a scream. Due to the scream, Ranger Rick went to the Southern Slip where they saw two of the students. Those students were pointing toward the river and Ranger Rick said that the students could barely speak. Ranger Rick then went to the bottom of the Southern Slip and found the body of the deceased. After confirming that the deceased no longer had a pulse, Ranger Rick called dispatch.

Ranger Rick then walked Complainant over to the body. The body was clear of abrasions, but it appeared that it had many broken bones. To confirm, Complainant also checked for a pulse and there was none. After this initial examination of the body, Complainant called for backup to help control the growing crowd and for the coroner's office.

#### *Contact with Connor Bagley*

After Complainant made calls to dispatch and the coroner's office, Complainant was approached by an individual identified as Connor Bagley via Wisconsin driver's license. Bagley stated that they are a teacher at Clearwater High School. They identified the deceased as Tam Casper, one of their students. Bagley explained that they were one of the teacher chaperones for the Senior trip. Bagley stated that the deceased had approached them around 2230 about students smoking marijuana in the forest. Because of that report, Bagley went to look for these students. When they returned to the campsite, a group of students notified Bagley that the deceased, Maple Mattox, and Peyton Cruz, left and went toward the Southern Slip. When Bagley neared the fence closing off the Southern Slip, they heard a scream. Bagley reported seeing Cruz run toward them, during which Cruz stated that "Maple made us do it!" Bagley stated that they slipped past the fence and found Mattox on their stomach, reaching down and over the edge of the cliff. Earlier that day, Bagley saw the deceased slip, but they could not elaborate on that further. Additionally, Bagley stated that they thought Mattox and the deceased were acting out-of-character.

Bagley appeared shaken up, and Bagley's voice seemed to break as they described the events of the day. Complainant asked Bagley to identify Mattox and Cruz. Bagley indicated, by pointing, who Mattox and Cruz were.

#### *Contact with Peyton Cruz*

Complainant made contact with Peyton Cruz, identified by Wisconsin driver's license. Cruz was huddled with a few other students. Complainant asked to speak with Cruz separately. Cruz appeared pretty shaken, their forehead was sweaty, and they were muttering to themselves. Complainant asked Cruz what happened. Cruz's voice was shaky as they explained that Cruz, Mattox, and the deceased left the campsite around 10:45 p.m. They intended to go to the Southern Slip to solve the mystery surrounding it. Cruz said that they only made it so far before Cruz decided to turn back. Cruz said that the deceased wanted to turn back, too, but Mattox kept pushing them

forward. Cruz ran back to the campsite, and they were pretty sure they saw Bagley on the way. They couldn't say what happened between the deceased and Mattox. Complainant asked whose idea it was to go to the Southern Slip. Cruz said that they were pretty sure it was Mattox's idea, but they couldn't be sure. They mentioned one time when the three of them met before May 13, during which the deceased and Mattox discussed the mystery of the Southern Slip and they had been very excited about it. They mentioned that the deceased suggested that they bring black tourmaline as it would help protect them. Complainant told Cruz that was all that was needed for now, but they may be contacted by authorities in the future. They went back to the group of students.

#### *Contact with Maple Mattox*

After speaking with Cruz, Complainant walked over to Maple Mattox, who was standing alone. Mattox appeared to have been crying earlier in the day, but was not currently crying. Mattox identified themselves by providing a Wisconsin driver's license. Complainant asked Mattox to provide a description of the events. Their voice was steady as they spoke. They said that the deceased had this "bright idea" to try and solve the Southern Slip mystery. They further said that the deceased coaxed both Mattox and Cruz to leave the campsite around 10:40 p.m. to head off to the Southern Slip. Mattox said that they were afraid, but the deceased told them to keep going. At one point, Mattox noticed that Cruz had turned back, but the deceased said that we "shouldn't be stupid losers." Mattox continued by stating that they and the deceased reached the edge of the Southern Slip. Mattox indicated the deceased was going to lower themselves down onto a ledge and started maneuvering to do so. Then, the wind picked up. Mattox looked down and saw that the deceased was holding on to a recess on the edge of the Southern Slip. Mattox tried to reach down and grab the hands of the deceased, but they were unable to hold on without falling down themselves. The deceased slipped through their grip and fell. Mattox stayed in the same position with their hands over the edge until Connor Bagley appeared and helped them back up. While Mattox explained what happened, they didn't appear very emotional and Complainant questioned the mismatch between their emotions and their version of events. Complainant asked Mattox whose idea it was to go to the Southern Slip, to which they responded unequivocally that it was the deceased's idea. According to Mattox, the deceased wanted to become famous, and they thought the best way to do that was to solve the mystery of the Southern Slip. Complainant thanked Mattox and told them that there would likely be follow up. They turned and walked back to where they had been standing alone.

After speaking with the above individuals, Complainant worked with backup to schedule pickups for each of the students with their parents. Once that was completed, it was about 0500, but contact still needed to be made with the deceased's parents. At that time, Complainant drove to the deceased's home, where Complainant was able to speak with the deceased's parents. Complainant escorted them to the coroner's officer, so that they could identify the body.

Based upon the information that I received regarding Mattox having the idea to go to the Southern Slip and pushing the deceased forward despite the deceased's wish to turn back, I referred the matter to the District Attorney's office for further review and for a charging decision.

Det. Sam DuGoode  
Sam DuGoode

Signed and sworn to before me  
This 30<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2022.

Kevin Lonergan  
Notary Public, State of Wisconsin  
My commission is permanent

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Plaintiff,

-vs-

Case No: 2022-CF-76

MAPLE MATTOX

Defendant.

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**JURY INSTRUCTIONS**

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**1018 FIRST DEGREE INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE; FIRST DEGREE RECKLESS HOMICIDE — § 940.01(1)(a); § 940.02(1)****Crimes To Consider**

The defendant in this case is charged with first degree intentional homicide, and you must first consider whether the defendant is guilty of that offense. If you are not satisfied that the defendant is guilty of first degree intentional homicide, you must consider whether or not the defendant is guilty of first degree reckless homicide which is a less serious degree of criminal homicide.

**Intentional and Reckless Homicide**

The crimes referred to as first degree intentional and first degree reckless homicide are different types of homicide. Homicide is the taking of the life of another human being. The degree of homicide defined by the law depends on the facts and circumstances of each particular case.

Both intentional and reckless homicide require that the defendant caused the death of the victim. First degree intentional homicide requires the State to prove that the defendant acted with the intent to kill. First degree reckless homicide requires that the defendant acted recklessly, under circumstances which show utter disregard for human life. It is for you to decide of what type of homicide the defendant is guilty, if guilty at all, according to the instructions which define the two offenses.

**Statutory Definition of First Degree Intentional Homicide**

First degree intentional homicide, as defined in § 940.01 of the Criminal Code of Wisconsin, is committed by one who causes the death of another human being with the intent to kill that person or another.

**State's Burden of Proof**

Before you may find the defendant guilty of first degree intentional homicide, the State must prove by evidence which satisfies you beyond a reasonable doubt that the following two elements were present.



### **Elements of the Crime That the State Must Prove**

1. The defendant caused the death of Tam Casper.

"Cause" means that the defendant's act was a substantial factor in producing the death.

2. The defendant acted with the intent to kill Tam Casper.

"Intent to kill" means that the defendant had the mental purpose to take the life of another human being or was aware that their conduct was practically certain to cause the death of another human being.

### **When May Intent Exist?**

While the law requires that the defendant acted with intent to kill, it does not require that the intent exist for any particular length of time before the act is committed. The act need not be brooded over, considered, or reflected upon for a week, a day, an hour, or even for a minute. There need not be any appreciable time between the formation of the intent and the act. The intent to kill may be formed at any time before the act, including the instant before the act, and must continue to exist at the time of the act.

### **Deciding About Intent**

You cannot look into a person's mind to find intent. Intent to kill must be found, if found at all, from the defendant's acts, words, and statements, if any, and from all the facts and circumstances in this case bearing upon intent.

### **Intent and Motive**

Intent should not be confused with motive. While proof of intent is necessary to a conviction, proof of motive is not. "Motive" refers to a person's reason for doing something. While motive may be shown as a circumstance to aid in establishing the guilt of a defendant, the State is not required to prove motive on the part of a defendant in order to convict. Evidence of motive does not by itself establish guilt. You should give it the weight you believe it deserves under all of the circumstances.

### **Jury's Decision**

If you are satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant caused the death of Tam Casper with the intent to kill, you should find the defendant guilty of first degree intentional homicide.

If you are not so satisfied, you must find the defendant not guilty of first degree intentional homicide, and you should consider whether the defendant is guilty of first degree reckless homicide in violation of section 940.02(1) of the Criminal Code of Wisconsin, which is a lesser included offense of first degree intentional homicide.

### **Make Every Reasonable Effort to Agree**

You should make every reasonable effort to agree unanimously on the charge of first degree intentional homicide before considering the offense of first degree reckless homicide. However, if after full and complete consideration of the evidence, you conclude that further deliberation would not result in unanimous agreement on the charge of first degree intentional homicide, you should consider whether the defendant is guilty of first degree reckless homicide.

## **Statutory Definition of First Degree Reckless Homicide**

First degree reckless homicide, as defined in § 940.02(1) of the Criminal Code of Wisconsin, is committed by one who recklessly causes the death of another human being under circumstances that show utter disregard for human life.

### **State's Burden of Proof**

Before you may find the defendant guilty of first degree reckless homicide, the State must prove by evidence which satisfies you beyond a reasonable doubt that the following three elements were present.

#### **Elements of First Degree Reckless Homicide That the State Must Prove**

1. The defendant caused the death of Tam Casper.

"Cause" means that the defendant's act was a substantial factor in producing the death.

2. The defendant caused the death by criminally reckless conduct.

"Criminally reckless conduct" means:

- the conduct created a risk of death or great bodily harm to another person; and
- the risk of death or great bodily harm was unreasonable and substantial; and
- the defendant was aware that their conduct created the unreasonable and substantial risk of death or great bodily harm.

3. The circumstances of the defendant's conduct showed utter disregard for human life.

In determining whether the circumstances of the conduct showed utter disregard for human life, consider these factors: what the defendant was doing; why the defendant was engaged in that conduct; how dangerous the conduct was; how obvious the danger was; whether the conduct showed any regard for life; and, all the other facts and circumstances relating to the conduct.

Consider also the defendant's conduct after the death to the extent that it helps you decide whether or not the circumstances showed utter disregard for human life at the time the death occurred.

### **Jury's Decision**

If you are satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant caused the death of Tam Casper by criminally reckless conduct and that the circumstances of the conduct showed utter disregard for human life, you should find the defendant guilty of first degree reckless homicide.

If you are not so satisfied, you must find the defendant not guilty.

You are not, in any event, to find the defendant guilty of more than one offense.

## **140 BURDEN OF PROOF AND PRESUMPTION OF INNOCENCE**

In reaching your verdict, examine the evidence with care and caution. Act with judgment, reason, and prudence.

### **Presumption of Innocence**

Defendants are not required to prove their innocence. The law presumes every person charged with the commission of an offence to be innocent. This presumption requires a finding of not guilty unless in your deliberations, you find it is overcome by evidence which satisfies you beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty.

### **State's Burden of Proof**

The burden of establishing every fact necessary to constitute guilt is upon the State. If the defendant contends that they acted in self-defense or defense of others, the State bears the burden of proving beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant did not act lawfully in self-defense or defense of others. Before you can return a verdict of guilty, the evidence must satisfy you beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty.

### **Reasonable Hypothesis**

If you can reconcile the evidence upon any reasonable hypothesis consistent with the defendant's innocence, you should do so and return a verdict of not guilty.

### **Meaning of Reasonable Doubt**

The term "reasonable doubt" means a doubt based upon reason and common sense. It is a doubt for which a reason can be given, arising from a fair and rational consideration of the evidence or lack of evidence. It means such a doubt as would cause a person of ordinary prudence to pause or hesitate when called upon to act in the most important affairs of life.

A reasonable doubt is not a doubt which is based on mere guesswork or speculation. A doubt which arises merely from sympathy or from fear to return a verdict of guilt is not a reasonable doubt. A reasonable doubt is not a doubt such as may be used to escape the responsibility of a decision.

While it is your duty to give the defendant the benefit of every reasonable doubt, you are not to search for doubt. You are to search for the truth.

## **170 CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE**

It is not necessary that every fact be proved directly by a witness or an exhibit. A fact may be proved indirectly by circumstantial evidence. Circumstantial evidence is evidence from which a jury may logically find other facts according to common knowledge and experience. Circumstantial evidence is not necessarily better or worse than direct evidence. Either type of evidence can prove a fact. Whether evidence is direct or circumstantial, it must satisfy you beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant committed the offense before you may find the defendant guilty.

### **300 CREDIBILITY OF WITNESSES**

It is the duty of the jury to scrutinize and to weigh the testimony of witnesses and to determine the effect of the evidence as a whole. You are the sole judges of the credibility, that is, the believability, of the witnesses and of the weight to be given to their testimony.

In determining the credibility of each witness and the weight you give to the testimony of each witness, consider these factors:

- whether the witness has an interest or lack of interest in the result of this trial;
- the witness' conduct, appearance, and demeanor on the witness stand;
- the clearness or lack of clearness of the witness' recollections;
- the opportunity the witness had for observing and for knowing the matters the witness testified about;
- the reasonableness of the witness' testimony;
- the apparent intelligence of the witness;
- bias or prejudice, if any has been shown;
- possible motives for falsifying testimony; and
- all other facts and circumstances during the trial which tend either to support or to discredit the testimony.

Then give to the testimony of each witness the weight you believe it should receive.

The defendant has testified in this case, and you should not discredit the testimony just because the defendant is charged with a crime. Use the same factors to determine the credibility and weight of the defendant's testimony that you use to evaluate the testimony of any other witness.

There is no magic way for you to evaluate the testimony; instead, you should use your common sense and experience. In everyday life, you determine for yourselves the reliability of things people say to you. You should do the same thing here.

STATE OF WISCONSIN

CIRCUIT COURT

CLEARWATER COUNTY

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STATE OF WISCONSIN

Plaintiff,

-vs-

Case No: 2022-CF-76

MAPLE MATTOX

Defendant.

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**VERDICT**

---

We, the jury, find the defendant, Maple Mattox, guilty of First Degree Intentional Homicide, contrary to Wisconsin Statutes sec. 940.01(1)(a).

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Jury Foreperson

STATE OF WISCONSIN

CIRCUIT COURT

CLEARWATER COUNTY

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STATE OF WISCONSIN

Plaintiff,

-vs-

Case No: 2022-CF-76

MAPLE MATTOX

Defendant.

---

**VERDICT**

---

We, the jury, find the defendant, Maple Mattox, not guilty of First Degree Intentional Homicide, contrary to Wisconsin Statutes sec. 940.01(1)(a).

---

Jury Foreperson

STATE OF WISCONSIN

CIRCUIT COURT

CLEARWATER COUNTY

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STATE OF WISCONSIN

Plaintiff,

-vs-

Case No: 2022-CF-76

MAPLE MATTOX

Defendant.

---

**VERDICT**

---

We, the jury, find the defendant, Maple Mattox, guilty of First Degree Reckless Homicide, contrary to Wisconsin Statutes sec. 940.02(1).

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Jury Foreperson

STATE OF WISCONSIN

CIRCUIT COURT

CLEARWATER COUNTY

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STATE OF WISCONSIN

Plaintiff,

-vs-

Case No: 2022-CF-76

MAPLE MATTOX

Defendant.

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**VERDICT**

---

We, the jury, find the defendant, Maple Mattox, not guilty of First Degree Reckless Homicide, contrary to Wisconsin Statutes sec. 940.02(1).

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Jury Foreperson



## AFFIDAVIT OF PEYTON T.A. CRUZ

Peyton T.A. Cruz, first being duly sworn, states as follows:

1           1.       My name is Peyton T.A. Cruz. I'm 18 years old, and I've lived in Clearwater since  
2 I was five, when my parent moved here with my siblings and I for a good factory job. I just  
3 graduated from Clearwater High, and now, I work at the local garden store.

4           2.       I know Maple Mattox from school. We have been really close since second grade,  
5 when Robbie Smith was bullying me during recess and Maple went right up to him and told him  
6 off. Ever since then, we have been like two peas in a pod. We also liked to have fun, and we would  
7 constantly dare each other to do things. People started calling us the "Dare Pair" in high school  
8 because of the wild stuff we would dare each other to do. It became a game between us—it would  
9 have been shameful to say "no" to each other's dare's—and let's be honest, Maple did most of the  
10 daring, and I did most of the saying "yes." It was hard to say no to Maple.

11          3.       COVID made a lot of school stuff annoying, but one good thing that came from it  
12 was that Maple and I got to spend a lot more time together. Apparently, the virtual math classes  
13 weren't enough, so our parents made us go to a math tutor. It was kind of weird because the tutor  
14 would only teach two kids at a time on the back porch of their house, but it was whatever. Maple  
15 and I agreed that the tutoring was the worst because in winter we had to sit outside in the cold  
16 learning math. On the plus side, Maple and I live close to each other so we would walk to and from  
17 tutoring together.

18          4.       I felt like Maple and I were best friends—even closer than Shaun Penn was with  
19 Maple. Shaun and I never really did get along. Shaun seemed way too good for Maple and I and  
20 think Maple just grew out of that friendship and how hard they had to try to be Shaun's "people"  
21 when Shaun was clearly not into the same things—I mean they didn't even like to play the dare  
22 game. I'm not really sure why they were ever friends.

23          4.       I think it was September or October of last year when Maple brought up the  
24 Clearwater Forest mystery for the first time. Of course, everyone in town knows about the mystery.  
25 Personally, I think there was some government intervention, à la Dyatlov Pass, but Maple was  
26 convinced that they could find the bodies of the missing hikers and claim the cash reward. Over  
27 the next few months, Maple would bring up the mystery more and more. It was kind of weird, it  
28 was like they were getting obsessed with finding out what happened like 130 years ago. I'm not  
29 sure what motivated Maple more – the idea of the money from the trust or the fame they thought  
30 would come from solving the mystery – but they sure talked about both a lot.

31          5.       During our COVID lockdown, we also had to come up with ways to earn our phy-  
32 ed credits on our own. Most kids just made stuff up, went for walks in their neighborhoods, or  
33 tried to stay conditioned for when sports started back up by going running. But Maple suggested  
34 that we should check out the local climbing gym to get in our required hours to earn the credit. I  
35 am pretty afraid of heights, so I wanted to opt out, but agreed because it seemed more enjoyable  
36 than doing laps around the block or my parents' old workout videos in the basement (and how  
37 would I have fulfilled expectations as half of the "dare pair" by opting out?). I didn't think I could  
38 lie outright or pretend I had done a physical activity to get the credits. Lying has never been my  
39 thing – especially when it comes to school. At the climbing gym, we learned the basics of different  
40 types of climbing, including free climbing and how to use the harnesses and rope systems. I was

41 glad when it was over, but I know Maple got really into it and kept going after we got all of our  
42 hours in.

43         6.       After all the snow melted this year, and after all that time talking about the mystery,  
44 Maple wanted me to go with them to check out the Southern Slip. At first, I didn't really want to  
45 go. It would be really cool to figure out what happened, but everyone knows it's super dangerous  
46 to go up there. I think there have been 15 people who have died looking for the missing hikers.  
47 But Maple just kept bringing up the topic of checking out the Southern Slip. They said we would  
48 be rich if we found the bodies, after I had just been talking to them about how my options for after  
49 high school were limited because my family didn't have much money. Eventually, I decided it  
50 wouldn't hurt to just go take a look. In March, I think, we went up to the trail. We saw a wire fence  
51 that stopped us from getting too close to the Southern Slip. Maple walked right up to the fence and  
52 started looking at it closely. I asked what they were doing, and they said that they were looking for  
53 a way to get through. Eventually, they found a place where the fence had been rusting. They tried  
54 to pry it away, but it wouldn't give.

55         7.       After finding that portion of the fence, we realized we would need something to  
56 move the fence. As we drove away from the forest that day, we decided that we would get a  
57 crowbar and maybe a wire cutter and try that. A couple of days later, Maple stopped me in the hall  
58 at school and swung their backpack around. They pulled out a crowbar and asked whether we  
59 should head to the forest to get to the Southern Slip. That's when I realized Maple thought this  
60 was actually happening, and started worrying about this dare going too far. When we went before,  
61 I saw the signs saying that there was no trespassing, so I told Maple that I wasn't sure about going  
62 again. They told me that I wouldn't have to walk all the way down the Southern Slip, but they  
63 wanted me there in case they needed me to hold ropes or something.

64         8.       I felt better that Maple didn't want me going down the slip, so I agreed to go. We  
65 headed back out to the Southern Slip the next weekend, and Maple used the crowbar on the fence.  
66 It worked, and we headed out farther. Maple was getting really close to the edge, but they stopped  
67 before getting too close. They looked over the edge for a few minutes. Then, they turned back to  
68 me and said that they would need mountain-climbing gear – heavier-duty stuff than what we used  
69 at the rock climbing gym. I didn't know what to say, so I just agreed. Right after that, Maple said  
70 it might be a good idea for us to have a third person to help. I wasn't exactly sure what Maple was  
71 planning, but I decided to let them hatch out this plan.

72         9.       It was around this time that Maple had to stay after school a lot for detention. The  
73 way they told me the story was that Tam Casper had invited Maple to cheat off of their math quiz,  
74 but when Maple did, Tam coughed really loudly. This got both of them in trouble. Anyway, Maple  
75 was super mad at Tam and blamed them for Maple losing their scholarship, but must have gotten  
76 over it quickly: Maple said that while they were in detention with Tam, they and Tam began to  
77 talk a lot about the mystery of the Southern Slip. Maple was pretty sure they could convince Tam  
78 to help us.

79         10.      A few weeks later, Maple texted me saying they wanted to hangout that night. I'm  
80 pretty sure it was a Friday night. I didn't have anything else going on, so I agreed. I went over to  
81 Maple's house. Since we have known each other so long, it's kind of an open-door policy. I walked  
82 in and saw Tam sitting on the couch. They seemed to be fidgeting a lot. Maple came into the living  
83 room and patted Tam on the back. They introduced Tam to me and we all sat down. It was at that  
84 time that we started to discuss the mystery of Clearwater Forest. It was kind of weird. As Maple

85 and Tam talked about it, they were really into it and very animated. Anyway, as we talked about  
86 it, we all agreed that the best time to try and look for the cave would be during the Senior overnight  
87 on May 13. To be honest, that was really all the planning that we did; I don't think that Maple ever  
88 did get mountain-climbing gear.

89         11. During that meeting, I remember the time Tam became really animated and started  
90 doing more than just listening to Maple's plan (Maple can be very convincing and I have the scars  
91 from their "dares" to prove it) was when Tam started talking about some superstitious stuff about  
92 the protection we could get from wearing something they called an amulet. Apparently Tam had  
93 an aunt who was very well-versed in the local lore regarding the hikers and the supernatural. Tam's  
94 aunt predicted that if anyone was going to successfully locate the cave and the lost hikers' bodies,  
95 it would only be with the protection of an amulet made of black tourmaline. Tam said something  
96 about how it would create a shield or a forcefield around us to prevent negative energies from  
97 entering our space while we were on the Southern Slip. I didn't buy any of it, but didn't really  
98 balk at it either.

99         12. On May 13, Maple, Tam, and I drove to school together to catch the bus to the  
100 Clearwater Forest. The bus got to the forest around 10:00 a.m. We tried to duck out of the stupid  
101 group activities, but the chaperones made sure we didn't miss them. At dinner, we were able to  
102 regroup, and we decided that the best time would be to sneak away during the talent show that  
103 would be happening later. I guess Tam wasn't kidding about the black tourmaline stuff, because  
104 they handed Maple and I each a piece to keep in our pockets, "just in case." I was a little weirded  
105 out, and I honestly don't even know what happened to mine – maybe I dropped it when we were  
106 making our way to the Southern Slip and that's how everything went so wrong. Tam seemed really  
107 excited about it, though, and they had seemed kind of "off" all day, so I went along with it to make  
108 them happy.

109         13. Around 10:45 p.m., everyone was paying attention to the talent show. Honestly,  
110 there wasn't much talent, but I didn't really care. The three of us snuck away. One of us was in  
111 charge of making a diversion but I can't remember who it was or what the diversion was. On our  
112 way to the Southern Slip, we saw a bunch of couples making out in the woods, gross. When we  
113 reached the fence, we found the area that we had pried away the last time and slipped past it. As  
114 we got closer the edge, it was a lot scarier than when Maple and I had come during the day. It was  
115 really hard to see anything even though we had the flashlights from our phones on. Not only that,  
116 but I'm pretty sure that area is haunted. There was a bunch of whispering and cracking noises. I  
117 asked whether Maple or Tam could hear it, but they didn't say anything. As we kept walking  
118 toward the edge, the temperature dropped. I knew there was a ghost or something at that point. If  
119 that rock was supposed to be doing something for us, it sure didn't feel like it was working.

120         14. My heart was thumping as we got closer and closer to the edge and couldn't see  
121 ahead of us to know just where it dropped off. I told Maple that we should go back and that it was  
122 too dangerous: it wasn't worth it. I could tell that Tam was scared too, but they refused to say  
123 anything to Maple—they just started to slow down and fall behind. Maple said, "don't be stupid  
124 losers!" After saying that, they pushed Tam forward on the path toward the edge. I could tell that  
125 Maple was upset and getting more agitated by Tam slowing down and delaying us. They kept  
126 balling up their fists. After Maple pushed Tam, Tam started to cry. When that happened, Maple  
127 told Tam to shut up, which only made Tam cry harder. Tam kept getting louder until they were

128 sobbing uncontrollably. I don't even know how they could see with tears in their eyes—I was  
129 doing everything I could to hold back my tears because I knew I needed my vision clear.

130         15. It was getting to be too much for me. Maple was getting really mad and Tam's  
131 sobbing was getting under my skin. After Tam's slowdown, Maple made sure to keep Tam in front  
132 and closer to the edge, like they wanted to be behind them to stop them from running away. That  
133 was when I started to back away. It was all too much, and I wanted out. Then, I heard someone  
134 shout, "Who's down there?!?" I jumped when I heard that, but I kept walking backward trying to  
135 get away. I tried to be as quiet as possible because I didn't want Maple to get mad at me and push  
136 me ahead like they had done to Tam. As I was backing away, I suddenly heard gravel and rocks  
137 sliding and skittering from where Maple and Tam still were. At the same time, I heard one of them  
138 – I think Tam – let out a full-blown scream. I'll never forget the sound of that scream. I love to  
139 read thrillers, and now I know what they mean when they talk about a "blood curdling scream."  
140 But I had to get away. At that point I stopped tiptoeing backward and just turned around and ran  
141 back toward the campfire. It was only a few seconds and the screaming stopped. As I ran toward  
142 the fence, I saw our teacher—shoot we call them Bags, and I can't remember their actual  
143 name...Bagley? I think that's it. The one who was a chaperone. I saw them coming, but I didn't  
144 stop for them. I couldn't. I through the fence and just kept running. I did look back, and I am pretty  
145 sure I saw Bags go through to check things about.

146         16. It was all so freaky, but I got back to the campfire and hugged myself. It wasn't  
147 too long after that that someone came up shouting about how someone had fallen and was dead. I  
148 knew right away that it would be Tam, since they were closer to the edge. I don't want to think  
149 that Maple would do anything to hurt Tam, or anyone else, but they seemed so angry that night. I  
150 mean I guess the only time I saw Maple actually push Tam was like more than a minute before the  
151 scream. But it was super dark and my flashlight only let me see so much. I just can't stop thinking  
152 about what might have been different if I had spoken up for Tam, too. I knew they were scared but  
153 didn't want Maple to call them out—I know because I've been there.

154         17. I don't want to be here testifying. The district attorney's office is making me do  
155 it—they even served me with a subpoena while I was in the greenhouse at work. It was really not  
156 cool. I called them because I was worried that they would say it is my fault for making this plan  
157 with Maple, and I really can't afford to add legal troubles to my list of problems. They told me I  
158 would be immune from prosecution. Immunity doesn't change my testimony: I'm here because  
159 they made me here and I'm just going to tell the truth.

160         18. I've seen the pictures that Ranger Rick took of the Southern Slip and the fence, and  
161 they're spot-on for what the area looks like...during the day. But everything seems different at  
162 night, I tell you. And I swear those screams are still echoing across the water, to this day. At least  
163 they are in my head. So much for protection stones. I used to love all things danger and adventure,  
164 but I'm going to lay low in the greenhouse and keep my adventuring to the daytime for a while.

Peyton T.A. Cruz  
Peyton T.A. Cruz

Subscribed and sworn before me  
this 8<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2022.

Kristin Renee Pierre  
Notary Public, State of Wisconsin  
My commission is permanent.

## AFFIDAVIT OF SHAUN PENN

Shaun Penn, first being duly sworn, states as follows:

1           1. My name is Shaun Penn. I am eighteen and a recent graduate of Clearwater High. I am  
2 currently enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Clearwater and I am planning to major in  
3 philosophy. I have known Maple Mattox since 6th grade. We immediately became friends when  
4 we met, and we were friends through all of middle school and almost all of high school until about  
5 two weeks before the senior trip. Because of that long friendship, I know Maple better than anyone.  
6 I bet I know Maple even better than Maple's dad does.

7           2. Maple's mom died when Maple was five. The only real family Maple had was their dad  
8 since then. Maple's dad tried his best to create a good home environment. I remember going over  
9 to Maple's house sometimes on weekends and Maple's dad would make us malted milkshakes.  
10 They were delicious. Sometimes we would have sleepovers at Maple's house. The best ones were  
11 when we could sleep outside. We would just lie there in our sleeping bags and look up at the stars  
12 and talk about life and things. I miss those times.

13           3. I didn't see Maple as much during lockdowns due to COVID. I think that was hard on  
14 Maple. Still, we stayed in touch though. We would send messages to each other on Nudge.  
15 Sometimes Maple would send me messages when they had what they called "inspirational  
16 moments." At one point during remote learning, we had a big Shakespeare unit in English class.  
17 We read Hamlet and Henry IV, Part 1. Maple sent me a message on Nudge with a quote from  
18 Hamlet about the cycle of life and about kings eating fish eating worms eating kings or something  
19 like that. A little later, Maple sent me another message on Nudge about how we were all "food for  
20 worms." It alluded to a line from Henry IV, Part 1, but the actual quote was from a movie. They  
21 sent me a third message with some lines from the song "Dust in the Wind." You know, "All we  
22 are is dust in the wind." They sent that with a picture of some soil. It was bleak.

23           4. That was when Maple really got into the television show "Bobjack Cowperson." It is a  
24 cartoon meant for adults but super popular with teenagers, as well, where the characters are animals  
25 that dress, talk, and act like people. Bobjack Cowperson is a "cow" that has a drug problem and  
26 difficulties with commitment. Maple said the show is really all about the philosophy of Nihilism—  
27 the rejection of all religious and moral principles in the belief that life is meaningless and that there  
28 is no such thing as right and wrong. I am talking that really intense "God is dead" kind of stuff. In  
29 fact, Maple had a picture of Nihilist philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche as the screensaver on their  
30 phone. Maple loved that show and that philosophy. It's okay, but I'm really more into  
31 Existentialism—sort of the belief that there is meaning and purpose in life, but that we create  
32 meaning ourselves as individuals, rather than having it given to us from authority. There is good  
33 and evil, and we can choose to be good or we can choose to be cruel. We get the credit or the  
34 blame ourselves. You could probably guess Jean-Paul Sartre is my hero.

35           5. I remember later during the pandemic when people started returning to places like  
36 schools and all the students had to wear masks. Maple thought that a person's face was a window  
37 to their personality, and that covering part of one's face with a mask diminishes their "self" and  
38 their individuality. That is when Maple started wearing two masks in class—one over the bottom  
39 half of their face and one over the upper half of their face. You couldn't see their face at all. The  
40 teachers stopped Maple every time Maple did that and got really mad because they said Maple

wasn't taking the pandemic seriously enough. But that wasn't it. I think Maple wanted to hide their true self from the world.

6. Around that time, Maple also developed an odd fascination with the shooting that happened back in 2018 at Clearwater Alternative High School. You remember that, right? Everyone does. People thought that weird kid Tim Riggins brought a gun to school, but he didn't. Then that school administrator Kelsey Grammar shot and killed Tim Riggins because Grammar thought it was an active shooter situation. The Kelsey Grammar trial was the biggest trial in Wisconsin that year. Maple and I were finishing up middle school then. I didn't think much about it for a long time. But later, when things were opening up again, I would visit Maple's house and they actually had two action figures they named Tim Riggins and Kelsey Grammar and would reenact the shooting. Sometimes the Tim Riggins action figure had a gun and fought back—shooting and killing Kelsey Grammar. Maple asked if I wanted to help reenact it with the action figures, but I said no. One time I asked Maple if they would ever want to buy a gun themselves, but they said, “No. Guns are clumsy and random. I would prefer a more elegant weapon for a more civilized age.” I didn't ask Maple what they meant. Sometimes I think Maple watched too many movies and television shows. At least they didn't play violent video games. Maple, ultimately, blew up the Kelsey Grammar action figure with a bunch of firecrackers.

7. One time around then, Maple talked about how they had a fantasy of one day having a job where they would go down a long elevator to their office. For eight hours a day, they would be severed from the reality of the outside world and forget everything about their life above. If you met “quota,” you would be rewarded with a melon bar. I thought that was weird. Who loves melon so much? They said going down in the elevator would be like going into a deep dark cave every day and that would be so cool.

8. Maple's next fixation was the whole Southern Slip mystery. It was the fall of 2021. They started reading everything they could about what happened. Maple said they wanted to find the dead bodies for the money, but I think Maple was really just obsessed with the thought of the cave and the bleakness of the remains being there all this time. “Just imagine dying in that cave like that,” Maple once said. I said, “Just imagine all of the people who died trying to find those hikers.” Maple just looked at me and said, “In a way, those hikers are kind of famous too, aren't they? That's one way to become famous.”

9. Like I said, nobody knows Maple like I do. We were friends all through middle school and most of high school. Peyton Cruz was a friend, I guess, but Peyton mostly just wanted to impress Maple, rather than be a true friend. Peyton and Maple were the “Dare Pair.” More like the “Idiot Pair.” Maple would come to me and say, “Guess what Peyton and I jumped over,” or, “Look what Peyton and I fell out of.” Both of them would often run around saying they were doing “parkour,” but all they were doing was just jumping out of a tree. I mean, really? That's not parkour. It bothered me that it seemed like Maple was a completely different person with Peyton—just doing dumb stuff together all the time. But at the same time, it comforted me to feel like I was the person Maple could be real with and could have meaningful conversations with. I never saw them texting Peyton when they thought of them during the day like they texted me.

10. Notwithstanding Maple's dumb “parkour” antics, they were actually a pretty good rock climber. Early on in high school, they saw the award-winning documentary about Alex Honold—the famous rock climber from Clearwater. Honold is a “free climber,” which means he climbs with no ropes. Yikes! Maple thought this was so cool that they started going to climbing

gyms and practicing without ropes. Maple kept getting thrown out of the climbing gyms when they free climbed because of something about liability and insurance or something like that, so Maple could only practice free climbing out on real cliffs when nobody official was looking. They only got away with it at gyms when they dragged Peyton along as their lookout. I watched Maple free climb on real cliffs a few times. It was crazy. They had no fear. The seeming lack of fear may come from a non-working amygdala in Maple's brain—the part of the brain that is shaped like two almonds and supposedly processes fear. In the Alex Honold movie, they said Alex Honold once had functional magnetic resonance imaging scans that showed his amygdala barely activates when watching disturbing images—resulting in feeling almost no fear. Maybe that is what is going on in Maple's head? I told Maple this and Maple said that was perfect because their "brain was the size of an almond." Sometimes I wonder about that.

11. Maple and I started growing apart pretty quickly in the second semester of senior year. I offered to help Maple in math class because they were having some difficulty, but they said my grades were not good enough to help them. Maple said they would get Tam to help them. My grades were actually pretty good, but they were not as good as Tam's grades. Both of them got in trouble for cheating in math class, and that was when things started to change.

12. Maple told me they bet they could get Tam to walk the Southern Slip to find the hidden cave and wanted me to bet money on this. I thought that was kind of sick and said no way. Maple went ahead anyway. Maybe Peyton took that bet? One time I heard Maple tell Tam that Tam would gain instant popularity, become a celebrity in Clearwater County, and gain world-wide recognition if they found the hidden cave and dead bodies. Maple told Tam they could be a winner if they did that. "Be a winner, Tam," Maple said. "Don't be a loser. I am sick of whiners and losers. Losers should die." Maple got this gleam in their eye when they said that. Tam responded, "I'm a winner, Maple."

13. Maple was spending more and more time with Tam and Peyton. Maple was cheating in math class with Tam and jumping out of trees with Peyton. I would invite Maple over to hang out at my house, but they started coming up with excuses. In one sense, I was relieved because Maple was getting kind of weird, but it was also a little lonely. I had nothing better to do but hang out with my cats. I love cats. I play with them in our big, screened-in patio. I call it our "catio." Get it? It's a play on words—a patio for cats. A catio.

14. I started asking Maple to come over less and less. All of their creepy behavior just started adding up: the obsession with nihilism, the double masking, the action figure role playing, the obsession with caves and the Southern Slip mystery. At a certain point you might begin to wonder. A few weeks before the senior trip, Maple told me they did not want to be friends with me anymore. I said we had been friends for years—best friends. They just shrugged and said, "So it goes." We haven't spoken since then.

15. Maple is so good at hiding their feelings. It's like a big lie. They just sit there and look back at you all nicey-nice and innocent and everything, but inside, they are a big liar. Don't be fooled by their outward demeanor. I learned that after being their friend for years, and then, getting kicked to the side of the curb by them. Part of me is relieved, but part of me remembers the good days.

16. There is not much I can tell you about the events of Friday, May 13. Well, maybe I heard and saw a few things. The senior class arrived at the forest that morning. I hate being



outside, so I knew I would not enjoy this, but I had no choice. We did a team-bonding ropes course and I got a bad rope burn on my right forearm. I did overhear Maple, during the ropes course, talking to Peyton and Tam. Maple said it would be easy to get to the Southern Slip. “All you have to do is go through the wire, go around a big pile of dirt, and you are there.” I also overheard Connor Bagley say to another teacher after we got off the bus, “I just saw Tam trip and stumble in the parking lot. Tam seems really tired and out of it today.” The rest was a blur—from the talentless show to the distant, echoing scream that we all thought was a coyote, to the people running around and the yelling and loud whispers about someone dying...I knew that trip was going to be bad, but I never would have thought it would be THAT bad.

17. Maple could be a bully, but in a sneaky, charismatic way where you don’t realize what’s happening until they dump you and you are left friendless. I think some of that was because they were bullied in middle school themselves. The bully’s name was Bobby Mattulla. Bobby was mean, pure and simple. Middle school is a tough age because kids are old enough to know how to be mean but sometimes too young to have much of a conscience. Maple’s family were not “fancy,” while Bobby’s parents were pretty rich. Bobby gave Maple a nickname—he called them “Dirt.” Bobby was relentless. He would use the nickname all the time. In the halls at school, he would say to Maple, “How is it going today, Dirt?” The worst was during class. We often sat alphabetically, and Mattulla unfortunately came right after Mattox, so Bobby often sat right behind Maple. I usually sat pretty close since Penn is not far away alphabetically so I could see ... and hear ... everything. When the teacher was occupied at the front of the room, Bobby would lean close to Maple and in a creaky, whispery kind of voice quietly repeat the word “Diiirrrt! Diiirrrt! Diiirrrt!” in Maple’s ear. I knew it hurt. I could tell. But Maple never cried and never fought back. They just put their head down a little and stared at their desk while this went on. This continued for two whole years until the summer before high school. That is when Bobby’s family moved away, but I think the pain never left.

18. Is Maple crazy? I mean, I saw what I saw and heard what I heard, but I’m not an expert.

Shaun Penn  
Shaun Penn

Signed and sworn to before me  
This 15<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2022.

Kenneth Dortzbach  
Notary Public, State of Wisconsin  
My commission expires 2/22/2024

## **AFFIDAVIT OF RANDY RICK**

Randy Rick, being first duly sworn, states as follows:

1           1.       My name is Randy Rick, but most people around town call me Ranger Rick. I'm  
2   41 years old, and I'm originally from Clearwater. After graduating from Clearwater College with  
3   my bachelor's degree in wildlife management, I moved to Alaska with my high school sweetheart.

4           2.       While living in Alaska, I worked as a park ranger at Denali National Park. It was  
5   the perfect fit for me because I focused on the preservation of grizzly bear environments during  
6   my studies at Clearwater College. During college, I interned for a summer at Clearwater State  
7   Forest and Devil's Lake State Park.

8           3.       After working at Denali for five years, I was promoted to management. I supervised  
9   a team of park rangers and helped to manage the day-to-day functioning of the park. I worked in  
10  this capacity until 2012. In 2012, I moved back to Clearwater after a run in with the law. My ex-  
11  high school sweetheart lied about a fight we had, but as a result, I was charged with and convicted  
12  of disorderly conduct with a domestic abuse enhancer. My boss at Denali was able to pull a few  
13  strings to get me a job at Clearwater State Forest, but it meant that I would have to start as a ranger  
14  again and work my way back up.

15          4.       I accepted and began working at Clearwater State Forest in August 2012. I received  
16  some training during my internship, but the other interns and I mostly goofed around while  
17  cleaning up trails. When I returned in 2012, I received extensive training even though I had learned  
18  most of the stuff while working for Denali.

19          5.       A large portion of the orientation was dedicated to Clearwater State Forest itself.  
20  The park is approximately 6,000 acres. It contains hiking trails, most of which are Class 1;  
21  however, there are a few Class 2 trails and only one Class 3 trail.

22          6.       A Class 1 trail is one that is considered "easy" with minimal elevation and few  
23  obstacles. A Class 2 trail more difficult, may be off-trail, and may require a hiker to put their hands  
24  down for balance at times. A Class 3 trail is one that requires either scrambling or un-roped  
25  climbing.

26          7.       At any given time, the park has six rangers patrolling it. It is split into six, roughly  
27  equal areas. My personal favorite is Area 3; it has dense forests. Sometimes, I opt to walk around  
28  the area, rather than drive my truck around because I can "get lost" and think about things. Area 3  
29  also contains the Southern Slip, an old part of the Class 3 trail that is on top of a rocky outcropping  
30  that hugs the cliff's edge. The Southern Slip is kind of a natural oddity. The formation of the rocks  
31  make it such that there is a cave that is viewable from certain perspectives; however, accessing the  
32  cave is nearly impossible. The rockface below the cave is steep and has little in ways of  
33  footholds—it's like those gravelly rocks that give way with each step up. On top of the cave, there  
34  is a lip that provides an overhang. If someone were to try and access the cave from above, they  
35  would have to climb over that lip. The issue with that is that a lot of the overhang is formed of  
36  sandstone, which is very brittle and prone to breaking apart.

37          8.       I already knew about it, but during orientation, they make sure that all park rangers  
38  are aware of the mystery surrounding Southern Slip. Over the past 130 years, seventeen, now

1890s, deaths occurred at the Southern Slip. Is it dangerous? Yes. Does that stop local teenagers from risking their lives chasing after some legend? No.

9. I don't know how the rumor about Southern Slip started, but it goes that in the 1890s, a group of six hikers set out along the Class 3 trail looking for a cave near the Southern Slip. It was said that the cave mouth could be found under the outcropping upon which the Southern Slip sat. Inside, people thought that there was a large grotto with a pool, which was fed by a waterfall when it rained. The six hikers were last seen at dusk on the Southern Slip. That same night, a violent, unexpected thunderstorm passed through the park. The next day, park rangers found a tent that belonged to the hikers. They found the tent on the edge of the river that runs 250 feet below the cliff. Inside the tent, they found three bodies. Based on the conditions of the bodies, it was determined that the three hikers drowned before they fell from the cliff. After finding the hikers, search parties looked for the remaining hikers but could not find them. One of the missing hikers was a trust fund baby whose grandparents got rich in trading furs in the early 1800s. The grandparents created a trust that would be paid to the person or people who found the hikers.

10. They also found some black stones in pouches that hanged from the neck of each of the dead hikers. It would later be determined that the black stones were black tourmaline. The park has a visiting center with a display regarding the historical significance of the Southern Slip. The pouches and black stones were in that display, but there was a recent break in, during which those items were taken. Apparently, the black rock is supposed to have some sort of magical mumbo jumbo that protects you.

11. Supposedly, the Southern Slip is haunted. Some say that it's the ghosts of the hikers who died in the 1890s. Others say that it is some curse from the indigenous people in this area. I don't believe any of it. In the ten or so years that I have been here, I haven't seen a ghost.

12. I don't really get into the magic or ghost stuff, so I can't tell you too much about what these black rocks are supposed to do. But of the seventeen to die from trying to climb the Southern Slip, two-thirds of them had that black rock on them in some form, whether it was in a ring, a necklace, or just in their pocket.

13. Based on what those park rangers found in 1890, we think that the hikers found the cave and set up camp. When the storm came through, the lake flooded and pushed one tent through the mouth of the cave and over the cliff. Legend has it that the bodies of the three missing hikers are still in the cave, but if you ask me, it's more likely that they just wanted to get away from 1890s Clearwater.

14. Despite warnings of the danger, people still looked for the missing hikers. By 1950, eight people died while looking for the bodies of the hikers. Since people didn't want to listen, the State decided to close the Southern Slip in 1954. They rerouted the trail 20 yards away from the ledge, hoping this would deter people from trying to find the bodies of the missing hikers. But even this didn't stop people. Rangers continued finding people trying to locate the bodies and they were arrested. Unfortunately, three more people died too. Then, in 1968, the State determined that more deterrence was necessary, so they erected a fence along the Southern Slip to keep people from the cliff's edge. Fortunately, climbing the rockface is nearly impossible as it is crumbling, and it has been illegal to climb in the park since 1968. No one has ever died at the Southern Slip on my watch.

81           15.     Like most years, the senior class of the Clearwater High School decided to have  
82 their senior-year overnight in Clearwater State Forest. Normally, the most that us rangers have to  
83 worry about on senior night is some underage drinking. Senior night this year was different.

84           16.     Senior night occurred on May 13, 2022. I was working a double shift; my ex had  
85 been bothering me about child support a lot recently and until I get that management job, I'll be  
86 stuck maximizing my hours to make ends meet and to get my ex to stop bothering me. I got to HQ  
87 at 9:00 a.m. and was scheduled to be done around 1:00 a.m. Like normal, the seniors arrived at the  
88 park around 10:00 a.m. and set up their camps. They did a team-bonding ropes course and rangers  
89 gave guided tours in groups. I checked in-and-out on the kids, making sure nothing too rowdy was  
90 happening. Around 11:15 p.m., I headed back toward the campsite to check in on the kids.  
91 Everything seemed to be going smoothly.

92           17.     Then, about 15 minutes later, there was screaming in the forest. I could tell it was  
93 from the direction of the Southern Slip, so I ran that way. When I got there, I saw two of the  
94 children pointing down to the river. Despite everything happening so quickly, I saw that both of  
95 the kids had the pouches from the visitor center display hanging around their necks. I figured that  
96 I would have to deal with that at a different time.

97           18.     I didn't want to waste any time; I ran back to my truck and headed toward the  
98 riverbed. By the time I got there, it was about 11:59 p.m. I passed by the point where the tent from  
99 the hikers in 1890 landed, we are required to see it as part of orientation, and about ten feet from  
100 that point, it was a horrible scene. Bile raised in my throat, and it took all I had to not throw up on  
101 the spot.

102           19.     Even though I felt sick, I rushed over to the body, I would later find out it was Tam  
103 Casper. Their broken body landed on large rocks near the river. I knew that I wouldn't find  
104 anything, but I checked for a pulse. There was none. There wasn't anything hanging around Tam's  
105 neck, either. I had the chance to look at their hands. There weren't any scratches and it didn't  
106 appear that they had any bruising on their wrists. It looked like the only injuries resulted from them  
107 landing on the rocks. There were no signs that they hit any rocks or trees as they fell from the cliff.

108           20.     After overcoming the shock of finding their body, I looked at the rockface of the  
109 cliff. As I stood there, I thought about how this could have happened. The slope of the rockface is  
110 pretty gentle. A lot of the bodies that have fallen before, from old pictures that I have seen, had a  
111 lot of other injuries because they had hit rocks or trees on the way down. Given this, the only way  
112 that Tam's body could have fallen without having such injuries would either be from jumping off  
113 the cliff or from being pushed off of it. I didn't do a reconstruction or anything, but it's just  
114 common sense. I called 911 and they sent an officer and medical examiner.

115           21.     I didn't think to take pictures until the next day, when I photographed the southern  
116 slip with the cave area sort of hidden by trees, plus the area on top, down below where I found the  
117 body, and some of the path to get there. All those pictures are attached. My boss told me I did good  
118 work, and I'm hoping that means I'll finally get that promotion to management that I was looking  
119 for.

120           22.     I found out that Maple Mattox, the Defendant, had been one of the children at the  
121 top of the cliff on the night of May 13. I didn't see them from my angle at the ground level but I  
122 was told it was Maple and someone else.

123           23.     I was actually familiar with Maple due to an incident that occurred two or so weeks  
124 before Tam's death. I was patrolling Area 3 again when I saw some movement near the Southern  
125 Slip. I went to the fence and saw the Defendant walking around the area. I looked down at the wire  
126 fence and saw that a small portion had rusted and had been peeled back. The area was large enough  
127 to allow a small person to fit through. I called to the Defendant.

128           24.     At first, they didn't appear to hear me, but I continued to shout. After a few seconds,  
129 they looked over at me. I told them to come back because this area was dangerous. The Defendant  
130 took one more look at the cliff then walked back toward the fence. When they did, they told me  
131 that they had just gotten through the fence and that they had been checking the fence. The  
132 Defendant also said to me that they wouldn't go near the cliff because "everyone knows, if you  
133 get near the edge, you're certain to die." I asked for their name and whether they had a vehicle  
134 nearby. They said that they had left it down the trail quite a way.

135           25.     I offered to drive them back to the vehicle, which they accepted. When we got to  
136 it, I told them that I would have to contact the District Attorney's office because they had been  
137 somewhere where they weren't supposed to be. Maple just got in their vehicle and drove off. I  
138 called to the District Attorney's office about the incident. They said they would likely issue a  
139 citation for trespassing.

140           26.     I also had to report the trespassing to my supervisor. It went up the chain of  
141 command and eventually the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources was notified. They  
142 directed us to repair the fence immediately. My supervisor assigned this to me, and I ordered  
143 materials to repair it, but they hadn't arrived by May 13.

Randy Rick  
Randy Rick

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
this 16<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2022

Bryant Ray  
Notary Public, Clearwater County, WI  
My Commission is permanent.

## AFFIDAVIT OF MAPLE MATTOX

Maple Mattox, first being duly sworn, states as follows:

1           1.       My name is Maple Mattox. I'm 18 years old and I've lived in Clearwater my whole  
2 life. I, technically, just graduated from Clearwater High, but I'm not sure you can really call getting  
3 your diploma mailed to your parents' house, instead of walking across the stage because you've  
4 been charged with a homicide you didn't commit, "graduating." My life was just getting started,  
5 and now, it's ruined for something that wasn't my fault.

6           2.       My Dad says that he and my mom, who died when I was five, named me "Maple"  
7 because they knew I was sweet. I'm not sure that really fits. Then again, I have always loved being  
8 outside and in nature as much as possible. As long as I can remember, I've loved everything  
9 outdoors. When I was in middle school, my Dad and I got a Wisconsin State Park checklist, and  
10 over the years, we have camped together at most of them. Lucky for us, our favorite park is the  
11 one closest to home—the Clearwater State Forest. Growing up, we would go hiking there at least  
12 a few times a year.

13          3.       I guess it's fair to say I'm a bit of a risk taker, but that's just because I like to have  
14 fun. Nothing to me has ever been worse than being bored. Ugh. Peyton Cruz and I used to be called  
15 the "Dare Pair" at school because we were always daring each other to do things: start singing in  
16 the middle of online class, jump from that tree, etc. Just silly, high school kid stuff. I've never  
17 understood why so many people spend so much of their time being afraid to do much of anything.

18          4.       I mean, early in the pandemic our school had a virtual talent show (everything  
19 school related was virtual because of COVID), and I was one of only 3 students in the whole grade  
20 willing to participate! 3?! And that was at a time that I was just feeling terrible. I hated having  
21 virtual school and wanted to be around people. But, we couldn't be, so virtual talent show it was.  
22 I'd gotten pretty into using computer software to make EDM—electronic dance music for those  
23 who don't know. I played a track off of the mixtape I made, Sap and Synth. The track was called  
24 "Southern Slip." I can't play that track anymore.

25          5.       Going to virtual schooling was rough, I'll be honest. With just my Dad and me at  
26 home, it got really lonely when I wasn't able to be around my friends. So many people seemed to  
27 be totally cool just texting or Nudging, but COVID taught me that I need to be around people. It's  
28 an energy thing, I think. I started feeling angry at the world—like I wasn't a part of it but instead  
29 had to push against it to thrive. I think the only thing that got me through was those porch Math  
30 tutoring sessions with Peyton and the "phy ed" minutes logged at the climbing gym—I didn't care  
31 how cold it got or how much my muscles ached, it was just nice to be with another human.

32          6.       Shaun Penn and I used to be best friends, at least I thought. Now I wonder whether  
33 Shaun ever actually even really liked me or just found me fascinating and liked trying to show me  
34 off to other people, like an insect Shaun somehow trapped in a jar. I never thought about myself  
35 as being into different kinds of stuff or having "out there" ideas, but Shaun always seemed to love  
36 bringing up my ideas and interests around other people. Shaun would say, "Maple, tell them your  
37 thesis about Bobjack Cowperson and Nietzsche," or, "Maple, tell them what you really think  
38 happened at the Clearwater Alternative High School shooting." I wasn't shy about talking about  
39 my ideas, for sure, but I as high school went on I got the feeling that Shaun liked to make me seem  
40 more and more extreme than I actually ever was.

41           7.       Take, ghosts, for example. Do I believe in ghosts? Of course. Now, to be clear, I  
42 don't mean the Halloween white-sheet "Booooooooo" kind of ghosts. But to think that we as  
43 humans even have the ability to 100% understand all of the forces of energy and spirits in our  
44 world is way too human-centric, to me. But Shaun loved telling everyone we encountered that I  
45 was super into ghosts and wanted to find a poltergeist. A little much.

46           8.       Shaun even started to think that somehow my brain was wired differently—that I  
47 somehow didn't fear or feel the way "normal" people do. I think Shaun was just watching a bit too  
48 many Netflops true-crime docs and, as always, wanted to make me seem more out-there than I  
49 really am.

50           9.       It's no secret I found the mystery of the Southern Slip fascinating. I mean, I loved  
51 hiking in Clearwater State Forest and we have the Country's biggest mystery right in our backyard.  
52 Who wouldn't want to know more?

53           10.      Before our second semester math class senior year, I don't think I could have told  
54 you Tam Casper's name. I'd seen Tam around before COVID shut classes down, but it was obvious  
55 that Tam was uncomfortable around other people like, all the time.

56           11.      Tam and I got to know each other better in that math class, which was once class  
57 was back in person. I'm not sure I'd say we were best friends, but we spent a lot of time together.

58           12.      We both got something out of it, for sure. Tam didn't have many friends and was  
59 clearly afraid of people more than anything else. I helped get Tam out of Tam's shell and Tam  
60 helped me with things I really didn't want to do. Like, if I didn't want to go get myself a bag of  
61 CheezyWeezys from the vending machine, Tam would do it. If I really didn't want to figure out  
62 that math homework, Tam would do it.

63           13.      I'd poke fun at Tam a bit, sure, for being so shy—my favorite thing to do was raise  
64 my hand when the teacher asked who knew an answer and respond, "Tam does!" But at least that  
65 got Tam talking! If I'm being really honest, I was kind of jealous because Tam usually *did* know  
66 the answer. Tam was super smart.

67           14.      We had an understanding, at least that's what I thought. That's why it wasn't cool  
68 at all when Tam got us both in trouble for giving me some help with a quiz. Tam had told me it  
69 would be fine if I snapped some pictures of Tam "showing the work" on a quiz as all math teachers  
70 seem to love to say. But as I was doing it, Tam started fake coughing really loudly so of course the  
71 teacher looked up and thought I was cheating because I was taking pictures of Tam's quiz from  
72 the seat behind Tam.

73           15.      Tam and I both got detention for that alleged "cheating" incident. It turned into an  
74 even bigger thing for me. I'd written an essay about Nihilism for philosophy class that my teacher  
75 thought was good enough to submit as an entry for a small scholarship to study philosophy, called  
76 "The Everything of Nothing." I was really excited when my teacher told me that I'd been named  
77 a finalist for the scholarship. It wasn't a huge amount of money on the line or anything, but I was  
78 still excited about it. Well, Tam making that big showing in class as if I had been cheating resulted  
79 in me getting disqualified as a finalist for the scholarship. I found that out about a week before our  
80 senior trip.

81           16.     I know Tam didn't mean that to happen, but it was still a bummer. I'm not going to  
82 say I wasn't irked about it. I wrote a whole new EDM album after that, so I guess that's a positive.  
83 A lot of distorted synth.

84           17.     It was during detention for the "cheating" that I started telling Tam about Southern  
85 Slip. After talking about it for a while, Tam was the one who first suggested that we should actually  
86 try and solve the mystery to get the trust money. I was kind of surprised and wondered if Tam was  
87 trying to make amends in some way. But if Tam wanted to make it up to me, solving the Southern  
88 Slip mystery was a good way to do it.

89           18.     I remember I was complaining to Tam that I had to do all that pointless math  
90 tutoring, and Tam said, "no one would need stupid tutoring or anything for that matter if they  
91 solved the Southern Slip mystery—they'd be the most famous and richest people in Clearwater!"  
92 Honestly, I didn't think Tam was the type to care about becoming rich and famous in Clearwater  
93 by solving the mystery—Tam was uncomfortable with attention in math class! But Tam said that  
94 if we found the missing hikers and got the trust reward money, we'd "run" Clearwater and Tam  
95 was tired of other people telling Tam what to do. Peyton told Tam that solving the mystery would  
96 "talk for Tam." The money, of course, was an exciting idea too.

97           19.     I'll admit that once Tam got the idea in my head that maybe we could actually solve  
98 the mystery and get the money, I had a hard time thinking about anything else. I kept dreaming  
99 about the computer set-up, drum machines, speakers and other equipment I could buy. My Dad  
100 and I had talked about doing a road trip to tour national parks after graduation, and I also thought  
101 it would mean a lot if I could pay for that trip. It just seemed ridiculous to me that no one had been  
102 able to solve the mystery in 130 years!

103           20.     I asked my World History teacher, "Bags," (I guess their real name is Bagley, but  
104 that's not what we called them), about it. I think that even though I'd been a bit of a jokester in  
105 Bags' class, that Bags liked how interested I was in history. Honestly, a lot of the time of me joking  
106 around in Bags' class was to just try and get other people interested in history, too. There are so  
107 many things from the past that we still don't understand, and the Southern Slip mystery was of  
108 course a huge one—and it was right *there*! Bags told me more about the hikers who died. And, in  
109 really shocking news given that Bags had always seemed to me like the sort of person who would  
110 *never* break the rules, Bags told me that when they were a teenager they were able to slip through  
111 a small hole in the wire fence by the Southern Slip. That gave me a gameplan.

112           21.     Peyton was totally on board with wanting to try and solve the mystery with Tam  
113 and me. Shaun, not so much. It was obvious to me that Shaun was jealous that I was hanging out  
114 more and more with Tam and Peyton. Honestly, Shaun wouldn't have had anything to be jealous  
115 about if Shaun weren't always so afraid of doing anything fun. Shaun just always wanted to stay  
116 at home and play with Shaun's cats inside their big screened-in outdoor "catio." As I always said  
117 to Shaun, animals are part of *nature*. Nature should be outside! Finally, a few weeks before the  
118 senior trip, I told Shaun that they were too much of a drag to be worth my time. I haven't talked to  
119 Shaun since. That's fine with me—I spent my time discussing different theories and approaches  
120 with Tam and Peyton.

121           22.     Anyone who knows anything about the Southern Slip knows that there are spirit  
122 forces involved. We didn't want them in our way, so we all got black tourmaline stones to bring  
123 with us. Well, by "we" got them I told Tam to get them for us and Tam did. If you haven't heard



of it before, it's a type of crystal that repels negative energy. About a month before our trip, Tam got me a necklace from the rock shop to wear.

23. A few weeks before the senior trip, I went to Clearwater State Forest for a hike. I was frustrated because I wanted Tam to come along but Tam had to take care of their younger siblings, which Tam had to do a lot. Peyton's parent was making them do extra sessions with the math tutor, torture I was luckily spared from. Peyton didn't seem to think they needed to go back anyway—we had gone a couple times earlier in the year to start scoping things out.

24. The hiking trail itself of course hasn't gotten anywhere close to the Southern Slip since they closed the slip in the 1950s. Yes, I read the park sign that said when they closed the slip. And the wire fence they put around the area was, let's be real, a joke—if anyone actually cared about it or thought it was actually dangerous, there would be an *actual* barrier, not a rusted wire fence that could so easily be pulled back with small pliers. That was all it took for me to get through—in fact, Peyton and I had opened the fence up the last time we were there, and it just needed to be pried back open. I really wasn't close to the edge *at all*, I couldn't even see over the lip of the slip. But all of a sudden, I heard Park Ranger Rick yell at me to “get away from there.” They said it was dangerous and that I could fall and die and be “just like the rest.” I walked back through the fence and told them that I wasn't stupid and that I knew it was dangerous to be too close to a cliff.

25. Needless to say, my Dad was not pleased when I got that trespassing ticket. But my Dad understood how much I love hiking, and as I said only about a million times, I really did not get close to the edge. But when I told Tam, Tam was as excited as I was that it really was that easy to get through the fence. I remember that even though Peyton was not keen on going back through the fence, Peyton seemed concerned that the Park Ranger Rick would have fixed the fence before our senior overnight. I assured Peyton that if Park Ranger Rick wanted to fix the fence, Park Ranger Rick would have done that after the last time we cut it open. I told Peyton, “Ranger Rick is as rusty as that fence.”

26. About a week before the senior overnight, Tam, Peyton came up with our plan. We agreed that we would sneak away from our tents in the night, hike to the Southern Slip, and that Tam and I would climb down the cliff to find the cave. Peyton had told me that they were afraid of going through the fence and climbing down. I was worried that Peyton would chicken out of the whole thing. But I told Peyton that they wouldn't have to actually climb down the slip because we wanted a lookout, anyway. That seemed to calm Peyton down.

27. Tam had read lots of sites on cave exploration and rock-climbing safety and the three of us agreed that Tam would be the leader once we were there. Tam, Peyton, and I actually even went to the Clearwater rock-climbing gym to get better at rock-climbing. It was super easy.

28. I didn't go back to Clearwater State Forest again before the senior overnight. We were all super excited when we arrived that morning, though I do remember Peyton saying it seemed poor planning on the school's part to make our senior overnight on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>.

29. You know what I was *not* excited about that day? The ropes course! Nothing kills the joy and excitement of being outdoors in the wilderness faster than having to do controlled trust and team-building exercises. And why did we need to be a team if we were all graduating soon and going our separate ways? Tam, Peyton and I just wanted to get to mystery-solving. Bags kept

saying, “Teamwork makes the dream work!” Yeah, I had a different team that was ready to actually make something happen. Other than the ropes course, though, the day was really nice, honestly. I haven’t enjoyed a day that much since. Tam, Peyton and I kept joking as we had our dinner and sat around the campfire in the forest waiting for the talent show to start that it would soon be time to put on our “slippers” and get to work. We waited until things were underway and then Tam created some kind of diversion so we could walk away unnoticed.

30. As planned, we walked in silence toward the Southern Slip. As soon as we were away from the campsite, we each put on head lamps that I’d taken from my Dad’s camping box in the garage. I remember feeling the energy and excitement. We all knew we were on the precipice of solving Clearwater’s oldest and most confounding mystery. And, no surprise, I was right—no change in the fence other than the rusted piece of I had plied in one direction having been un-plied. Un-plied? Re-plied? Anyway, I just repeated what I had done before and the three of us were able to walk through, no problem. It was much darker than the other times we had gone, and this was Tam’s first time there, so I had to direct them a bit.

31. When we got close to the cliff’s edge, we started walking single-file to be careful. I remember either Tam or Peyton asking where the climbing gear was—apparently one of them thought I was supposed to bring it, but I don’t remember that conversation at all. As far as I knew, we were free climbing like we had practiced. As we’d agreed, Tam was in front of me and Peyton was behind me. Tam approached the edge of the cliff and leaned Tam’s head over the lip that hangs out over the edge and looked down. Tam then came back to Peyton and I, who were standing a few feet back. Tam said that based on what Tam could see below, the conditions were good enough that we should climb down right away.

32. Unfortunately, at this point, Peyton started freaking out. Needless to say, that was *not* part of the plan. Peyton said there was no reason for us to think we would be able to do better than anyone else at solving the mystery. Peyton said we were being stupid, that this was super dangerous, and that we should just go back to camp. I could tell that Peyton was scared, and it was starting to get a bit windy, but we had a plan and we knew we would be scared but would have to just push through it. I said no, that we had a plan and needed to start climbing. Peyton then started screaming and crying, “PLEASE, LET’S GO BACK.” I told Peyton that no one was surprised that Peyton was being such a chicken and asked Tam if Tam was still going to go forward with the plan or be a chicken like Tam. Tam said, “No, I’m climbing down just like we said we would.” I said, “do it, Tam.” Peyton then turned and moved away from the cliff. I was worried Peyton would get us caught with all their noise.

33. I know that Peyton has said that Tam got scared at this point, too. That’s not true. *Peyton* was scared and I think now, looking back, Peyton just wants to make themselves feel better about what happened to Tam. But Tam and I were both ready to do what we’d set out to do. Tam was never crying until Tam fell.

34. While Peyton backed away, Tam told me to come closer to the edge to see. We both laid on our stomachs and looked over the edge of the cliff. Tam showed me a small rock ledge not far below and said that they would slide down there and that I should then follow. I nodded my head. Tam then turned so that their feet were dangling over the cliff with their stomach against the cliff, and they started scaling their body over the edge of the cliff to reach that ledge. Tam was looking fine until all of a sudden Tam lost their footing. I immediately reached my arms out and grabbed Tam’s wrists. Tam was screaming, “HELP ME, HELP ME.” Tam was not a large person,

210 but I was really struggling to hold on and be able to pull Tam up. It felt like Tam was going to pull  
211 me over. I started yelling for Peyton to come and help me, but Peyton never did.

212 35. I kept trying to pull Tam up and Tam was trying to claw at the side of the cliff wall,  
213 but Tam was slipping further and further through my hands. All of a sudden, a big wind gust came,  
214 and Tam slipped out of my hands and was gone. Forever.

215 36. I don't know how long I stared down over the cliff, but I was apparently staring  
216 down over the cliff when Bags arrived. I think I was in shock. I remember Bags having to help me  
217 get up and away from the cliff, but I don't remember anything else from that night.

218 37. I cannot believe that Peyton has said it was *my* fault that Tam wanted to find the  
219 cave and died. It was Tam's idea in the first place, and the three of us came up with the plan  
220 together. If anything, Peyton was the one who was afraid and didn't help Tam when Tam was  
221 dangling from my arms. I don't think I'll ever get the image of Tam's terrified face dangling from  
222 my arms out of my head.

Maple Mattox  
Maple Mattox

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
this 7th day of July, 2022.

Hannah Jurss  
Notary Public, Clearwater County, WI  
My Commission is permanent.

## **AFFIDAVIT OF CONNOR BAGLEY**

Connor Bagley, first being duly sworn, states as follows:

1           1.       My name is Connor Bagley. I am currently a teacher at Clearwater High School,  
2 and have been for the last five years, although if you asked any of the students, they would swear  
3 I was a student teacher because I look so young. I graduated from Clearwater High School myself,  
4 but ended up leaving town to attend college and pursue my teaching career. After my mom got  
5 sick, I ended up moving back to Clearwater and have been here ever since.

6           2.       For as long as I can remember, I have been very interested in history. While other  
7 kids would be playing kickball or soccer at recess, I would be sitting against the side of the building  
8 reading my history books. While I really loved reading and learning about some of the larger world  
9 conflicts like WWII or the Cold War, I was also really fascinated with the mystery surrounding  
10 the missing hikers in Clearwater State Forest from the 1800s. Something about it being so close to  
11 home was really interesting for me.

12          3.       Basically, the story is that six hikers ventured out to find this cave mouth that  
13 supposedly opens into a large cave with a pool fed by a waterfall. The problem was that this cave  
14 is (according to legend) situated under a cliff that drops 250 feet, now known as "Southern Slip."  
15 It is a strange formation because you can see the cave from certain angles, but it is virtually  
16 impossible to make it down to the cave. According to the mystery, the six hikers set up camp, but  
17 a huge thunderstorm came through that night and led to their unfortunate demise. Three of the  
18 hikers were found deceased in their tent at the bottom of the Southern Slip, but the other three were  
19 never found, and still have not been to this day.

20          4.       Over the years, those who were brave enough to venture out onto the Southern Slip  
21 would attempt to find the remains of the three missing hikers, but no one has ever succeeded. In  
22 fact, that area was so dangerous that multiple people plunged to their deaths over the years, until  
23 the Clearwater State Forest permanently closed the Southern Slip and put up large wire fencing to  
24 deter people away from the cliff.

25          5.       Another twist to this mystery of Southern Slip is that the three hikers that were  
26 found all those years ago had a bag of black rocks hanging from their necks, later determined to  
27 be black tourmaline. Over the years, a lot of the hikers who died trying to make it to the bottom of  
28 Southern Slip had the same black tourmaline with them.

29          6.       Once when I was a teenager, I decided that I wanted to get out of the books and go  
30 explore that area for myself. I was able to slip through a small hole in the wire fence and walk  
31 towards the Southern Slip. Truth be told, I got my hands on some of these black tourmaline rocks  
32 when I was a teenager and brought them with me that night. I was by myself, so it could have been  
33 nerves or just adrenaline, but as I was approaching the old trail that used to lead to the Southern  
34 Slip, I started hearing what sounded like whispers in the wind. I remember feeling like my heart  
35 dropped into my stomach, and my whole body got cold. I immediately turned around and ran back  
36 to the fencing, dropped the black stones, slipped right back through and never returned again. The  
37 rumor is that Southern Slip is haunted and given the way I felt that day, I do not doubt that it really  
38 is, and those black stones definitely have something to do with it. I still like to read stories about  
39 the mystery of the missing hikers, but I never planned to go back to that part of the State Forest  
40 again.

41           7.       When I moved back to Clearwater to teach, the school had an opening for a World  
42 History teacher, which was perfect for me and my interests. I like to think that I made the class  
43 interesting for the students, and often heard that I was considered one of the “cool teachers.”  
44 Reputation did not matter as much to me—I was just happy to be teaching what I was passionate  
45 about. Everyone called me “Bags” and I thought it was pretty cool to have a teacher nickname. I  
46 would often encourage students to pull their pranks at my house to get it out of their systems in a  
47 safe space. I can’t tell you how much toilet paper I’ve pulled out of my trees, forks and flamingos  
48 I’ve taken out of my lawn, and saran wrap I’ve cut off my car. But it’s worth it if it helps my  
49 students avoid getting into real trouble on the weekends.

50           8.       Each year, the senior class has one final overnight trip to celebrate the end of their  
51 high school careers. This overnight trip always happens at the Clearwater State Forest. Although  
52 the forest covers 6,000 acres and includes many trails and clearings for camping, the senior trip is  
53 always held in a clearing that is about a fifteen minute walk from the Southern Slip.

54           9.       Each year, a couple of teachers are picked to be chaperones for the trip. Normally,  
55 the school first asks for volunteers, but if there are not enough volunteers, names are drawn to see  
56 which teachers get to go and chaperone a bunch of rowdy teenagers for the weekend. In my first  
57 four years teaching I was lucky enough that other teachers volunteered themselves to go. In April  
58 2022, though, I was given the news that I would be one of the teacher chaperones for the senior  
59 trip. My heart immediately sank. I had not been back to that area of the Clearwater State Forest  
60 since I snuck through the fence years ago. Worse yet, this particular trip was set to start on Friday  
61 the 13th—what could possibly go wrong?

62           10.      The buses pulled up to the Clearwater State Forest around 10:00 a.m. on May 13,  
63 2022. Right as we were getting off the bus, I saw one of the students, Tam Casper, stumble a bit  
64 across the parking lot. I’m not sure if they slipped on the steps leading off the bus, or something  
65 on the ground, but I do remember making a comment to one of the other chaperones that Tam  
66 seemed really out of it. From what I observed at school, Tam was always a really quiet kid and  
67 most of the time Tam was by themselves. Tam did not seem to have many, if any, friends and was  
68 not involved in anything at school. I had Tam in class one semester and they only spoke if I  
69 specifically asked a question, and the answers were always short. After Tam stumbled, I saw Maple  
70 go up and start talking to them. I was a little surprised, as I did not know that Maple and Tam were  
71 friends, especially because their personalities could not be more different. I decided that I should  
72 keep an eye on them the rest of the trip. Something about their interaction did not sit right with  
73 me.

74           11.      Other than Tam stumbling, the day seemed to go relatively smoothly, and the kids  
75 were directed to team bonding activities and tours of the forest that took up most of the afternoon.  
76 I was still pretty on edge most of the afternoon, but by the time we got to dinner, I finally felt my  
77 heart rate coming down. It felt nice that I could start to relax and have a little bit of fun joking back  
78 and forth with the students that I had had in classes over the years.

79           12.      I had Maple Mattox in World History during their junior year, and they were  
80 nothing but trouble when the year started, even with classes that year being by zoom for a period  
81 of time. Maple would always act up in class, change their zoom name and background constantly,  
82 distract the other students from lectures and joke around. However, as the year progressed and  
83 with classes returning back to being in person, I could see their interest in the subject matter  
84 growing, and their behavior started to calm down. I had many conversations with Maple about

different topics, from current events to answering questions they had about different times of history.

13. Throughout their junior year, Maple started asking more about the mystery surrounding Southern Slip and the Clearwater Forest Mystery. Maple seemed to be really enthralled about the mystery of the missing hikers, but I never thought it was a concerning amount of interest. In fact, I understood the fascination as I used to have the same obsession when I was their age. Toward the end of that school year, I did tell Maple about the time I slipped through the fence close to the Southern Slip, and what happened when I did. This was the first and only time I told anyone about my experience in the forest that night.

14. I also had Peyton Cruz in class for World History their junior year, but in a different section than Maple. Peyton was interesting to have in class to say the least. You know that feeling you get when you do not like someone, but there is no particular reason as to why? That is how I felt about Peyton. I know, I know, I am not supposed to be vocal about my dislike of my students, but I can't help it with Peyton. Any time there was a distraction in class, Peyton was involved. Any time I could hear whispering while my back was turned, I knew it was Peyton. Any time I had to scold someone for having their phone out during class, it was Peyton. I tried not to let it get to me and distract from my teaching, but sometimes it was really hard to ignore. The one prank Maple and Peyton pulled off at my house was to duct tape a headless doll to my attic window. I have to say, that one was just plain creepy. I have no idea how they climbed up there, and it really made me uneasy. If I had to guess, I'd say Peyton was the brains behind that idea.

15. From what I observed around the school, Maple and Shaun Penn were glued together at the hip for the first few years of high school. If Maple was there, so was Shaun. Based on their interactions, it seemed like Maple really looked up to Shaun, kind of like the admiration a younger sibling has for their older sibling. I did notice, though, that Maple and Shaun started to drift apart when Maple and Peyton started to get closer. Based on my observations, it seemed like Shaun was getting a little bit jealous of Maple and Peyton's relationship. Shaun would try and be included in Maple and Peyton's inside jokes and mischief and banter, but it always seemed awkward. I could tell there was some animosity there from Shaun, but it didn't seem to bother Maple. By the time that the senior trip came along, Maple and Shaun didn't seem to talk at all anymore. As I saw that friendship unravel, I realized Maple can be very charismatic and suck people in, but then dispose of people when they were no longer useful to them. That is why I didn't quite trust it when I saw the attention they were suddenly putting toward Tam.

16. Friday night of the senior trip was going pretty well, or so I thought. I did continue to keep an eye on Tam and Maple throughout the day, but nothing about their interactions seemed too off. I did see them whispering with each other, but that in and of itself is not really that suspicious. From what I could tell, it really did seem like they had developed some sort of friendship with one another. Peyton was also involved in a lot of the whispering which did make me nervous given my opinion of Peyton from class, but again, nothing else seemed out of the ordinary.

17. The students finished their activities, had dinner, and were hanging out by the campfire making s'mores and joking around with one another while the talent show was going on. Around 10:30 p.m., Tam approached me while I was sitting by the fire and told me that a group of students had snuck off and were smoking pot and making out in the woods. I had no reason to think that Tam would lie to me about something like that, and with how shy they were, I knew it

probably took a lot to come up to me and call someone out. But, I definitely had some pause given Tam and Maple's interactions throughout the day. Ultimately, though, I figured I should probably go investigate Tam's claims; I did not want any of the kids to get in trouble on this trip. Tam pointed me in the direction of the forest away from the Southern Slip and I headed into the woods to find the students Tam mentioned. I walked for about ten minutes into the woods, but did not see any kids, or smell any pot. Annoyed at being sent on a wild goose chase, I turned around and walked back to the campsite.

18. As soon as I returned to the campsite, a group of students approached me and informed me that Maple, Tam and Peyton, had headed in the direction of Southern Slip. My heart started racing immediately. Not only was I not supposed to let kids sneak away from camp, I was definitely not supposed to let kids sneak off towards Southern Slip.

19. I started to walk towards the area of the fence that I knew had the small hole in it when I heard screaming. Everything in my body wanted me to turn around, but my mind was focused on Maple, Tam and Peyton. I ran to the fence and as I was approaching, Peyton was running up from the other side and was absolutely hysterical. It was hard to make out their words between sobs, but I distinctly remember them saying "Maple made us do it!" I did not think it was possible for my heart to drop any further into my stomach, but it did when I heard Peyton say those words.

20. I yelled at Peyton to go back to camp and get more help, and slipped through the fence like I did all of those years ago. I ran down the old path to the Southern Slip and found Maple on their stomach, with their hands reaching over the edge of the cliffside. They kept muttering "they left me, they left me" over and over again. Maple's affect was flat, like they were in shock over something that had happened. Even with the flat affect, there were tears streaming down Maple's face. Tam was nowhere to be seen. I pulled Maple away from the edge of the cliff and they collapsed back onto the ground like they forgot how to use their legs. It took three teacher chaperones to help Maple to their feet and walk them back to the fence.

21. The whole night seemed to crawl at a snail's pace. The ranger, police, and medical examiner all showed up and eventually we were informed that Tam had fallen off Southern Slip. I knew as soon as I heard that Tam had fallen that there was no way they had survived.

22. I'm still a teacher at Clearwater High School. I thought the school was going to fire me for letting some of the kids slip away. All I know is that the school is never going to have another senior overnight trip at Clearwater State Forest, and I am never going back there. Ever.

Connor Bagley  
Connor Bagley

Subscribed and sworn before me  
on this 18th day of July, 2022

Larissa Dallman  
Notary Public, Clearwater County Wisconsin  
My Commission: is permanent.

## **AFFIDAVIT OF FRAN FLICK**

Fran Flick, being first duly sworn, states as follows:

1           1.       I am an adult resident of the State of Wisconsin. I make this affidavit based on  
2       personal knowledge, the documents I reviewed regarding Maple Mattox, and based on my  
3       professional knowledge and expertise.

4           2.       I am a forensic psychologist; I am not a medical doctor. I have my Ph.D. in Clinical  
5       Psychology, where I did some pretty groundbreaking research on the relationship between THC  
6       consumption and mental health in teens. This was back in the time where it was hard to do any  
7       research related to THC, so it was a big deal. Only anecdotal data was available, so I had to  
8       coordinate with parents who were willing to allow their teens to serve as anonymous case study  
9       subjects, and then work closely with those teens and their health care professionals. It was intense  
10      and sparked my interest in working with troubled youth.

11          3.       After I completed my Ph.D., I practiced clinical psychology in private practice for  
12      five years, further honing my interest in severely mentally ill persons who commit crimes.

13          4.       I went on to work for the Clearwater County Health Department for 18 years,  
14      evaluating patients to determine whether criminal defendants were competent to stand trial. The  
15      Health Department didn't like that I was publishing articles about my observations without their  
16      permission, and, frankly, I didn't want to work for an employer that wouldn't support my cutting-  
17      edge research, so we parted ways in 2020.

18          5.       Now I teach forensic psychology at Clearwater College. As an adjunct professor, I  
19      am free to do whatever work I want on the side, including continuing my research. However, I am  
20      still figuring out how to get the data I need for my research without the steady stream of subjects  
21      I had with the County, so I serve as a consultant psychologist on criminal cases to support myself  
22      as I set up the infrastructure and seek funding to continue my research.

23          6.       My consulting work has taken off, and, frankly, has been so lucrative that I might  
24      just stick with this instead of continuing my research. As a consultant, since 2020, I have been  
25      hired as a defense witness in over 50 cases, and I have been hired as a prosecution witness in six  
26      cases. Most prosecutors just want to lock up mentally ill citizens without treatment and without a  
27      chance to function in the community. Our mental health system is totally broken, and in my  
28      opinion, prosecutors are a huge part of the problem. Failing to recognize that people's actions are  
29      caused by illnesses they cannot control is blatant discrimination based on mental disability. I am  
30      pretty outspoken about those opinions, which is why I think prosecutors haven't been hiring me  
31      as much. To the best of my knowledge, no court has ever barred or restricted my testimony.

32          7.       I am not Maple's treating psychotherapist. I was hired by Maple's defense counsel  
33      to testify as an expert witness. I receive \$300/hour in compensation for my services. I have  
34      expended 36.5 hours on this case, mostly reviewing records and conducting interviews. The  
35      information I reviewed is the sort of information reasonably and regularly relied upon by experts  
36      in my field.

37          8.       I interviewed Maple three times, each session lasting two hours. The medical  
38      records I reviewed included the following:



- a. Entire medical history from Maple's pediatrician;
- b. School psychiatric testing records from grade school and middle school;
- c. Psychotherapy notes from when Maple saw a child psychologist between the ages of nine and twelve.

9. I interviewed Maple's father for two hours.

10. Based upon my interviews and record review, I have diagnosed Maple with Borderline Personality Disorder and Depersonalization-Derealization Disorder. General information about these disorders is available on Mayo Clinic's website. The website has a lot of valuable information, and I often consult it when diagnosing patients. I will provide a brief description of each here, but further information can be found in the attached articles:

- a. Borderline personality disorder is a type of mental health disorder that impacts interpersonal relationships, everyday function, self-image, and ability to manage emotions. It can result in fear of abandonment or being alone, causing people to push others away before they can be pushed away themselves. It can result in impulsiveness and frequent mood swings, appearing to change one's perception of a person rapidly and without prompting, and also rapidly changing goals or values. It can also result in risky behavior, paranoia with respect to relationships, and disproportionate anger. People who underwent childhood trauma are at increased risk of developing borderline personality disorder.
- b. Depersonalization-Derealization Disorder occurs when fleeting episodes of depersonalization or derealization turn persistent or recurrent. In a depersonalization episode, one feels as to they are outside their own selves—observing themselves, feeling like they are not in control of their own actions, and/or feeling numb to the world around one's self or otherwise not feeling emotions in connection to the human experience. Derealization occurs when someone feels alienated from their surroundings, like they are in a dream, and emotionally disconnected from their loved ones. It can cause distorted perceptions of the world, in relation to time, distance, size, and shape. This Disorder can also be caused by childhood trauma.

11. In my opinion, Maple's mental health disorders stem from trauma Maple experienced after their mother passed away. It is unknown whether Maple has a genetic disposition to these disorders or whether their brain was susceptible to developing mental illness prior to the traumatic event. Detailed brain scans and DNA research could possibly provide some answers, but those have not been performed on Maple.

12. Despite having been seen regularly by a pediatrician, Maple was never referred to a mental health professional after they stopped seeing a psychologist at age twelve. That may be due to the fact that people who develop these mental illnesses are often asymptomatic until early adulthood. It could also be that the stress and isolation related to COVID hastened onset.

13. Maple's childhood psychologist did not diagnose Maple with anything other than mild depression and the school testing provided no useful information. That may be because school

psychologists' tools are more limited than in a clinical setting, and they usually have too many kids and too little time. This is just my opinion, but I think school psychologists are told not to diagnose children with mental health diseases because then the school is required to provide services. I can't believe nobody saw what I believe is painfully obvious in Maple. The adults in Maple's life failed them. Maple could have been helped, and now they are facing life in prison. Our state needs to stop locking up mentally ill citizens, especially mentally ill children.

14. Maple's Borderline Personality Disorder exhibits through intense mood swings and an unrealistic sense of their abilities and accomplishments. Maple's Depersonalization-Derealization Disorder primarily exhibits through having a blurry sense of reality and detachment from their true emotions and the emotions of others. In my opinion, Maple does not suffer from delusions or memory lapses, and Maple is able to distinguish reality from fantasy and fact from fiction.

15. Because of these disorders, which Maple has no control over, Maple lacks the ability to appreciate danger. For example, most people without mental health challenges can look both ways before crossing the street and make a realistic assessment as to the likelihood of being hit by an oncoming car. If the car is 200 yards away and traveling slowly, most people determine they can safely cross, whereas if a car is 50 yards away and speeding, they determine crossing is too dangerous and wait for the car to pass before crossing. Maple's condition, however, makes it impossible for them to assess the danger of a speeding car. This could be compared to someone with impaired vision who would not be able to physically assess the danger of crossing the street. With both conditions, the body simply does not allow the person to make an informed decision as to the danger.

16. Based on my assessment of Maple and my review of Maple's medical records, I can say to a reasonable degree of professional certainty that Maple was unable to appreciate the recklessness of the situation or understand the danger that night on the Southern Slip. Instead, Maple was nearly blinded by the desire to be seen by others as victorious—as someone who can win against all odds—as someone who can do things nobody else can do. Maple was fixated on the result without having any connection to their emotions, the emotions of the others around them, or the objective physical danger. Maple was unable to realistically assess the danger of the situation.

17. During my interview with Maple's father, I learned the following: Maple's personality shifted during the pandemic. Maple experienced intense mood swings to a degree they had never experienced before. I learned that Maple would vacillate between depression and elation, and Maple would exhibit dangerous ideas and behaviors that appeared to alleviate the feelings of depression. Based upon the information I learned, Maple often talked about the Clearwater Forest mystery and shared plans of climbing the cliff to find the hidden cave. Maple's father told Maple never to attempt that because of the danger, but Maple would just bring the subject up a few days later as though Maple's father had never said anything.

18. During my interview with Maple, they described what I call episodes of dissociative feelings, which they described as feeling they were observing themselves from the outside. Maple explained that after their mother died, Maple would often pretend they belonged to a different family, one with two living parents, and that Maple would only observe themselves from the outside looking in.

123           19.     Maple reported being physically fit and suffering from no physical ailments, except  
124 for a recurring ingrown toenail.

125           20.     If Maple was the ringleader in convincing others to join in the quest to solve the  
126 Clearwater Forest mystery, Maple's premeditation was not of murder, but 100% focus on the glory  
127 of finding the cave and solving the mystery. Pushing someone off a cliff would not have been  
128 consistent with Maple's mental state. Furthermore, Maple had no appreciation of the  
129 dangerousness of the situation and in the moment, was incapable of understanding why the other  
130 friends wanted to turn back, and was incapable of forming awareness about the risk associated  
131 with their plan. That laser focus on success and glory would have been exacerbated by Maple's  
132 friends choosing to join—they would have perceived their choice to join and continue as support  
133 of a mutual goal, and anyway, it's not like Maple made them come along.

134           21.     I am aware that Maple has crossed the street many times and has never been hit by  
135 a car.

Fran Flick

Fran Flick

Subscribed and sworn to before me

On this 3rd day of August, 2022.

Andie Bensky

State of Wisconsin, County of Clearwater

My commission is permanent.

## Clearwater Police Department

## Incident Report

Case Number: 05-22-13

<i>Date/Time Reported</i> 05/14/2022 12:04 a.m.	<i>Nature of Incident</i> Homicide	<i>Case Status</i> Closed
<i>Date/Time Occurred</i> 05/13/2022 11:30 p.m.	<i>Case Outcome/Disposition</i> Referred to District Attorney’s Office for Charging	
<i>Location of Incident</i> Clearwater State Forest		

### Assigned Units

			<i>Assign</i>	<i>Arrive</i>	<i>Clear</i>
Assigned	Offc. Sam DuGoode	CPD	12:05 a.m.	12:09 a.m.	7:16 a.m.

### Suspect

<b>Mattox, Maple</b>	<i>Birth Date:</i>	<i>Age at Inc.:</i>
Address	<i>Gender:</i>	<i>Race:</i>
Address 2	<i>Hair:</i>	<i>Eyes:</i>
Home Phone:	<i>Height:</i>	<i>Weight:</i>

### Complainant

<b>Rick, Randy</b>	<i>Birth Date:</i>	<i>Age at Inc.:</i>
Address	<i>Gender:</i>	<i>Race:</i>
Address 2	<i>Hair:</i>	<i>Eyes:</i>
Home Phone:	<i>Height:</i>	<i>Weight:</i>

### Report Notes

I was dispatched to the Clearwater State Forest. At approximately 2405, Randy Rick, a ranger at the forest, called and advised that there had been a death at the forest. I was the closest unit to the scene. I made my way to the location, described by Ranger Rick, and I arrived on the scene at approximately 2409.

#### *Contact with Randy Rick*

I first made contact with Randy Rick upon my arrival at the scene. They explained that it was Clearwater High's Senior night. They further stated that around 2315 they arrived at the campsite where all of the students were staying. Ranger Rick continued by stating that about 15 minutes later, there was a scream. Due to the scream, Ranger Rick went to the Southern Slip where they saw two of the students. Those students were pointing toward the river and Ranger Rick said that the students could barely speak. Ranger Rick then went to the bottom of the Southern Slip and found the body of the deceased. After confirming that the deceased no longer had a pulse, Ranger Rick called dispatch.

Ranger Rick then walked me over to the body. The body was clear of abrasions, but it appeared that it had many broken bones. To confirm, I also checked for a pulse and there was none. After this initial examination of the body, I called for back up to help control the growing crowd and for the coroner's office.

#### *Contact with Connor Bagley*

An individual, identified as Connor Bagley via Wisconsin driver's license, approached me after I made the calls to dispatch and the coroner's office. Bagley stated that they are a teacher at Clearwater High School. They identified the deceased as Tam Casper, one of their students. Bagley explained that they were one of the teacher chaperones for the Senior trip. Bagley stated that the deceased had approached them around 2230 about students smoking marijuana in the forest. Because of that report, Bagley went to look for these students. When they returned to the campsite, a group of students notified Bagley that the deceased, Maple Mattox, and Peyton Cruz, left and went toward the Southern Slip. When Bagley neared the fence closing off the Southern Slip, they heard a scream. Bagley reported seeing Cruz run toward them, during which Cruz stated that "Maple made us do it!" Bagley stated that they slipped past the fence and found Mattox hanging from the edge of the cliff. Earlier that day, Bagley saw the deceased slip, but they could not elaborate on that further. Additionally, Bagley stated that they thought Mattox and the deceased were acting out-of-character.

Bagley appeared shaken up. During our conversation, Bagley's voice seemed to break as they described the events of the day to me. I asked Bagley to identify Mattox and Cruz for me. Bagley indicated, by pointing, who Mattox and Cruz were.

#### *Contact with Peyton Cruz*

I made contact with Peyton Cruz, identified by Wisconsin driver's license. Cruz was huddled with a few other students. I asked to speak with them separately. Cruz appeared pretty shaken, their forehead was sweaty, and they were muttering to themselves. I asked Cruz to tell me what happened. Cruz's voice was shaky as they explained that Cruz, Mattox, and the deceased left the campsite around 10:45 p.m. They intended to go to the Southern Slip to solve the mystery surrounding it. Cruz said that they only made it so far before Cruz decided to turn back. Cruz said that the deceased wanted to turn back, too, but Mattox kept pushing them forward. Cruz ran back to the campsite, and they were pretty sure they saw Bagley on the way. They couldn't say what happened between the deceased and Mattox. I asked whose idea it was to go to the Southern Slip. Cruz said that they were pretty sure it was Mattox's idea, but they couldn't be sure. They mentioned one time when the three of them met before May 13, during which the deceased and Mattox discussed the mystery of the Southern Slip and they had been very excited about it. They mentioned that the deceased suggested that they bring black tourmaline as it would help protect them. I told Cruz that was all I needed for now, but I may need to contact them in the future. They went back to the group of students.

#### *Contact with Maple Mattox*

After speaking with Cruz, I walked over to Maple Mattox, who was standing alone. Mattox appeared to have been crying, but they were not when I approached. Mattox identified themselves by providing a Wisconsin driver's license. I asked Mattox to provide a description of the events. Their voice was steady as they spoke. They said that the deceased had this "bright idea" to try and solve the Southern Slip mystery. They further said that the deceased coaxed both Mattox and Cruz to leave the campsite around 10:40 p.m. to head off to the Southern Slip. Mattox said that they were afraid, but the deceased told them to keep going. At one point, Mattox noticed that Cruz had turned back, but the deceased said that we "shouldn't be stupid losers." Mattox continued by stating that they and the deceased reached the edge of the Southern Slip. Mattox indicated the deceased was going to lower themselves down onto a ledge and started maneuvering to do so. Then, the wind picked up. Mattox looked down and saw that the deceased was holding on to a recess on the edge of the Southern Slip. Mattox tried to reach down and grab the hands of the deceased, but they were unable to hold on without falling down themselves. The deceased slipped through their grip and fell. Mattox stayed in the same position with their hands over the edge until Connor Bagley appeared and helped them back up. While Mattox explained what happened, they didn't appear very emotional and I questioned the mismatch between their emotions and their version of events. I asked Mattox whose idea it was to go to the Southern Slip, to which they responded unequivocally that it was the deceased's idea. According to

Mattox, the deceased wanted to become famous, and they thought the best way to do that was to solve the mystery of the Southern Slip. I thanked Mattox and told them that there would likely be follow up. They turned and walked back to where they had been standing alone.

After speaking with the above individuals, I worked with backup to schedule pickups for each of the students with their parents. Once that was completed, it was about 0500, but we still had not had the chance to get a hold of the deceased's parents. At that time, I drove to the deceased's home, where I was able to speak with the deceased's parents. I escorted them to the coroner's officer, so that they could identify the body.

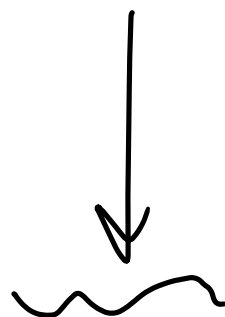
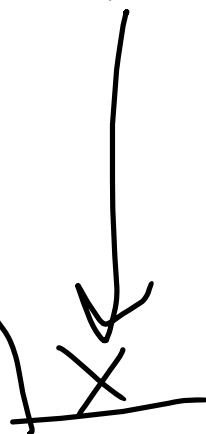
I have included a diagram of the scene for reference.

I cleared from the coroner's office at 0716. I am sending my report to the Clearwater County District Attorney's Office for a charging decision.

← Campsite

Southern  
Slip

deceased  
River



07/4/2022

Date

Sam La Grada

Responding Officer



State of Alaska v. Randy R. Rick

**Judgment of Conviction**Sentence to Denali County  
Jail

Date of Birth: March 10, 1981

Case No. 4NE-11-00114CR

The defendant was found guilty of the following crime(s):

Ct.	Description	Violation	Plea	Severity	Date(s) Committed	Trial To	Date(s) Convicted
1	Assault in the Fourth Degree [Domestic Violence Enhancer]	11.41.230(a)(1) 12.55.135(c)	Guilty	Misd. A	10-26-2011		02-14-2011

**IT IS ADJUDGED** that the defendant is guilty as convicted and sentenced as follows:

Ct.	Sent. Date	Sentence	Length	Agency	Comments
1	03-15-2012	State Trooper Jail	45 Days	State Trooper	

**IT IS ADJUDGED** that 5 days sentence credit are due pursuant to § 12.55.027, Alaska Statutes.**IT IS ORDERED** that the Sheriff shall deliver the defendant into the custody of the State Troopers.

If the defendant is in or is sentenced to state prison and is ordered to pay restitution, **IT IS ORDERED** that the defendant authorize the department to collect, from the defendant's wages and from other monies held in the defendant's inmate account, an amount or a percentage which the department determines is reasonable for restitution to victims.

**BY THE COURT:****Distribution:**Patrick Fassbender, Judge  
Heather Brown, Prosecutor  
Matthew Lang, Defense AttorneyElectronically signed by Hon. Patrick Fassbender  
Circuit Court Judge/Clerk/Deputy ClerkMarch 16, 2012

Date

## INDUSTRIAL FENCE, Co.

121 Water St.

Estimate #	Date
2034	April 29, 2022

Clearwater, WI ZIP

## WORK ESTIMATE

### TO

Randy Rick  
Clearwater Forest Rangers  
7970 Park Rd.  
Clearwater, WI ZIP

### DESCRIPTION OF WORK

- Remove rusted portion of fence;
- Install new fencing

ITEMIZED COSTS	QTY	UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT
• Service Fee	1	\$200.00	\$200.00
• Labor: 4 hours at \$65/hr.	4	\$65.00	\$260.00
• Parts, including sales tax	3	\$47.59	\$142.77
<i>Thank you for your business!</i>	<b>TOTAL ESTIMATE</b>		<b>\$602.77</b>

Note: This estimate is not a contract or a bill. It is our best guess at the total price to complete the work stated above, based upon our initial inspection. If prices change or additional parts and labor are required, we will inform you prior to proceeding with the work.



@MapleDaresYouTo sent you a private message  
February 11, 2022

Now, don't hang on  
Nothing lasts forever but the earth and sky  
It slips away  
And all your money won't another minute buy

Dust in the wind  
All we are is dust in the wind

— Kansas



*You responded*  
February 12, 2022

You okay, friend?



@MapleDaresYouTo sent you a private message  
September 14, 2021

Zoom class is so awful. I'd rather be reenacting. Check out Tim Riggins!



*You responded*  
September 14, 2021

Nah, I'd rather not revisit that scary stuff.



@MapleDaresYouTo sent you a private message  
February 2, 2021

"A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm."

-- Hamlet

*You responded*  
February 2, 2021

On the Shakespeare unit, eh?



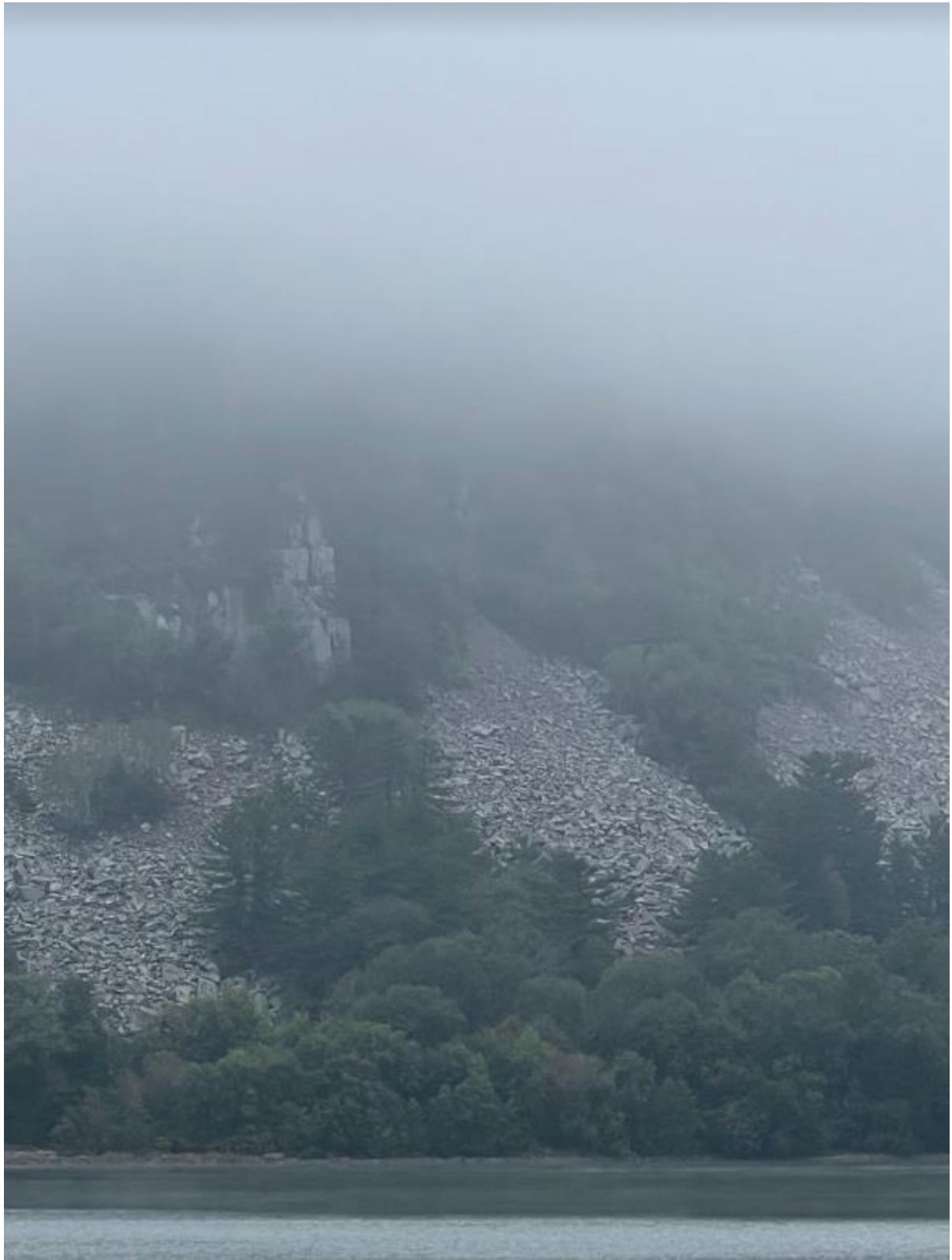
@MapleDaresYouTo sent you a private message  
February 14, 2021

"We are food for worms."

-- Henry IV, Part 1

*You responded*  
February 14, 2021

Happy Valentine's Day?



















**Fran Flick, Ph.D.**  
**Licensed Clinical and forensic psychologist**

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**Education**

1996 Ph.D. Clinical Psychology  
University of Northern Colorado

Dissertation: Moderate Tetrahydrocannabinol Consumption and its Impacts on Severe Depression in Teenagers.

1994 MA in Clinical Psychology  
University of Northern Colorado

1991 B.S. Biology  
University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point

**Academic Experience**

2020-  
Adjunct Professor, Forensic Psychology  
Clearwater College, Clearwater, WI

**Public Sector Experience**

2002-  
2020 Forensic Psychologist  
Clearwater County Dept. of Health, Clearwater, WI

**Clinical Experience**

1996-  
2002 Clinical psychologist  
Boulder Children's Psychology Group, Boulder, CO

**Publications**

- 2019 Incidence of Severe Depression in Teenagers Who Witnessed Trauma Before Age One.  
Clearwater University Press
- 2018 Incidence of Severe Depression and Suicidality in Teenagers Who Have Experienced Incarceration  
Clearwater University Press
- 2018 Sham Criminal Charges Sweep Mental Illness Under the Rug  
Clearwater Times Op Ed

- 2017 It's Not Your Fault, An Open Letter to Teenagers Facing Criminal Charges as a Result of Mental Illness  
Teen Vogue
- 2015 Your brain on LSD, what really happens  
Good Housekeeping Magazine
- 2010 Breakthrough in Treating P.T.S.D. in Teenagers using Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Therapy  
Science Magazine
- 2008 Marijuana: Friend or Foe?  
University of Colorado Press

### **Affiliations**

International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology  
American Academy of Forensic Psychology  
American Psychological Association  
Association for Criminal Defense Experts

### **Expert witness services**

Service as an expert witness on behalf of the accused person in over 50 juvenile cases, Clearwater County, WI

Service as an expert witness on behalf of the prosecution in 6 juvenile cases, Clearwater County, WI



## Borderline personality disorder

### Overview

Borderline personality disorder is a mental health disorder that impacts the way you think and feel about yourself and others, causing problems functioning in everyday life. It includes self-image issues, difficulty managing emotions and behavior, and a pattern of unstable relationships.

With borderline personality disorder, you have an intense fear of abandonment or instability, and you may have difficulty tolerating being alone. Yet inappropriate anger, impulsiveness and frequent mood swings may push others away, even though you want to have loving and lasting relationships.

Borderline personality disorder usually begins by early adulthood. The condition seems to be worse in young adulthood and may gradually get better with age.

If you have borderline personality disorder, don't get discouraged. Many people with this disorder get better over time with treatment and can learn to live satisfying lives.

### Symptoms

Borderline personality disorder affects how you feel about yourself, how you relate to others and how you behave.

Signs and symptoms may include:

- An intense fear of abandonment, even going to extreme measures to avoid real or imagined separation or rejection
- A pattern of unstable intense relationships, such as idealizing someone one moment and then suddenly believing the person doesn't care enough or is cruel
- Rapid changes in self-identity and self-image that include shifting goals and values, and seeing yourself as bad or as if you don't exist at all
- Periods of stress-related paranoia and loss of contact with reality, lasting from a few minutes to a few hours
- Impulsive and risky behavior, such as gambling, reckless driving, unsafe sex, spending sprees, binge eating or drug abuse, or sabotaging success by suddenly quitting a good job or ending a positive relationship



- Suicidal threats or behavior or self-injury, often in response to fear of separation or rejection
- Wide mood swings lasting from a few hours to a few days, which can include intense happiness, irritability, shame or anxiety
- Ongoing feelings of emptiness
- Inappropriate, intense anger, such as frequently losing your temper, being sarcastic or bitter, or having physical fights

## When to see a doctor

If you're aware that you have any of the signs or symptoms above, talk to your doctor or a mental health provider.

## If you have suicidal thoughts

If you have fantasies or mental images about hurting yourself or have other suicidal thoughts, get help right away by taking one of these actions:

- Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately.
- Call a suicide hotline number. In the U.S., call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255) any time of day. Use that same number and press "1" to reach the [Veterans Crisis Line](#).
- Call your mental health provider, doctor or other health care provider.
- Reach out to a loved one, close friend, trusted peer or co-worker.
- Contact someone from your faith community.

If you notice signs or symptoms in a family member or friend, talk to that person about seeing a doctor or mental health provider. But you can't force someone to seek help. If the relationship causes you significant stress, you may find it helpful to see a therapist yourself.

## Causes

As with other mental health disorders, the causes of borderline personality disorder aren't fully understood. In addition to environmental factors — such as a history of child abuse or neglect — borderline personality disorder may be linked to:

- **Genetics.** Some studies of twins and families suggest that personality disorders may be inherited or strongly associated with other mental health disorders among family members.
- **Brain abnormalities.** Some research has shown changes in certain areas of the brain involved in emotion regulation, impulsivity and aggression. In addition, certain brain chemicals that help regulate mood, such as serotonin, may not function properly.

## Risk factors

Some factors related to personality development can increase the risk of developing borderline personality disorder. These include:



- **Hereditary predisposition.** You may be at a higher risk if a close relative — your mother, father, brother or sister — has the same or a similar disorder.
- **Stressful childhood.** Many people with the disorder report being sexually or physically abused or neglected during childhood. Some people have lost or were separated from a parent or close caregiver when they were young or had parents or caregivers with substance misuse or other mental health issues. Others have been exposed to hostile conflict and unstable family relationships.

## Complications

Borderline personality disorder can damage many areas of your life. It can negatively affect intimate relationships, jobs, school, social activities and self-image, resulting in:

- Repeated job changes or losses
- Not completing an education
- Multiple legal issues, such as jail time
- Conflict-filled relationships, marital stress or divorce
- Self-injury, such as cutting or burning, and frequent hospitalizations
- Involvement in abusive relationships
- Unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, motor vehicle accidents and physical fights due to impulsive and risky behavior
- Attempted or completed suicide

In addition, you may have other mental health disorders, such as:

- Depression
- Alcohol or other substance misuse
- Anxiety disorders
- Eating disorders
- Bipolar disorder
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Other personality disorders

By Mayo Clinic Staff

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# Depersonalization-derealization disorder

## Overview

Depersonalization-derealization disorder occurs when you persistently or repeatedly have the feeling that you're observing yourself from outside your body or you have a sense that things around you aren't real, or both. Feelings of depersonalization and derealization can be very disturbing and may feel like you're living in a dream.

Many people have a passing experience of depersonalization or derealization at some point. But when these feelings keep occurring or never completely go away and interfere with your ability to function, it's considered depersonalization-derealization disorder. This disorder is more common in people who've had traumatic experiences.

Depersonalization-derealization disorder can be severe and may interfere with relationships, work and other daily activities. The main treatment for depersonalization-derealization disorder is talk therapy (psychotherapy), although sometimes medications also are used.

## Symptoms

Persistent and recurrent episodes of depersonalization or derealization or both cause distress and problems functioning at work or school or in other important areas of your life. During these episodes, you are aware that your sense of detachment is only a feeling and not reality.

The experience and feelings of the disorder can be difficult to describe. Worry about "going crazy" can cause you to become preoccupied with checking that you exist and determining what's actually real.

Symptoms usually begin in the mid- to late teens or early adulthood. Depersonalization-derealization disorder is rare in children and older adults.

## Depersonalization symptoms

Symptoms of depersonalization include:

- Feelings that you're an outside observer of your thoughts, feelings, your body or parts of your body — for example, as if you were floating in air above yourself
- Feeling like a robot or that you're not in control of your speech or movements



- The sense that your body, legs or arms appear distorted, enlarged or shrunken, or that your head is wrapped in cotton
- Emotional or physical numbness of your senses or responses to the world around you
- A sense that your memories lack emotion, and that they may or may not be your own memories

## Derealization symptoms

Symptoms of derealization include:

- Feelings of being alienated from or unfamiliar with your surroundings — for example, like you're living in a movie or a dream
- Feeling emotionally disconnected from people you care about, as if you were separated by a glass wall
- Surroundings that appear distorted, blurry, colorless, two-dimensional or artificial, or a heightened awareness and clarity of your surroundings
- Distortions in perception of time, such as recent events feeling like distant past
- Distortions of distance and the size and shape of objects

Episodes of depersonalization-derealization disorder may last hours, days, weeks or even months at a time. In some people, these episodes turn into ongoing feelings of depersonalization or derealization that may periodically get better or worse.

## When to see a doctor

Passing feelings of depersonalization or derealization are common and aren't necessarily a cause for concern. But ongoing or severe feelings of detachment and distortion of your surroundings can be a sign of depersonalization-derealization disorder or another physical or mental health disorder.

See a doctor if you have feelings of depersonalization or derealization that:

- Are disturbing you or are emotionally disruptive
- Don't go away or keep coming back
- Interfere with work, relationships or daily activities

## Causes

The exact cause of depersonalization-derealization disorder isn't well-understood. Some people may be more vulnerable to experiencing depersonalization and derealization than others, possibly due to genetic and environmental factors. Heightened states of stress and fear may trigger episodes.

Symptoms of depersonalization-derealization disorder may be related to childhood trauma or other experiences or events that cause severe emotional stress or trauma.

## Risk factors



Factors that may increase the risk of depersonalization-derealization disorder include:

- **Certain personality traits** that make you want to avoid or deny difficult situations or make it hard to adapt to difficult situations
- **Severe trauma**, during childhood or as an adult, such as experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event or abuse
- **Severe stress**, such as major relationship, financial or work-related issues
- **Depression or anxiety**, especially severe or prolonged depression, or anxiety with panic attacks
- **Using recreational drugs**, which can trigger episodes of depersonalization or derealization

## Complications

Episodes of depersonalization or derealization can be frightening and disabling. They can cause:

- Difficulty focusing on tasks or remembering things
- Interference with work and other routine activities
- Problems in relationships with your family and friends
- Anxiety or depression
- A sense of hopelessness

By Mayo Clinic Staff

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