

TOWER -- Festival Submission-SD

[Start of recorded material]

00:00:29

NEAL SPELCE: This is Neal Spelce in Red Rover on the University of Texas campus. This is a warning to the citizens of Austin. Stay away from the University area. Stay away from the University area. There is a sniper on the University Tower firing at will.

00:00:56

[SONG "MONDAY MONDAY"]

Bah da bah da da da,

Bah da bah dad da da,

Bah da bah da da da,

Monday Monday,

So good to me . . .

00:01:16

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: We had taken an anthropology test so we got out of class early that day. My boyfriend Tom and I were drinking coffee at the Chuck Wagon at the Student Union. We knew that if we didn't go quickly and put another nickel in the meter, we'd get a pink slip. And we already had two, and I think if you had three you couldn't park on campus any longer. We were kind of disagreeing, or he was worried that I wasn't getting enough nutrition for the baby. And I said, "Well, Tom, I had orange juice this morning."

00:02:20 I just felt this -- this huge jolt, like I'd stepped on a live wire, like I'd been electrocuted. Tom said, "Baby!" and reached out for me. And then . . .

00:03:07

PROFESSOR: What are you doing? Get up from there.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Please call a doctor.

PROFESSOR: Get your books.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Please help us.

[MONDAY MONDAY]

. . . Every other day,
Every other day,
Every other day,
Every other day of the
week is fine, yeah . . .

00:03:43

ALECK HERNANDEZ JR: I had a paper route around the University of Texas. It was the biggest route in Austin and everybody wanted to get that route. I had my cousin with me. Sometimes he would help me with my paper route. I was not supposed to work that day. The

regular guy was supposed to get back from vacation that day. But about 10:00 that morning, the paper called me and asked if I could do that route one more day.

[MONDAY MONDAY]

. . . But Monday morning,
Monday morning
couldn't guarantee that . . .

00:04:30

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: I was either filling out reports or I was taking it easy a little bit, listening to my radio on country/western. I do remember one song they played that morning. It was Waterloo. I kind of felt that after that day, well, here's Waterloo coming up for somebody.

[SONG "WATERLOO"]

. . . Every puppy has its day.
Everybody has to pay.
Everybody has to meet his Waterloo . . .

00:05:02

ALECK HERNANDEZ JR: And it was hot that day. It must have been 100 degrees. I started making my deliveries and I heard some sounds, like popping. It sounded like firecrackers.

[RADIO JINGLE FOR KTBC RADIO]

00:05:47

NEAL SPELCE: August 1st -- it started out as a typical summer day in Austin, Texas. And it was a day that you sat around, frankly. And we were trying to decide, okay, what do we cover today?

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: Then the radio called my number, and I was trying to make out what they were saying but it just wasn't coming through.

00:06:12 I can't -- I can't make out what you're saying. You keep cutting out now.

[UNINTELLIGIBLE RADIO DISPATCHER]

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: Finally I decipher University of Texas, so I just said I was headed towards the University of Texas.

NEAL SPELCE: We had police radios, of course, throughout the newsroom.

POLICE RADIO REPORT: We have a shooting or gunshots at the University Tower. [Crosstalk]

NEAL SPELCE: And then within seconds . . .

POLICE RADIO REPORT: We need all the units we can at the University Tower.

NEAL SPELCE: There's a guy on top of the Tower and he's shooting, shooting at people. And they're dispatching officers as best they can to the scene.

POLICE OPERATOR: Police operator.

MICHAEL [HALL]: This is Michael Hall. There's just been a gunshot right in front of the Tower.

MARGARET BERRY: I heard what I thought were two firecrackers. And I thought: somebody still has firecrackers from the 4th of July.

POLICE OPERATOR: Police Operator.

00:07:11

FEMALE VOICE: Hello. This is the Department of English at the University. Someone has been shot, we believe, outside. Someone is shooting from the Tower.

BRENDA BELL: I was in Shakespeare class when it started. And we all ran to the windows of the English Building. And we just stood there peering out over each other's shoulders.

MALE VOICE: I realized that there was someone shooting from the Tower and that if I could see him, he could see me.

FEMALE VOICE: A sniper. Somebody has shot four different people.

DISPATCH: Yes, Ma'am, it's been reported. She says four people have been shot up there so far.

00:07:44

MALE VOICE: As I ran behind the car, the shot from the rifle sounded like it was almost in my ear. And I could hear the bullet ricochet. When I asked if anyone had been hit someone said five people, including a little boy on a bicycle.

ALECK HERNANDEZ JR: When I got shot, we both fell down.

FEMALE VOICE: You're going to be okay. You're going to be okay. He's going to be okay.

00:08:13

FEMALE VOICE: Oh, God, what happened?

MALE VOICE: He's been shot.

ALLEN CRUM: I'd been working at the University of Texas [Co-Op] since 8:30 a.m. I noticed across the street a small group.

MALE VOICE: What's going on?

ALLEN CRUM: Looks like a fight.

I got across the street and found the boy had been shot.

All right. Let's stop this bleeding here.

And so I tried to stop the flow of blood. You okay?

ALECK HERNANDEZ JR: [Uh-huh].

ALLEN CRUM: You'll be alright.

00:09:08 I heard reports that I recognized as gunshots, but I could not tell where they were coming from.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I didn't know what had happened at all. I thought that I felt the baby kind of fall to the side. So I thought he probably wasn't alive any longer. You know, by the eighth month your baby is moving a lot. And after I got shot, the baby never moved. "Tom?" I called out to him. "Tom . . ." But Tom never said another word.

00:10:20 **OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY:** You know what? I thought it was already over with. [Lawman] gets there and by the end it's usually over with, you know?

[SONG]

Texas, you know that
we love you.

And we praise you

[unintelligible] 'till dawn . . .

Then I-I finally realized something was happening that I ain't never seen before. I just thought: there's a thousand windows up there and a thousand Black Panthers, a revolution. And the hair just stood up on the back of my neck. And I must say I was scared. It was bigger than me.

00:11:33

NEAL SPELCE: There's a guy on top of the Tower and he's shooting, shooting at people. I told the disc jockey on duty. I say, "Give us some news intro music and throw it to me and I'll take it from there." I began my broadcast as I was driving up to the Tower: "This is Neal Spelce in Red Rover on the University of Texas campus. This is a warning to the citizens of Austin. Stay away from the University area. There is a sniper on the University Tower firing at will."

00:12:20

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: Well, I was just expecting another routine day. I had dropped my daughters off at daycare, my wife was at work and my shift didn't start until 3:00 p.m.

TV AD: [Crosstalk] clean up your carpets. This Austin vacuum rebuilt Hoover beats as it sweeps --

ANNOUNCER: This is a KLRN news bulletin. A sniper with a high-powered rifle has taken up a position on the observation deck of the Tower on the campus of the University of Texas.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: So I got on the telephone.

OPERATOR: Voice operator.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: Yeah, this is Martinez.

OPERATOR: [Unintelligible].

00:12:67

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: And I called the station.

This is Officer Martinez. Do they need anybody?

POLICE OFFICER: Captain, Martinez is on. Do you want him to come out? Uh, yes, Sir. He'd, uh, he'd like you to come on out if you will.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: Okay. I'll be right over.

POLICE OFFICER: Okay. That's at the University.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: Then I called my wife at work and I said, "Dear, I'm going to go there but don't worry because I'm going to go work traffic."

00:13:33

ALLEN CRUM: I couldn't get back across the street because I figured I might get shot myself. I moved on to the next building. I tried to find a telephone to call my wife. My wife knew it was my lunch hour and I knew that she would worry. So I knew that if I could make it to the Tower that I could make contact with the store and my wife.

00:14:12

[SONG "DAYDREAM"]

What a day for a daydream.

What a day for a daydreaming boy . . .

JOHN ARTLY FOX: I went to high school at Austin High,
graduated May of '66. I wanted to get freshman English out of the
way, so I started at the University of Texas in the summer.

[DAYDREAM]

. . . And even if time ain't really
on my side,
It's one of those days for taking
a walk outside . . .

00:14:36

JOHN ARTLY FOX: We went to class that morning. And then
during the lunch break, I went over to play chess with James Love.

[DAYDREAM]

. . . and fall on my face
in somebody's new-mown lawn . . .

JOHN ARTLY FOX: James and I had graduated from Austin High
together in May. And I went over to where he lived at the STAG
Co-op. We were listening to the Top 40 and playing chess in his
room.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: We interrupt this program to bring you
a special bulletin from ABC Radio. Here is a special --

00:15:09

JOHN ARTLY FOX: They said somebody was on top of the Tower
with an air rifle.

JAMES LOVE: Air rifle?

JOHN ARTLY FOX: Shooting with an air rifle.

Didn't sound dangerous to us. Sounded exciting.

You want to go check it out?

JAMES LOVE: Yeah, let's go.

[SONG]

Things may go and
Things may stay . . .

JOHN ARTLY FOX: We were just walking down the middle of the
road and a guy waved at us: "Get out!" you know, "Get under
cover! Get out of the street." And that was the first sign we had that
things were [bad wrong]. By the time that James and I had walked
onto campus, I'm sure over a dozen people had been murdered. And
we didn't know it.

00:16:08

ANNOUNCER: This is a KLRN news bulletin. A sniper with a high-powered rifle is firing at persons within his range. All Austin-area residents are warned to stay away from the University of Texas area.

NEAL SPELCE: It's an unbelievable sight. The serene University of Texas campus, a temperature approaching 100 degrees now, and a madman located on top of the University Tower firing and shooting at any movable target that he can see.

FEMALE VOICE: The shot that hit me bypassed me and ricocheted off a building. Everybody was in a state of panic.

MALE VOICE: Then what happened?

FEMALE VOICE: Then everybody ran.

NEAL SPELCE: It's like a battle scene. It's like [there it goes], and another shot. There's two different kinds of shots. Apparently police are returning the fire now.

MALE VOICE: I got lucky, considering what happened to other people.

NEAL SPELCE: There's no report as to who this man may be or what he's doing up there or what prompted this apparent madness.

FEMALE VOICE: We passed the steps to the Undergraduate Library. As we were about to the corner, he shot. And I lay there for about, oh, probably 15 or 20 minutes.

00:17:15

FEMALE VOICE: We didn't know who was being killed. Students on campus were being shot. People were dying.

ALECK HERNANDEZ JR: It was just chaos.

MALE VOICE: I was looking through the binoculars when all of a sudden I realized he's pointing that rifle right at me. I couldn't believe how close I'd gotten to being shot.

ANNOUNCER: We can see the movement under the clock on the south side of the University of Texas Tower, and police are returning the fire.

BRENDA BELL: There's this guy who's shooting at everyone he can see. What is the matter with him?

ANNOUNCER: The man is located on the University Tower observation deck below the clock, which now shows 12:25, and is shooting. He's shooting our direction.

BRENDA BELL: There was a lot of suffering. And we were helpless to do anything about it.

00:18:06

ALECK HERNANDEZ JR: I see all of this blood and I think: I didn't get a chance to say goodbye to my mom and dad, or anything. The ambulance driver got a call. Right around the corner, there was another person that they wanted him to pick up. Looking out that window, it was just a direct shot. And of course I'm thinking: if we don't get out of here quick, I'm going to get shot again.

NEAL SPELCE: A boy off a bicycle, he's shot windows of the Texas Union . . . more ambulances are screaming up and down the University drag and the ambulances are apparently carrying those persons that we had reported as lying on the sidewalk, shot in front of the Varsity Theater and other buildings along the university drag. The University area has been cordoned off and so far we've had reports of people being shuttled to the hospital via ambulances from practically all the funeral homes in the city.

00:19:17

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I didn't know at the time, but I was losing a lot of blood. I felt like I was melting. The heat was just deadly. The pavement was so hot that it was burning the backs of my legs.

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: There was a bunch of students and I just hollered out: "Anybody got a rifle?" Some old boy said he did.

STUDENT: Do you want it?

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: Yeah.

I took the rifle first but, see, I've never shot a scope. I was raised a poor boy and a .22 is the biggest thing I ever shot. I was shaking. And what it was is, I mean, it wasn't a nervous shake. It was the wobble, yeah, the wobble. I just couldn't get the crosshairs to center in on nothing. That boy said he could. Lord knows he had better eyes than I did.

00:20:46

BRENDA BELL: We were in Parlin Hall when Billy Speed was shot.

My God, he hit the cop.

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: Billy Speed . . . I glanced down and I saw Billy get hit.

Billy!

NEAL SPELCE: We have a man here who just came from the base of the Tower. What's your name, please, sir?

LELAND AMMONS: Leland AMMONS.

NEAL SPELCE: You'd better duck down a little bit here. You were standing beside the policeman when he was shot?

00:21:12

LELAND AMMONS: Yes.

NEAL SPELCE: Was there just one shot fired?

LELAND AMMONS: Uh, well, he was -- he opened fire on us when he saw the, uh, policeman with his shotgun converging. The policeman was walking. He shot him through the, uh, support near the statue of Jefferson Davis.

NEAL SPELCE: The shots came near you at the time, though?

LELAND AMMONS: Oh, yeah. There were shots all around.

BRENDA BELL: A couple of students crept out the back door and made their way to him. A girl had taken off her slip and was using it to try to stanch the bleeding, but he was bleeding a lot. The guy that was with her had gotten a little tin cup and had filled it with water. It was just like the cowboy movies, right?

LELAND AMMONS: We, uh, did all we could for him. But whether he was still conscious when they carried him off in the ambulance, we don't know. It may be-be a superficial wound.

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: Billy!

I saw him get hit here, so I-I thought he was going to be alright,
you know?

00:22:07

BRENDA BELL: That was the moment that separated the brave people from the
scared people. I knew that there was no way that I was going to go
out there and help them. I didn't want to get shot. That was a
defining moment because I realized I was a coward.

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: I met up with Billy not a couple of hours
before that. We just talked a little while, just a good-old-boy
conversation. He was going to quit. He said he was going to work a
couple more months and then he was going to quit and go back to
college. And that's just what he was going to do. And, uh, you know,
his wife just had a baby and everything.

STUDENT: If I see someone --

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: He asked me. He said --

STUDENT: -- do I shoot him?

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: And I said, "You shoot the shit out of him."

00:23:06

ALLEN CRUM: Before I got into the tower -- and this is not too nice -- I took a-a position behind a column at the Academic Center. And I gave him the Italian digit. He fired once at the column and hit it. But he didn't do it again. I waited until the individual started firing on the east side of the Tower and then ran across the street into the Tower Building.

JOHN ARTLY FOX: You could see the bodies lying on [the campus], on the Main Mall. And we know then there was nothing that could be done from that office. So we were inextricably drawn closer.

00:24:31 We got up to the statue of Jefferson Davis. People say that that statue should be taken down, that that statue has no place being there because of Jefferson Davis and all he represents. But at least on that day, it gave me a little shelter. Across from the Main Mall there were about a dozen students there as well, all looking at the bodies laying there. And it was frustrating, I guess. Something has to be done, but if I go out there I might die.

00:25:14

BRENDA BELL: It was like a frozen snapshot. Obviously, some people were still alive and hiding behind small things. A couple of people seemed

really dead. I've never seen a dead body. I didn't care if they bombed the Tower. I just wanted a plane to come and take that guy out.

NEAL SPELCE: Uh, what else did you see as you came through the campus? Did you see any other injured persons?

LELAND AMMONS: There are several people laying out on the Mall at this time. Three of them may be shot and the others may just be laying there.

BRENDA BELL: A woman was lying on her back on the mall and she was obviously pregnant and in obvious pain. It was hard to watch her and to know that no one could get to her without being shot themselves.

00:26:08

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Under the base of the Tower there were a lot of people there, and they were yelling. And they were saying, "We've got to help that pregnant woman!" And then somebody else yelled out, "No. We've got to help the ones that there's still hope for." So I thought: well, I probably wasn't going to get help.

NEAL SPELCE: Has any effort been made to try to get those persons out? Another shot. He's still firing repeatedly from the University Tower.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I was trying to figure out what was happening. I didn't feel pain. It felt more like something really heavy was pressing down on me. I thought it felt like an invasion from outer space, because I felt like I had been shot by some kind of antimatter gun. It felt like that's what was happening, that I was just dissolving.

00:27:44 Then at some point a girl ran up.

RITA STARPATTERN: Please, are you alright? Let me help you.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: She came up and-and kind of knelt over me. And her hair, it was red and coming down.

Get down. Get down!

00:28:21

RITA STARPATTERN: What's your name?

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: It's Claire.

RITA STARPATTERN: Claire? I'm Rita. I'm here with you now,
okay?

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Her name was Rita.

ALLEN CRUM: I tried to call the store and my wife. The lines were busy. I saw Officer Day. He was alone. I went up to him and I offered my help to him.

00:29:14

NEAL SPELCE: As it went on, I moved forward a little bit more, kind of inching around, getting a little bit different viewpoint, that sort of thing, as we kept broadcasting. I think it's kind of a natural instinct: hey, I've got to get closer. I've got to see what-what's going on.

We are not sure that the police are returning the fire, but we do hear the shots and we do --

But I wasn't -- believe me, I wasn't trying to put myself in harm's way.

Under the clock on the south side of the University of Texas Tower and police are returning the fire.

00:29:47 I saw this airplane circling the Tower. It was a single-engine small airplane. But the drafts of the heat and the wind -- the airplane just couldn't get a steady shot at the sniper. The Austin Police Department, they didn't have weapons that would reach from the ground to the top of the Tower.

00:30:13

BRENDA BELL: It looked like a war. There were gunshots coming from everywhere.

ALLEN CRUM: At one point, I saw a civilian carrying a deer rifle coming from behind me and running toward the Tower.

BRENDA BELL: I don't know where these vigilantes came from, but Parlin Hall was filled with civilians with huge guns. And they began to shoot back. There was massive testosterone.

NEAL SPELCE: This was an average citizen who heard my report on the radio and decided to come help. We didn't know it at the time, but what was happening was my radio broadcast -- the feeds were made to the radio networks and to all the other news outlets throughout the country.

ANNOUNCER: At approximately 12:15 the phones at KTBC began to ring with requests for phone reports to radio stations all over the North American [proper]. Reports were recorded over radio stations in Anchorage, Alaska, Halifax, Nova Scotia, San Diego, California and even from Honolulu, Hawaii.

ANNOUNCER: Repeating: a sniper with a high-powered rifle has taken up a position on the Tower at the campus of the University of Texas.

ANNOUNCER: We interrupt this program to bring you a special bulletin from KTBC [crosstalk].

NEAL SPELCE: All over the United States radio stations were calling in to get a report of what's going on in Austin.

00:31:30

ANNOUNCER: You are looking at the University of Texas Tower in Austin live. There is a sniper, or more than one sniper, located on that ridge right there under the clock. One boy was shot while sitting in the Union through the window. Two others have been reported shot on the drag, Guadalupe Street. There are people hiding behind trees all over the University of Texas campus. Several are pinned down behind retaining walls in front of the main building. People are warned to stay out of the University of Texas area. This is a live camera coming to you from KLRN, Channel 9.

00:32:12

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: I really didn't know what to expect.

NEAL SPELCE: -- University Tower observation deck below the -- below the clock. And he's shooting. He's shooting our direction. We just saw a puff of smoke. He fired again. It's a battle now. It's a battle between the sniper and the police. It's --

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: I could hear all the-the shooting, hear the sirens. I knew it was a disaster, so to speak, because the only ones with sirens were ambulances.

00:32:46

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: I saw Officer Martinez there at 21st Street.

Martinez! Hey, Officer!

And I hollered out to him, but he didn't hear me.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: I tried to keep myself from being able to see the top of the Tower because I knew if I could see the top of the Tower the sniper could see me.

00:33:26

I ran into -- got to the South Mall by the Jefferson Davis statue. There were wounded people, dead people, people whose conditions I did not know, lying there on the sidewalk. There was a pregnant woman that was twisting and wilting in the hot sun. My training in the army had taught me you establish a command post right away. Then you organize an assault team.

00:34:19

I thought maybe I could go into the Tower and assist the people that were going there. My mission was to get into the Tower.

RITA STARPATTERN:

Don't worry. We're going to be okay.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I'm tired.

RITA STARPATTERN: Yeah. It won't be much longer now. Don't
worry.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: We lay there and just talked, which was kind
of wonderful because it kept me conscious. And I don't know what
would have happened had I been unconscious.

00:35:13

RITA STARPATTERN Where did -- where did you go to high school,
Claire?

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I think we tried to talk about who I was and
who Tom was.

RITA STARPATTERN: Claire, what classes are -- what classes are
you taking this semester?

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I'm taking anthropology with Tom.

RITA STARPATTERN: Tell me about Tom.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Tom Eckman.

I met Tom Eckman, Thomas Frederick Eckman, when I was
beginning the six month of my pregnancy.

[SONG "COLOURS"]

Yellow is the color
of my true love's hair . . .

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: And I was visibly, noticeably pregnant.

[COLOURS]

. . . in the morning
when we rise . . .

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I was trying to figure out whether I was
pregnant or just chubby.

[COLOURS]

. . . in the morning
when we rise . . .

00:36:07 **CLAIRE WILSON JAMES:** I thought he was beautiful.

[COLOURS]

. . . That's the time,
that's the time,
that's the time,

that's the time . . .

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: He was kind of amazing and wonderful. I don't know. We were just in love, you know, just really just totally connected to each other. He just talked to me about everything, about his whole life. He laughed a lot, played the banjo, which was really cool. He wanted to be a poet.

00:36:39

[COLOURS]

. . . That's the time,
that's the time,
that's the time
I love the best.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: And we were so happy. We were just really, really happy.

[COLOURS]

. . . Blue is the color
of the sky
in the morning . . .

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: We just couldn't stay apart, so he moved in with us.

[COLOURS]

. . . in the morning

when we rise.

That's the time . . .

00:37:08

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I don't know. We just fell in love. And as it turned out, we decided to register for anthropology together.

RITA STARPATTERN: Can you hear me? Breathe [unintelligible].
[Muffled echoed voice] Hey. Can you hear me? [Breathe quicker].
Claire?

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Yeah?

RITA STARPATTERN: Can you hear me?

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Yeah. Yeah.

RITA STARPATTERN: That's a good girl. You're okay.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: I picked up the phone and dialed the first number. I-I got a busy signal because everything was jammed. I just needed to get upstairs and find out what the game plan was.

00:38:07 Oh, my God, I'm heartily sorry for having offended thee. I detest all my sins because of thy just punishment, most of all because they offend thee. My God, you are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of thy grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.

What's going on, Jerry?

OFFICER JERRY DAY: Hell, I don't know.

ALLEN CRUM: It's good you're here.

DISPATCH: [Unintelligible] [advising the unit] to meet the UT police at the Security Building.

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: Uh, yeah, this is McCoy. Go ahead.

DISPATCH: We need a unit to go to the UT Security Building and they'll go with him to the 27th floor.

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: Uh, okay. You said the campus security booth? I'm meeting other officers?

DISPATCH: [25 to statewide].

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: 10-4. I'm headed that way now.

00:39:16 Here comes Connor, Shoquist, Sheppard and Moe. And they had teargas guns. And I asked Phillip -- I said, "Did you bring any shotguns?" And he said no. Wished he had.

RITA STARPATTERN: Can you hear me still? Look at me, Claire.
Look at me.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: She made sure to keep me talking so I wouldn't lose consciousness.

RITA STARPATTERN: Don't worry. We're going to be okay.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: But it was getting harder and harder for me to answer.

RITA STARPATTERN: Stay with me. Claire, just look at me.

00:40:00

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: But she was persistent. She kept asking me questions.

RITA STARPATTERN: It's okay, Claire.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: It was beautiful, a selfless act.

RITA STARPATTERN: I know it hurts. Just hold on a little longer.

JOHN ARTLY FOX: You know, the sun was directly overhead. I was dressed in all black, like an idiot. And I suddenly began to feel dizzy and nauseous. I was sick to my stomach and I was losing my coordination. She was so, so pregnant. I could see her move. I knew she was shot and hurt. I crawled underneath the hedges into the shade, where it's a lot cooler and quieter.

BRENDA BELL: It was endless waiting, endless terror, disappointment and hopelessness that you're not able to do anything to make it stop or to help the people that are suffering.

00:41:16

JOHN ARTLY FOX: Every 15 minutes the bell would ring from the top of the UT Tower and I'd think: that's 15 more minutes, 15 more minutes they were out there on that hot concrete.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I think I just wanted to close my eyes. I tried not to move.

RITA STARPATTERN: Just stay still. It'll be okay, alright?

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I tried to just ask like I was dead so he wouldn't shoot me again. The concrete was so hot that at some point I just decided: I can't take it anymore.

00:42:16

JOHN ARTLY FOX: When I came out from under those hedges I knew something had to be done. Someone had to go out there and get 'em.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I just remember looking up at the sky -- it was so blue -- and just thinking: I guess this is it. I guess this is the end.

JOHN ARTLY FOX: That's when I decided to go out there. And we had to move fast. We knew that. You can see there was a camera. Time moved strangely, slowly. I grabbed Claire's feet. James grabbed Claire's arms.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Tom. Tom.

00:43:35

JOHN ARTLY FOX: I've never been more scared.

I've never been more scared. And we ran 'em off. We ran her into safety behind the hedge and set her down. And other people took her where the ambulances were. There's a -- there's a cold spot that I can feel on my back right now. And when I think about it, it's about the size of a grape. It's all the w-- halfway up my spine. It's halfway between my shoulder blades. And it's the place I expected the bullet to come in if I was hit.

00:44:20

As I went down the stairs the glasses slowly -- I was -- I was sweating like a pig. The glasses slowly came off my face. Everything was -- turned into a complete blur for me without those glasses. And I couldn't see a thing. I had to go back out, out from cover again, to pick up my glasses. Her boyfriend, he was -- he was -- he was also carried off.

00:45:07

ANNOUNCER: One of those who was winded after running out onto the mall rescuing those who have been shot is [Brehan Ellison] of Austin, who's been in Vietnam and has been back for two years. Brehan, how many have you gone out to rescue?

BREHAN ELLISON: Today two.

ANNOUNCER: What did you have to do?

BREHAN ELLISON: Run hard and keep low.

ANNOUNCER: Did you have any trouble getting them or did any shots come close to you while you were out there?

BREHAN ELLISON: No shots came close to me. Just the last one, he was dead. He was dead weight. He was a little hard to pick up, too limp, not like someone who's knocked out.

ANNOUNCER: How many have you seen that are dead today?

BREHAN ELLISON: Just one. I hope not any more.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: I knew what I had to do. Knowing I had to walk up those stairs was a lonely feeling.

ALLEN CRUM: Where are you going?

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: Up.

ALLEN CRUM: I'm going with you.

00:46:07

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: When we reached the first landing, I could see the face of a -- of a young boy.

ALLEN CRUM: Good Lord.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: His eyes were open and he was dead. I quickly turned around the corner and I saw a young woman, a dead young woman, lying at his feet. And there was another woman lying there, and we turned her on her side to keep her from drowning in her own blood. There was a young man that was wounded slumped against the wall, still conscious.

ALLEN CRUM: The boy that was at the foot of the stairs saw us. And Martinez and I asked him how many people were shooting. And he replied, "One."

00:46:57

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: He said, "He's outside." And he pointed upstairs.

ALLEN CRUM: So are we playing for keeps?

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: Damn right we are.

ALLEN CRUM: I guess you'd better deputize me, then.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: I looked at him and I-I thought he was an officer from-from some other agency.

"Consider yourself deputized." All right. Ready?

ALLEN CRUM: I'll cover you.

00:47:42

ALLEN CRUM: We worked our way into the room and found a woman lying on her back behind the sofa.

Should we --?

OFFICER RAMIOR MARTINEZ: Gotta keep going.

00:48:07 The shooting outside sounded just like rolling thunder.

You got me?

ALLEN CRUM: I got you.

Martinez went to the door and he had trouble getting the door open.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: Well, time's passing but you don't feel like time's passing. Do-do you understand that?

Let's go. You need to cover that corner. If anyone comes around there, you shoot 'em.

00:49:21

ALLEN CRUM: I'm going to cover this corner. Your fellow officer went down this way.

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: Crum said, "Are you going to go out and help your fellow officer?"

Guess I -- guess I ain't got much choice now, do I?

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: I turned and saw an officer I knew, Houston McCoy. All I had was my .38 so that-that shotgun looked pretty beautiful at that moment.

Get down.

00:50:05 **ALLEN CRUM:** The other two officers went this way. I'll cover you.

OFFICER JERRY DAY: Got it.

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: A picture came in my mind, my boys and my wife. And immediately it went out of my mind. I didn't have a fear of being killed. I really didn't.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: There was no time to think about fear. Now, I'd be a fool or be a liar if I were to say I was not scared. I was scared. But you put that behind you. You cannot have fear in front of you and do your job.

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: I just knew that I wasn't going to allow anybody to make me dead.

ALLEN CRUM: I heard the subject running on the walkway. I fired one round in an attempt to stop him.

OFFICER JERRY DAY: What in the hell?

ALLEN CRUM: I'm sorry.

I heard him run the other direction.

00:51:09

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: It's going to take longer to tell you than it did to do it.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: I emptied my gun.

ALLEN CRUM: There was some firing. And then it was all over.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: By the time I had emptied my pistol --

By the time I had emptied my pistol . . .

McCoy fired.

McCoy was pretty close. I grabbed that shotgun from McCoy and I shot him one more time as he was hitting the ground.

00:52:10 After that was done, my knees felt like rubber. I felt like I had been hit by a sledgehammer. I mean all my energy left me. And I was shaking. Rounds, bullets were still coming up. And I said I had enough and I left.

NEAL SPELCE: The campus, for all practical purposes, has been cleared. Police got to the Tower and are keeping all the [unintelligible] University Tower [unintelligible] coming out and walking across the campus. The University area has been [cordoned off].

00:52:44

ALLEN CRUM: I waved my handkerchief to stop the firing from down on the ground.

JOHN ARTLY FOX: Once that flag waved, I knew it was over then. It was bam-bam-bam-bam. It was just -- because we had -- you had dozens of gunmen firing at the Tower from all directions. And they slowly stopped.

ANNOUNCER: Ladies and gentlemen, we have this word just into the newsroom. The sniper has been seen waving a white flag on the west side of the building. According to reports just into our newsroom, the sniper has been seen waving a white flag on the west side of the building.

00:53:25

NEAL SPELCE: This is Neal Spelce with a bulletin from the KTBC Radio newsroom. The sniper is dead.

This is Neal Spelce with a bulletin from the KTBC Radio newsroom. The sniper is dead. The firing has now stopped, and the time is [1:23].

When I said, "The sniper is dead" it was like --

It was like a big sigh of relief. The sirens all of a sudden started getting silent. The bullets stopped. And it was quiet.

00:54:08

BRENDA BELL: Someone waved a flag and I walked around. There was blood everywhere. People just surged out of the building.

We all walked up the steps. It seems like we filled the mall.

JOHN ARTLY FOX: It was a few people at first and then dozens and then hundreds.

BRENDA BELL: I don't remember anyone being articulate about what had happened. You know, just shock and awe -- kind of a blankness.

NEAL SPELCE: They looked like they were mesmerized. They-they weren't hugging each other. They weren't talking to each other. Most of them were

just kind of milling, walking around, as if dazed and wondering:
what in the world has happened to my world?

00:55:56

MARGARET BERRY:They didn't know the names of the people who had died. And we didn't know what had happened until later that day. It was a sad time, a very sad time, not only for the people who lost or were losing their loved ones but for the whole campus, the whole town, and the state.

It was not something you would expect from our beautiful Tower.

00:56:26

JOHN ARTLY FOX: I just sat there and watched people gather. It was something that I had been a part for-for an hour and a half. It was done for me.

ANNOUNCER: The Travis County Blood Bank is asked to please come immediately. There is an urgent need for these types of blood: Type O-positive, Type O-negative, Type A-positive.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I was begging them not to cut off my dress because it was the first day I'd worn it. It was my first and only maternity dress. It was very beautiful. Tom had helped me pick it out.

00:57:11

ALECK HERNANDEZ JR: My dad was working downtown in a shoe-repair shop. And then somebody came up to him and asked him if he knew what was going on. My dad said no and the guy said, "Well, there's been a lot of shooting going on."

He said, "Yeah, there's a lot of shooting going on. And, oh, by the way, your son has been shot and he was killed."

He went home, picked up my mom and the two of them rushed over to the hospital. He-he did not want to believe that until it was something that he-he could -- that could be confirmed, whereas my mother was responding . . . I guess like a mother. My parents didn't find out for several hours that I was okay.

JOE: It's a madhouse here at Brackenridge Hospital. At least 17 persons are here undergoing treatment. We have had unconfirmed reports of two persons that died. We have a list of the names. These names were just given to us by the hospital administrator. The victims have been identified as Oscar Royuela, Billy Speed, Robert Boyer, Paul Sonntag, Roy Schmidt, Billy Snowden --

00:58:21

PAUL BOLTON: Joe, hold it. Hold just a minute. There's a fellow over at the newsroom. What was that list of names again, please?

NEAL SPELCE: One of the people who came rushing into our newsroom to help out was Paul Bolton. He had gone into semi-retirement and I had taken over his position as the television news director. Paul was working there in the newsroom when Joe read the list of names. And Paul reacted dramatically at that point.

JOE: Roy Schmidt, Billy Snowden --

PAUL BOLTON: Joe, hold it. Hold just a minute. This is Paul over at the newsroom.

JOE: Yes.

00:58:57

PAUL BOLTON: Everyone is interested in that list of names. I think you have my grandson on there. Go over that list of names again, please.

NEAL SPELCE: "I think you have my . . . I think you have my grandson. I think you have my grandson on that list." And Joe said, "Okay. Okay, I'll do that." And he went through the -- the list again. And, yeah, it was his namesake grandson, Paul Bolton Sonntag. Didn't know at the time if he'd been killed, but he was. Frankly, I just broke up now. I think it's -- I think it's because I have grandchildren.

00:59:55

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I was in intensive care for seven weeks. Rita came to see me when I was in the hospital.

RITA STARPATTERN: How are you feeling?

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I'm -- I'm doing better now.

RITA STARPATTERN: I-I made you something. It's nothing much. I
just --

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: She came and brought me a painting she had
done.

01:00:35 I was just, you know, incredibly touched by her bringing that. And I
think that's the only time we saw each other after that. Only recently
I've realized how really amazingly brave that was of her.

RITA STARPATTERN: Are you alright? Let me help you.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: We've heard from all sorts of people involved
in this how terrified they were. And yet, she came right up to me. I
mean that was very selfless. Why did you do that, you know? What
gave you the courage to come out and do that? And were you
afraid? Were you afraid that you were going to get killed?

01:01:26

JOHN ARTLY FOX: For a person to be so giving as to go lay down
on hot concrete on a 100-degree day . . .

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Somehow, you know, that situation just pulled out that hero in her.

JOHN ARTLY FOX: There's a special place in heaven for people like that. She's a-a wonderful woman.

NEAL SPELCE: As our various reporters and photographers were bringing the film back for processing, we were getting their stories and their information. As we got a fuller picture of where the damage was and looked at the film, it was even more horrifying than-than you could imagine.

01:02:14

ANNOUNCER: KTBC Television News now presents a special program on today's mass murder in the capital city. Here is KTBC Television News Editor, Neal Spelce.

NEAL SPELCE: Good evening. One of history's worst mass murders occurred here in Austin today. By official count tonight, 49 persons were hit by gunfire. There are 16 dead and 33 injured. It started last night when a man reportedly killed his wife and his mother. That same man apparently rounded up an arsenal and supplies this morning and then went to the observation deck of the University of Texas Tower. It was then that terror rained down from the Tower. Charles J. Whitman was shot down on the observation deck by two city

policemen. The policemen were aided by an Austin man, Allen Crum. The story of how they ended the 90 minutes of terror was told this afternoon at a news conference held by Austin Police Chief Bob Miles.

01:03:09

MALE VOICE: [Did you go to] shoot as soon as you saw him?

MALE VOICE: Did anybody ask him to surrender or give up or anything before all the firing started?

POLICE CHIEF BOB MILES: No. As I said just a moment ago, Mr. Crum fired one shot into the west wall. When Officer Martinez looked around the corner, Mr. Whitman had his gun leveled out and ready to shoot. Officer Martinez had no way of knowing whether-whether Officer Day or Mr. Crum had already come out and were in a position to be shot.

01:03:39

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: At the news conference, of course it was McCoy, Jerry Day, Allen Crum and myself.

MALE VOICE: Did you think you would have to shoot him?

POLICE CHIEF BOB MILES: If you don't mind, I'll-I'll do the talking for the group. And no. No. And if I'm wrong Mr. Martinez can stop me and, uh, correct me on it.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: The reporters asked questions and Chief Miles answered all the questions. We were just there for show and tell, so to speak, because he-he handled it.

01:04:11

ANNOUNCER: The man here beside me is Allen Crum. He was deputized to go up on the Tower with the two policemen who ended the gun battle.

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: You got me?

ALLEN CRUM: I got you.

ANNOUNCER: Mr. Crum, could you tell us how you happened to be in the Tower Building in the first place?

ALLEN CRUM: Well, I became involved in this when I looked out of the Co-op windows and saw a boy shot across the street. I went across the street [to risk it] because I thought it was a small fight. And as I stepped out the door I heard the sound of shots.

ANNOUNCER: And you actually went into the Tower?

01:04:43

ALLEN CRUM: Yes, sir. I couldn't get back across the street because of my fear that I might get shot myself so I went to the next building and the next building. I thought perhaps I could help them when I got over there so I waited 'till he shot from the other side of the Tower and then ran into it myself.

ANNOUNCER: Mr. Crum, I know that I speak for all the citizens of-of Austin in expressing our gratitude to you and to the Austin police officers who put an end to the -- to the reign of terror on the University of Texas campus.

01:05:10

ALLEN CRUM: I've never known braver men. Their decisions were correct, timely done and accomplished in an honorable manner. If I had to do this over again with these men, I certainly would. The Chief of Police offered me a check from the City of Austin for one day's deputized citizen's pay. I refused it, of course.

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: Somehow, we ended up out on Airport Boulevard in a vacant lot with a case of Lone Star beer, took off our weapons, still dressed in our blues and everything like that. But we wasn't policemen no more.

01:06:02

If I would have just gone in, if I had just gone right up to that elevator, pressed that button to the top floor, go on in and get him done . . .

. . . go up and get him done and Billy Speed would still be alive.

Billy!

[Not that I'm sure], but-but-but-but it didn't happen that way.

Shoulda/coulda. But I didn't.

Should -- I could have, shoulda -- shoulda/coulda. But didn't. So . . .
I don't know.

01:06:56

OFFICER RAMIRO MARTINEZ: Well, to say it hasn't affected me in my life wouldn't be a-a truthful statement. But I have tried -- I have tried to just forget it. I hate to see people get hurt. But, you know, you have to be realistic and know that these things are going to happen. And so you have to have a way how to cope with it, how to take care of the problems.

01:07:27

OFFICER HOUSTON MCCOY: If somebody were to ask how you feel, well, I'd say no words. I've -- it's something -- I've been asked that before:

how-how did it make you feel? And then I kind of have to say,
"Well, how would I describe the colors or a rainbow to a person
born blind?" You know, you can't because there ain't no words. I
don't know.

01:08:01

ALECK HERNANDEZ JR: This is the shirt that I was wearing. And I
must have weighed about 90 pounds when-when this shooting
happened. See that little tear right there? That's where the bullet just
kind of . . . this is my cousin, Lee Zamora. He was with me when I
was riding the bicycle and delivering newspapers at the University
of Texas Tower.

LEE ZAMORA: I was just thinking, you know, I've never talked to anyone about this
before. And I thought, you know, maybe it'll help me, you know, do
some good to sit and talk-talk about it to someone for, you know,
for once. Maybe it's something I need to do.

ALECK HERNANDEZ JR: If you folks had not given us this opportunity,
I would not have seen this cousin of mine. I do now. Been a long
time. I mean, almost 50 years.

01:09:11

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: It was just a whole different world. Nobody
ever talked about it.

JOHN ARTLY FOX: I didn't meet Claire until a few months ago.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I never knew who Artly was. I finally decided maybe he was just an angel or something.

JOHN ARTLY FOX: I was 17. I'd-I'd never seen death. I-I didn't know anything about guns. It was nothing but a-a big, raw, gaping wound, you know, in my psyche, in my memory.

There's been a passage of time and it's -- the-the-the -- it's still raw, but it's not as raw as it once was.

A lot of times the worst days of your lives are personal and private. Maybe that's why I've -- I sort of hid it inside.

01:10:16 I feel guilty because I didn't go out soon enough.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Oh, Artly.

JOHN ARTLY FOX: You know, that you were --

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Artly . . .

JOHN ARTLY FOX: Yeah, so I think -- I think guilt comes with events like -- events like this.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Yeah. Yeah, because of --

JOHN ARTLY FOX: Strange guilt.

01:10:40

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Paul Sonntag, Claudia Rutt, Robert Boyer, Billy Speed, Roy Schmidt, Edna Townsley, Marguerite Lamport, Mark Gabour, Thomas Eckman, Harry Walchuk, Thomas Ashton, Thomas Karr, Karen Griffith, David Gunby, and my baby.

01:11:12

They said I could have babies but I never got pregnant. But I got to adopt my child. I adopted my child Sirak. He was born in Ethiopia, and I adopted him when he was four. And he's now 27. I mean, Sirak was a wonderful child. And there are times, even though his skin is brown and mine's white -- there are times when I absolutely cannot remember that he didn't come out of me. But the baby -- I-I dreamed about him from the beginning and I still have dreams that I found him and I have him and I'm so happy. But then I look away or something, and he's gone.

01:12:14

JOHN ARTLY FOX: I remember looking at the Tower, of course, a lot. And from the Main Mall you can see there's a biblical line from the Bible: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." I've thought about it. One of the truths I learned is that there

are monsters that walk among us. There are people out there that think unthinkable thoughts and then do unthinkable things.

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Through the years he remained largely kind of [wooden] in my mind. But the longer I've lived and the more I've seen, these precious little children who grow up and do sometimes horrible things, the more I have come to think of him as a very confused, very damaged young man. He died at about 25.

01:13:15 There's a picture of him standing at three years old, holding a rifle on either side, on the beach. I just think of him when he-he was that three-year-old who would have been sitting in my lap, you know. I'm a teacher. And I love that age -- so much promise and so much hope. How can I hate somebody like that? I can't hate him, in spite of the incredible damage that he's done. I can't hate him. I just can't do that.

01:13:51

DIRECTOR: Do you forgive him?

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: I forgive him, yes. How can I not forgive? I've been forgiven so much.

WALTER CRONKITE: The horror of these, the sick among us, must be found in the horror of our hyper civilization, a strange pandering

to violence, a disrespect for life fostered in part by governments which, in pursuit of the doctrine of self-defense, teach their youth to kill and to maim, a society in which the most popular newspaper cartoon strips, television programs and movies are those that can invent new means of perpetrating bodily harm, a people who somehow can remain silent while their own civilization seems to crumble under the force of the caveman's philosophy that might makes right.

01:14:50 It seems likely that Charles Joseph Whitman's crime was society's crime. This is Walter Cronkite. Goodnight.

01:15:30

CLAIRE WILSON JAMES: Somebody said to me: why would I want to revisit any of this, why would I want to dig it up, that it would be so painful. It was devastating. It was devastating. You know, I still have that loss. But what's painful is to just not have any sense of the whole thing and not have other people that knew about it and that could talk about what happened that day. That's what was painful. And so that's been very healing.

01:16:07 You know, just the little things make a huge difference in-in a big thing like this.

[End of recorded material]

