

United States v. Brendt Christensen
Case No. 17-20037

Transcript of Interview on June 15, 2017

BC: Brendt Christensen

AM: Anthony Manganaro

ES: Eric Stiverson

ES: Unintelligible. Uh, I'm tryin' to think - uh, but, they're 24 hours.

BC: Yeah, I assumed - you guys came at midnight that this is a priority, so [unintelligible] fast but

ES: Yeah, well, we're gonna talk about that in a little bit but -- we've just got a lot questions to ask and --

BC: Yeah.

ES: Uh -- we wanna get this resolved so everybody can move on with their lives.

AM: Sorry about that, Brendt. Our systems are running a little bit slow - It's like I don't know -- this storm's comin' in, we're getting power outages. Okay, um - wow -- this chair is a little -- um, like I said at your home, uh, my name is Anthony Manganaro. I'm a Special Agent with the FBI, I'm assigned here in Champaign.

BC: Okay.

AM: Um, and then this is Eric.

ES: Yeah - Detective Eric Stiverson.

AM: Detective with the University Police, okay. Um - we are investigating the disappearance of, uh, Ms. Yingying. Um, because we are in my offices and it's late at night, I'm going to read you your advice of rights, okay?

BC: Okay.



AM: Um, again, this is a voluntary interview, so at any time you're done, we'll drive you back home

BC: Okay.

AM: that's the end of it, but, um, just kind of given that it's late and stuff like that

BC: Yeah.

AM: out of an abundance of caution - all right, so - before we ask you any questions, you must understand your rights. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can be used against you in court. You have the right to talk to a lawyer for advice before we ask you any questions - sorry, I'm tryin' to read upside down - uh, you have the right to have a lawyer with you during questioning. If you cannot afford a lawyer, one will be appointed for you before any questioning if you wish. If you decide to answer questions now without a lawyer present, you have the right to stop answering questions at any time. Um, if you understand these rights - if you have any questions about these rights, um, ask now, ask anytime, um - if you do wish to talk, um, you can sign - I'll sign as a witness and we'll go from there.

BC: Okay - I'm willing to answer questions - some questions - obviously - I don't know

AM: Yeah - if there - if I ask you a question and you're like hey, I don't want to answer that, but I'll answer other ones -

BC: Yeah.

AM: Again - just. I'm, uh -- It is like seven minutes after.

AM: Did - I, I'm gonna -- uh where's my note pad?

ES: Yours is actually right here.

AM: Thank you. Okay. Um -

ES: I forgot to ask you -- did you bring your phone with ya?

BC: I didn't.

ES: Okay.

AM: All right. Now I'm gonna apologize ahead of time because I know that you've already spoken with my colleague, Joel. This chair is -

ES: It's like broken, isn't it?

AM: It's - it's yeah - can you --

ES: Yeah I think mine's broken too.

AM: Thank you.

ES: We're gonna play musical chairs.

AM: Oh yeah that's a lot better. I feel like I was leaning back away from you. All right. Um, so I know that you spoke with my colleague, Joel, um, I - I've briefly been able to talk to him and we've been kind of runnin' all over the state, um, so if you can kind of give me a - a recap of - of what you told him I would - I would appreciate it - um - our investigation is, as I'm sure Joel probably told you, is the disappearance of this woman, uh, this young lady and, uh, the most viable tip that we had referred to a black, uh, Saturn Astra, um, so, uh, that's why he came and talked to ya

BC: Yeah.

AM: the other day, um - do you remember what you told him? And I'm not gonna hold you to it if there are certain details that you

BC: Yeah.

AM: forget.

BC: Uh, so they came, they were just checking out all the Saturn Astras in the area.

AM: Um-hum.

BC: I know it's a pretty rare car so, probably a short list, um -

AM: Yeah.

BC: He asked where my wife and I were during -- I think it was a two to three on Friday and, I mean, I graduated a couple of weeks ago so I'm looking for jobs right now, so

AM: Okay.

BC: I mean, I was either playing video games on my computer or taking an afternoon nap - so I was unable to produce an alibi. I looked into certain things to try and see if I could get some kind of info for an alibi - I sent some texts around that time, but none exactly between two and three -

AM: Mmmm.

BC: I let them come in the apartment. They searched for stuff. I let them come in the car - they searched for stuff there. Um - that was pretty much it.

AM: Okay.

BC: 10 minutes/15 minutes gave them my info.

AM: Uh, what did you uh, graduate in?

BC: Uh, Masters in Physics.

AM: In Physics?

BC: Yes.

AM: Wow, that's - way smarter than me.

BC: Thanks.

AM: And I'm - I'm assuming that's over at the U of I there?

BC: Yes.

AM: Okay. Um, you said your wife was out of town, uh -

BC: Yes.

AM: The guys mentioned something about Wisconsin.

BC: Correct.

AM: Is that correct?

BC: That's correct.

AM: Okay. Yeah, you guys are originally from there or -

BC: Yes.

AM: Okay. Um, do you know what days she was, uh, in Wisconsin.

BC: Um - like late Thursday night/early Friday morning until Sunday evening. Yeah.

AM: Was she out looking for a job or -

BC: No, she has a job here - she was on a little road trip.

AM: Okay. Oh, the job sent her?

BC: Wait. What?

AM: I'm sorry - I may have misheard you.

BC: Oh. No - she has a job already - um, she was on a vacation. A little road trip.

AM: Oh, okay - I got it.

BC: Yeah.

AM: Okay. Seeing some old friends up in Wisconsin and stuff.

BC: Yeah - more or less.

AM: Cool. All right. Um, you mentioned that you thought you possibly sent text messages between, you know, the hours of two or three - you said you weren't able to find any?

BC: That's correct.

AM: Do you - do you recall, um, any text messages that you sent that day or like were there specific times --

BC: Oh yeah, there were a - I - I actually let - well I didn't, they didn't look through the phone, but I was showing them texts in my phone

AM: Right.

BC: like someone sent me a text at like 1:30. I responded at like 3:45 or something

AM: Okay.

BC: like that so, um, there are texts around it -

AM: Yeah, but maybe not that specific

BC: Not exactly between two and three and that's why I think I was probably lying down and sleeping just because like, you know, especially now, I'll typically do stuff in the morning - look for jobs, apply to a few, and

AM: Um-hum.

BC: like, you know, I like my sleep, wake up, respond - it - definitely fits -

AM: Okay.

BC: So.

AM: Um - was that kind of pattern of kind of looking for jobs, um, kind of having a little relaxation after graduation - was that typical to - the entire week prior?

BC: Yeah, pretty much.

AM: Okay.

BC: Yeah - it's -

AM: Um, do you remember, specifically, if you sent any applications out online or if you visited any places

BC: On Friday?

AM: throughout the week?

BC: Um - throughout the week? Uh - I haven't had any in-person interviews. I had a phone interview on Thursday and -

AM: Anything on Friday?

BC: [shakes head no]

AM: Okay. Do you remember if you uh, sent uh, any email or anything on Friday?

BC: I didn't. I checked. I checked.

AM: Oh you checked? Okay. Uh, was that on the email account that you -

BC: Yeah, just my -

AM: Joel said he's - he had an email for you -

BC: Yeah.

AM: Um - I didn't see what it was.

BC: It's just my first and last name at gmail.com.

AM: Okay.

BC: So if there's - I didn't really send any emails that day so -

AM: Okay. Um, do you have any questions for me before, um -

BC: Um - why am I under suspicion? Is it just my car or is there anything else?

AM: Uh, I mean that's - you know, a large portion, uh, I mean, it is a very unique car, um, like I said, our search warrant is, uh, is just for the car

BC: Yeah.

AM: so we can

BC: Yeah.

AM: you know, um, look into it

BC: Of course.

AM: we can see what we can find and of course it can also turn around and exonerate you completely, I mean - we're talking about a very rare car.

BC: Yeah.

AM: So, um. But, uh how long were you at the U of I? Did you do undergrad there as well?

BC: No, I did my undergrad at UW Madison -

AM: Oh okay.

BC: and came here in 2013.

AM: Okay.

BC: I was initially in the PhD program, but decided I didn't want a PhD so I just kinda left with the Masters.

AM: Got it. Um - I like the campus.

BC: It's all right.

AM: Not too bad.

BC: It's all right.

AM: Did you - did you meet your wife there or -

BC: No we, uh, actually, grew up in the same hometown - didn't really know each other until the end of high school - so, we both moved to Madison when I went to undergrad and then we both moved here.

AM: Cool. Now did she study here as well?

BC: No. She did not.

AM: Um - do you have any, uh, questions, Eric?

ES: Yeah, the, uh, when we were talking about uh Friday, uh, the day in question

BC: Yeah.

ES: on the nine - uh, the 9th - can you remember, you - you - you said that you played video games all day on Friday?

AM: Yeah.

ES: Is it just between the time period that he's asking about or just literally all day?

BC: Literally all day. Um - at the moments, not really hanging out with too many people or talking to too many people.

ES: Um-hum.

BC: Um, my wife and the girl I talk to, um, she was busy - my wife was out of town so I was like, well - I'm alone today so, uh, yeah - I just kinda

ES: You didn't go cruising campus or anything?

BC: I did on Saturday, but, I mean - getting a little stir crazy and just decided to go out for a drive on Saturday but, um -

ES: Did you go out to eat or anything, go any places?

BC: No, I didn't go out to eat.

ES: Oh.

AM: Uh, what other vehicles do you guys own? You own a --

BC: We own a 2000 Camaro as well.

AM: That's right. Is that one primarily yours or your wife's?

BC: It's primarily mine

AM: Really?

BC: so - uh -

ES: Is that the car she that she took on the road trip or how did she - how did she go on her road trip?

BC: Uh, the other person's car - it was her and another person - so - I'll typically drive the Camaro, um, the vast majority of the time. When I'm doing errands I'll take the Saturn because it's -

AM: Yeah, probably got better trunk space

BC: [unintelligible]

AM: Exactly - groceries and everything.

BC: Yeah, but - the Camaro's typ- the Camaro's mine.

AM: Cool. Um -

ES: Look - you know that we didn't bring you all the way up here to talk about video games and what you had for lunch that day.

BC: Yep.

ES: Why do you think that we brought you up here?

BC: Because the car I own was seen picking up a girl that's missing.

AM: Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

ES: So who was driving that car, other than you on - on Friday ninth? On Friday, the - the 9th. It's - you're driving your car on the 9th, weren't you?

AM: Does anybody else have access to that car?

BC: No one has access to that car.

AM: Okay.

ES: So how many sets of keys do we have to that car?

BC: Two.

ES: And where were they on Friday?

BC: Uh, one, I would have had one and my wife would have had one.

ES: And hers were in Wisconsin, right?

BC: Right.

ES: Yeah. And what do you keep on that keychain? Do you keep both sets of keys, right? One for the Camaro - or do you have separate sets?

BC: Um, I have one keychain, but sometimes I take the Camaro keys off of it - so -

ES: Now let - let's talk specifically about Friday.

BC: Okay.

ES: Okay. You went to school for how long at the U of I?

AM: Since 2013, right?

BC: Since 2013.

ES: So you're very familiar with our campus.

BC: Not really - I never really, um, talked to anyone, so -

ES: So you're kind of a loner?

BC: Yeah.

ES: And you would have went to Loomis Lab, you said?

BC: Yes.

ES: Okay.

BC: Yeah, that was my main place.

ES: Okay.

BC: That and the attached buildings.

ES: The - but specifically on that day, okay, when you - you originally told the agents that came to your apartment that you just played video games all day long - and you didn't leave the apartment.

BC: Yep.

ES: But it's fair to say that we know that that's not true, correct?

BC: Why would I lie? I mean - I --

ES: Maybe there's some misunderstanding why - why we're here - because like I said, we're - we're not just looking for a needle in a haystack - I'm -- I'm sorry - let me take that back - we're looking for a needle in a haystack

BC: Yeah.

ES: but my point is, you're - you're making it sound like we're just - we're - we just randomly came across your vehicle of the 1,400 Astras that are in the State of Illinois.

BC: I have [unintelligible]

ES: So - so - so what would have happened that day that brings us to you?

BC: Probably that I live in Champaign. I mean, I've never seen one before - an Astra - so

ES: Okay.

AM: Well - believe me when I say that the full weight and force of the FBI is going to descend on that vehicle

BC: Okay.

AM: and all that entails.

BC: Okay.

AM: Okay? Right now, my primary concern and why I've been out until midnight and these guys have been out until midnight every single night is we're trying to find this girl. It's raining outside - it's nasty - she's a foreign student whose only been here for a few weeks - I want to find her. I am asking for help.

BC: I know. I - I mean -

AM: I've got her getting into your car. I need to know why.

BC: [shrugs shoulders] there's ---

AM: Brendt, I - I need to know why she's getting into your car and I need to know where she went.

ES: If we could help her, we need it done now because we - we need to move on from this.

AM: It's - it's been like six days now.

BC: I don't know what to say. Sorry.

ES: And you've been at the U of I for how long?

BC: Three years - three and a half -

ES: And that you know what we do - I work in the detective's bureau at the U of I and you know what we have access to - cameras - do you think that we're not gonna track a vehicle all over campus. We control kiosks of bus stops - we can look in buses, we can look in every building, out on the streets and you're tellin' me that I didn't see you driving your car on Goodwin? That I didn't see you drivin' down Wright Street and turnin' on - right in front of parking where everybody pays their tickets - and driving down University to Goodwin and headin' South and then you see her standin' on that corner in that shade tree, didn't you? That's where you first saw her.

BC: [shrugs shoulders]

ES: And then you turned - you turned on Clark and we still have cameras.

BC: I've seen the videos. But I didn't see me.

ES: You've seen what we've allowed you to see.

BC: Can I see the stuff that you're talking about?

ES: Do you think that we brought you up here to show you video? We want to - we want to understand why you did it.

BC: I mean -

ES: We want to understand why you stopped there to pick her up. Was it to give her a ride? Are you afraid to tell us that you gave her a ride? Maybe you even wanted to make a couple bucks as an Uber driver and she told you I had to go get - I had to go sign a lease at One North and you're like oh, I know where that's at - I'll drop you off - if you're afraid to tell us that you gave her a ride some place, we can work with you there. But I know that you picked her up. I know you did. I saw you in your shirt - arms fully extended. Where did you drop her off at? She was looking for a ride - she had missed her bus. She told you she was going to One North, so where did you drop her off at?

BC: Maybe I'm getting my days mixed up then.

ES: Okay.

BC: I thought I drove -- I thought I drove around on Saturday. I did pick a girl up - I don't remember where.

ES: Okay.

BC: I saw her picture - I don't think it was her though.

ES: Do you remember the girl's name that you picked up?

BC: No - she was talking very broken English.

ES: Okay. Tell us about what happened - what time of day was that?

BC: Early afternoon. I don't really remember.

ES: Okay.

BC: I was just driving around. Um, I saw a girl and she was very distressed -

ES: Okay.

BC: So I stopped my car and looked at her. I asked her if she needed help, I talked to her for a little bit - not that much. I gave her a short ride a couple of blocks - she freaked out and got out.

ES: Okay.

BC: And that's all it was.

ES: Was this when you got on the North side of the railroad tracks on Goodwin - when you went across University and you drove on North?

BC: I was -

ES: Did you let her out by the hospital or by the railroad tracks or where did you let her out at?

BC: I don't really remember specifics um --

ES: Was it close to where you picked her up?

BC: Yeah, it was relatively close. It was in a residential area.

ES: Okay.

BC: So I've never really been over there before - I have no reason to

ES: Okay.

BC: I mean --

ES: When you say she freaked out what - what did she do? Did she - did she start throwing things at you? Did she scratch you? It looks like you have a scratch on your right bicep there? Is that from -

BC: I scratch myself when I sleep - that's from me

ES: Okay.

BC: so --

ES: So she just freaked out? So she's sitting in the front passenger seat of your vehicle?

BC: [nods head yes]

ES: Okay. Has anybody else sat in that front passenger seat since she got out of the car?

BC: Probably. Um, not with me, but with my wife probably, I mean -

ES: So other than your wife -

BC: I don't know [unintelligible]

ES: who all sat in the your front passenger seat with you that you know of?

BC: Um, maybe a guy she's hanging out with.

ES: Your wife?

BC: Yeah.

ES: Okay.

BC: Um - I don't know [unintelligible] I don't think it was her --

AM: [unintelligible] well, if it's - if it's [unintelligible] again, I wanna find this girl because I know she's alone and scared out there

BC: Yeah.

AM: and we haven't had any contact with her so you said you picked her up,

BC: Yeah.

AM: you went a couple blocks away to a residential area - do you remember if you went North?

BC: I went North for sure.

AM :Okay.

BC: I mean, I know my cardinal directions in the city.

AM: Yeah, okay, so you went North.

BC: That was relatively close to Loomis so -

AM: Alright. To - to where?

BC: It was relatively close to Loomis.

AM: Loomis?

BC: I am somewhat familiar with that area.

ES: Where you dropped her off or where you picked her up?

BC: Um, where I picked her up - so - I, I'm serious when I say I was -- I'm pretty anti-social - I pretty much just go to Loomis area - that parking lot there and then go home.

AM: Okay.

BC: But I knew my general area -

AM: Um-hum.

BC: And - I don't remember exactly where I was.

AM: Okay where did - where did you drop her off at?

BC: There's a residential area - I guess a little North of Loomis, um -

ES: The same street you picked her up from, right?

BC: Yeah, North of that place.

ES: That would be Goodwin Avenue that you were on.

BC: Okay. So --

ES: and you're facin' North when she gets in the car -

BC: She showed me her phone - and it was like broken English - she said I'm going here -

ES: Um-hum.

AM: So she was showing you her phone - like a maps program?

BC: Yeah.

AM: Okay.

BC: Um, and I saw it was North so I started driving North and she said something like turn left after a couple of blocks, um - maybe she said something else because that's really when she started freaking out.

AM: Okay.

BC: And she wanted to get out of the car. Get out - tried pulling the door - it was locked because my- the car auto-locks -

AM: Um-hum.

BC: I unlocked, she got out. That was it.

AM: Where were the streets at, do you remember?

BC: No, I don't remember. Um -

AM: Do you remember what she was wearing?

BC: No, I don't. Um - she had a backpack, uh jeans.

ES: Did she have anything on - on her head? Was she wearing sunglasses? Did she have tennis shoes on or flip flops?

BC: I didn't notice flip flops or high heels or anything so, it was probably normal shoes - um -

ES: What was her ethnicity? You said she had trouble speaking English. What was she?

BC: She was Asian.

ES: She was Asian?

BC: She was Asian.

ES: Okay.

BC: Um

ES: What was - what do you think - how old do you think she was Was she - do you think she was a grad student Undergrad? Was she [unintelligible]

BC: My guess was about 20.

ES: Okay.

BC: My guess was about 20, um - her hair length - ish -

ES: Okay.

BC: it was down to here. Um - uh - I have trouble telling Asian people apart from one another sorry.

ES: Well you would remember this very specific though because when you pulled up to her, you rolled your window down and she leaned into your car so you were looking right at her face and what did she have on her face? What did she have on her head? You were looking right at her.

BC: I don't -

ES: You don't remember?

BC: [Unintelligible] No, I mean - even - so I taught many, many semesters here and a lot of the students were Asian.

ES: Okay. Was she wearing glasses? Did she have a ball cap on?

BC: She - she might have been wearing glasses. I don't remember that. So -

AM: What did she tell you whenever you rolled down the window and you were chattin' with her? You said she looked distressed - um -

BC: That's why I stopped.

AM: Do you remember specifically

BC: [unintelligible]

AM: what she said to you?

BC: Um, I asked her if something was wrong, um --

AM: Um-hum. What - what'd she say to that?

BC: Uh, she said, I'm late, I need to get somewhere or something like this - I was - not exactly out of it - but just kind of like, oh, I'm gonna help this random person so [unintelligible] first place, um -

ES: So she said she was running late for somethin'?

BC: Yeah, and I was like oh, okay, well, do you need a ride because again I was just drivin' around.

ES: Um-hum.

BC: So -

AM: Did she say where she was tryin' to get to? You mentioned the - [unintelligible] on the phone -

BC: Um -

AM: with the map.

BC: She said she had a meeting with her professor so - I said all right. Um - yeah, I don't remember us talking for that long and there really wasn't much said, um - she like - when I told her my name she didn't really hear it so I had to say it again.

AM: Um-hum.

BC: A few times [unintelligible] her English was really bad, um - maybe I wasn't speaking properly either - yeah, I mean we really didn't talk about much. There really wasn't much said. Just - she looked freaked out so I offered her a ride.

ES: So how - how long do you think that she was in your car for?

BC: Less than five minutes. Not long at all.

ES: Less than five minutes.

BC: Not long at all. It was just a few blocks and I apparently took a wrong turn compared to what she said and that was enough to spook her. I don't know --

ES: So when you crossed the railroad tracks, did you turn to the left or to the right?

BC: I don't remember railroad tracks

ES: Okay.

BC: so - those are a little further up I think aren't they? I mean - I mean - I don't know, again, I don't know the area that well - those are before the hospital - pretty close to them - I don't know if I was that far up so - I mean I have no reason to go up that way because it's -

ES: So if you would have turned left there after University - you would have driven right by the hospital? You would have been South of the tracks and you - you - the very next thing you see - you're behind the hotel, right? And you see the hospital.

BC: Can I see - yeah, I went -

ES: You said you went to a residential neighborhood

BC: Yeah, I'd like to see a map.

ES: when you turned - when she said turn left.

BC: I would like to see a map.

AM: Yeah - I'm workin' on it -

ES: I know the area very well.

BC: I don't think I drove past the hospital, so I don't remember train tracks, but I mean it's - easy to forget - but --

ES: So - where - so - you said you kicked her out of the car in a residential neighborhood.

BC: She got out of the car -- I didn't -

ES: Oh, she got out of the car.

BC: She wanted to get out. Like that's why I let her out.

ES: Oh because she was freaking out.

BC: Yeah.

ES: Okay and she was saying things you didn't understand.

AM: Because you - she -- she thought you took a wrong turn -

BC: Yeah, and [unintelligible] - I don't know - something like that so - yeah. When she tried to open the door, but again, it was locked, because my car auto-locks - um - obviously want her to get out - I'm not gonna keep someone I barely know in my car who doesn't want be in there you know, I don't know the girl. Um, so I let her out and that was the last I saw of her.

ES: Really? Okay.

BC: Yeah

AM: All right -- um --

BC: I mean, I would have told this earlier, but I mean, I thought it was Saturday. I just -- Can I move this around a little? Thank you. Okay, um -

ES: Guess let's start where you think you picked her up at.

BC: That's a good question. Um -

ES: Well it's Loo - Loomis Lab is -

BC: So Loomis Lab - Goodwin is there - Green, Springfield, so Loomis is right here.

ES: Um-hum.

BC: Um, I remember driving around here - um - it was North of Springfield so I guess I was kind of in this area maybe - yeah like over here. I remember being by the quad.

ES: Do you remember driving by Wright Street where the little Circle K is and the big Beckman Institute? That is a landmark on University?

BC: Um, I don't think I drove past Goodwin. That doesn't ring a bell. I've been to Beckman a couple of times - I don't know what it looks like from the other side - but I have had to go there a few times - um - I guess -

ES: Here's the Circle K right over here.

BC: I don't remember that.

ES: You don't remember coming up Wright Street - driving across University? Coming down Goodwin? You see her standing there underneath that shade tree at the bus stop? You take that quick left and then you run a box around her - now you come back up North Goodwin and you pull up right next to her and you talk to her for less than a minute and she gets in your car.

BC: She was in my passenger side so we had to go this way.

ES: Um-hum.

BC: Um, again, I was driving around a decent amount beforehand - I don't remember exactly what I did beforehand.

ES: Yeah we saw - you were definitely driving all over campus and you were by yourself and you weren't playing video games all day, so why would you tell us that? Why would you tell the FBI that comes to your house -

BC: I thought it was Saturday.

ES: that you were -

BC: I don't - I may have mixed up the days, I mean, I thought I was doing it Saturday.

ES: So what did you think that those two agents were at your house talking to you about when they came over?

BC: Friday. That's why - I mean

ES: Friday as a day or Friday - or they're there to ask you if you picked up an Asian female and gave her a ride?

BC: About Friday - I mean - they were asking me about Friday between 2 and 3, so I told them - I mean - maybe I got my days mixed up - you know, I said a little bit ago. I thought I was doing this Saturday.

ES: But you didn't bother to tell them oh, I didn't - I played video games all day Friday, uh detective, but I actually did pick up a female on Saturday - you didn't - you didn't feel the need to give them that information? That it might be important?

BC: I mean -

AM: All right - so you go Northbound through University - where do you go next, do you remember?

BC: I turned left - so it looks like I did go past - past university, um - this must be the residential area I was talking about then. So I must have went past University - yeah, for sure - so I drove a little more than that so I must have turned left somewhere up here into this area and that's where I would have dropped her off - for sure.

ES: So just for -- you were shown the area of Hill Street and what was that Beslin?

BC: Um, I don't know exactly where in here I was - but - I mean - just looking at this yeah, I mean - if this is Goodwin, um, Springfield is right here, I was in this area here. I am assuming this is a residential area.

ES: Do you remember seeing a - a grade school off to your right? Did you get that far North where you would have saw Martin Luther King, Jr. High or Elementary School right there?

BC: I - I don't know. I don't know.

AM: Where did you go after?

BC: Home.

AM: Straight home?

BC: Yeah. That was enough for me that day.

AM: Okay. Where did you see her walking at?

BC: Um - she's really just standing there looking at her phone - I mean - and I left.

AM: Did you see her walk in any direction?

BC: I don't think so. No.

AM: Uh - I'm gonna ask a personal question - don't take it the wrong way - is - um - you - you mentioned your wife went on a vacation with another friend - um - you mentioned that, uh, there's another guy that she hangs out with - you mentioned that there's another girl that you hang out with - do you guys have a -

BC: We're in - we're in an open relationship.

AM: fairly open relationship?

BC: I have a girlfriend; she has a boyfriend as well.

AM: Okay.

BC: Um - It's um - kind of strained between us as well in an unrelated way.

AM: Okay.

BC: It's not just the open relationship - it's just strained so -

AM: Every marriage goes through some rough patches.

BC: Yeah -

AM: Yeah.

BC: Um - I mean

AM: How - how long has that been going on - that, that strain?

BC: A few months.

AM: A few months?

BC: I mean. Yeah, I mean, I didn't tell her that I did this because I was scared that, I mean - oh great, now all of this is happening.

AM: Mmmm.

BC: I didn't want to tell her.

ES: Did she go to Wisconsin with a boy or another girlfriend?

BC: Guy.

ES: How did that make you

BC: [Unintelligible]

ES: feel when she went away for the weekend - this long weekend with that guy?

BC: Lonely.

ES: Yeah. And it's okay that - those are normal human feelings

BC: Yeah.

ES: Did you feel hurt?

BC: Well yeah. But - I mean she had been seeing this guy for a while, um -

ES: But still, she's your wife - and it's tough - you know, even if you're in an open relationship like that where it's tough to see somebody you care about that you love to go someplace else with somebody else and not include ya.

BC: Yeah.

ES: And I get that, man. Is that why you were drivin' around campus all day, pretty much all day long on Friday - because you missed her?

BC: Just tryin' to clear my head, you know, more or less.

ES: That's understandable.

BC: You know, I was stir crazy - I was lonely - um - and I thought it was Saturday so --

ES: Did you talk to any other girls that day?

BC: No.

ES: Did you talk to any other girls on Saturday or did you stay home Saturday?

BC: No. Once again - days - mixed up.

ES: Okay

AM: Yeah - and I'm not tryin' to trip you up on the days.

BC: When I was - when I was driving - I'll - I'll put it in a clearer way then - when I was driving around she was the only person I talked to.

AM: Okay.

ES: Okay. Fair enough. Do you remember what time you started driving around campus that day? Was it early in the morning? Was it mid-afternoon?

BC: Uh - right - um - after I ate lunch, but it was an early lunch.

ES: Where did you eat lunch at? Did you eat in Savoy?

BC: No - at home.

ES: At home? Were you down in Research Park at all before you saw her that day?

BC: Down in Research Park?

ES: Down - down by the I Hotel?

BC: That far down? Um - I don't remember exactly where I drove - I wasn't just on campus - but

ES: Do you remember driving by the Assembly Hall? Or State Farm Center?

BC: No, I don't remember that. I don't actually know what those are.

ES: Oh, it's where they play basketball - the big basketball arena. It looks like a giant mushroom on the South quad.

BC: I drove past the cemetery around there.

ES: Yup.

BC: So, again like - I - I really don't know campus - it's - it sounds kind of silly because I've been here for three and a half years now but I still [unintelligible]

ES: The big - the big cemetery by the football field?

BC: Yeah.

ES: Yeah. That would, uh, and you were - so that's Kirby Avenue.

BC: Yes. I was on Kirby.

ES: Yup, and you were headin', uh, East, towards Urbana - and then Kirby - you would have had the baseball fields off to your right - the cemetery off to your left so you would have had softball field baseball field off to your right. And then right when you got to Lincoln Avenue there's soccer fields off to your right. Lacrosse fields.

BC: I don't remember specifics on directions - but I was down by the cemetery, I do remember that.

ES: Okay, fair enough. Yeah, that's a key landmark.

BC: Yeah.

ES: But, you don't remember where you went after you drove past the cemetery?

BC: It was - no - I mean it was completely random where I was driving - I didn't have any kind of -

ES: Do you remember driving off campus in Urbana into a residential neighborhood in Urbana?

BC: In Urbana? If I did, it wasn't that far.

ES: Were you

BC: So -

ES: were you in Orchard Downs?

BC: Orchard Downs?

ES: Where all of our married student housing is? There's a large Asian community that lives out there. Were you driving around Orchard Downs?

BC: I did go to Orchard Downs for a little bit, but there was construction so I turned back. I know I went to Orchard Downs because a friend of mine, uh, has an apartment there.

ES: Um-hum. Who's - who's your friend?

BC: Her name is Rita. I, uh, she was a co-worker/research partner of mine

ES: Okay.

BC: when I went here. Um - didn't see her obviously - nothing like that - I was like -

ES: So you - you came down - came down all the way through

BC: I turned into there but again there was construction so I just left immediately because I was like oh this is boring -

ES: Just turned around and you couldn't get all the way though?

BC: Um - I mean I drive like this occasionally it's just to clear my head - I like exploring - I guess you could say.

ES: Um-hum.

BC: Um - you know, one of those things like I drive down Springfield every single day to work.

ES: Um-hum.

BC: There are two streets right next two it -literally never seen them - was like I wonder what those are -

AM: So you take those instead.

BC: Yeah. So I do it occasionally and Saturday was the day where I did a lot of it I guess, so -

AM: Okay.

BC: - or Friday, whatever.

AM: Yeah, no, again, not - not tryin' to fault you or -

BC: Yeah.

AM: - trip you up over the days, I know sometimes days can be a blur, um, so you were cruisin' around campus a bit, um, tryin' to clear your head?

BC: Yeah.

AM: Uh, your wife was up in Wisconsin with her boyfriend, um. While you were cruisin' around you saw Ms. Yingying, uh, she appeared very distressed, is that correct?

BC: If it was her, yeah, I mean, again, I don't - if I recognized her, I would have told the agents that came on Monday or Tuesday - whenever it was - that it was her.

AM: Okay.

BC: Like, cause I knew she was missing. Um, I picked up an Asian girl. I thought she was about 20 - so -

AM: And from there you went North on University, um - she was tryin' to point out directions in her phone.

BC: Yeah.

AM: Uh, you turned left into the neighborhood - she started panicking.

BC: And got out. And that's all that happened. And then I went home.

ES: When she said she was distressed, um, or you said that she looked distressed, what did - what did she say to you when you rolled your window down and talked to her?

BC: Um, she said she was late for something.

ES: Other than that, did she - she tell you what - what it was?

BC: She said

ES: or where it was at?

BC: she had a meeting with her professor.

ES: Did she tell you where it was at?

BC: Yeah, but I didn't understand her.

ES: Okay.

BC: So -

ES: So did she offer to pull up the address in her phone?

BC: Um -

ES: And show it to you?

BC: I think she did that in my car - I don't remember her getting out her phone outside of the car.

ES: And what did her phone look like? Was it black? Was it red?

BC: Uh -

AM: Do you remember what kind it was? Like Android or iOS?

BC: It wasn't my type of phone, I can tell you that much, um -

AM: What kind do you have?

BC: I have a Samsung Moto

AM: Okay.

BC: G. So an Android - um -

ES: Do you remember the color of the case? Cause she showed you the map - where she wanted you to take her.

BC: The front of it must have been white -

ES: Okay, fair enough.

BC: had her hand like this, I couldn't see the back.

AM: Do you remember the - did you recognize the map program?

BC: It must have been Google maps, I mean.

AM: Okay.

BC: I think that's what everyone uses, so -

AM: I know - I know that there's a couple out there.

BC: I mean it looked like the one you showed me so -

AM: Okay.

BC: Yeah - I'd say it didn't look anything weird to me, so -

ES: Um-hum.

AM: Again my, um, you know, my theory is that she didn't get out of the car.

BC: Ok

AM: Um - I'm just being open with you - my - my theory is, um, she was in there a little bit longer

BC: Ok

AM: Ok, Um, I'd like you to be more forthcoming with me because, again, I need to find because, again, I need to find where she is. We've got her family flying over here from China - it's been six days -- it's rainy outside -- I need to find her.

ES: We have 600 Chinese students that have volunteered to look for her. What I can tell you is that we will find her. Now when we find her is up

to you because you know and we know that she didn't just get out of your car. So we need to know where she is now so that we can move forward from this. But if you maintain

AM: who

ES: that she just got out of the car and just walked away, it's very difficult for us to move forward.

AM: Were - were you hoping for, um, just kind of like a quick tryst with her or - see if, you know, tryin' to - tryin' to pick her up?

BC: I mean that would have been nice, but -

ES: Do you - do you have. I'm gonna ask you a weird question and, you know, a lot of us have fetishes - uh, how would you describe your relationship with your wife? Are you guys into certain things? Do you like porn? Do you like -

BC: Um, we're pretty vanilla together, um, but, yeah, that's pretty much it. We have some stuff in our apartment.

ES: I mean do you have like certain types of people that you have fantasies about that you might wanna hook up with, you know?

BC: Not particularly, no.

AM: Hold on a sec - I'll be - well, I'm going to step out for a second, they're callin' me.

ES: Okay. And have you ever like, um, you do realize like everything you tell us we fact check, regardless of what you tell us, so.

BC: Yeah, I know.

ES: Like stuff like - YouTube videos that you've seen

BC: Okay.

ES: regarding Asian women. Do you like videos of Asian women? Like Korean women?

BC: Like K pop songs and stuff? I mean -

ES: Maybe.

BC: I like - okay, so I like all types of women,

ES: Okay That's - that's the truth. So, I don't have an Asian fetish.

ES: But something drew your eye to her because

BC: She looked distressed.

ES: you were cruising all over and, if she was truly distressed, I mean, there was an e-phone stand right behind her. She could have pushed that button and - and got help and she didn't ask you for help, per se, she asked - she needed to get to - she was late for somethin'.

BC: Yeah.

ES: And that's - so you offered to give her a ride.

BC: Um-hum.

ES: Now I - look, I - I been doin' this - I'm 45 years old. I've been policing, uh, basically since I was 21 years old - young Marine - living out in Quantico, Virginia. I've had a gun on my belt for basically most of my adult life. Okay? And I get that - that sometimes people lie to me. I done get upset over that. I don't take it personal,

BC: Ok

ES: you know. A lot of times people, um, they tell me truths and then, or they basically, uh, a little bit of truth here - a little bit of truth there - but just to try to stay the course to make me believe that they're tellin' me they're bein' entirely truthful - but you and I know that here and now, what we're talkin' about, you're not bein' entirely truthful with us and at this point, we're trying to help you. We're trying to help her. We're tryin' to help her family. I don't think that you're a bad person. Somethin' happened though and something got out of control and we need to know where she's at because the longer she's missing - we're gonna find the answers to all these questions whether we do it now or we have to do it two weeks from now but we're gon - we're gonna - we're gonna put this behind us and everybody's gonna move forward and this is a time for you to be entirely honest with us. She - she - she - her family is coming to China to look for their daughter. Do you have any sisters?

BC: Yeah, I do.

ES :What - wouldn't - wouldn't - if - if your sister was missing - even if - if it was because of you, wouldn't you want to help for the closure for that family - for - for your loved ones?

BC: Yeah. I - I -- [unintelligible]. She rode in my car so --

ES: You have to know - you're a smart man - you have a PhD, right?

BC: Masters.

ES: Masters, oh, you st - got out of the PhD - but you're still a smart man, is my point. So you have to understand how technology works. How do you think I knew that she googled the address to One North? How do you think I knew that? One minute after getting in your car. How do you think I knew that? We know that you didn't - she didn't get out of your car. You need to be honest with us. Help us put this to rest - help us bring her back to her family. You can do that. You can do it. You can do it right now.

BC: I - I

AM: I understand if you've had dark thoughts. I understand if you've been depressed. I understand if you've been drinking too much at times. I understand if you've had sadistic thoughts - wondered what it would be like to commit an act of violence. I know that temptation is out there. I need to find her. I know she got in your car, you went with her. You've been depressed. Your wife just left to go on a vacation with another man. You see her - she gets in - she's vulnerable. Let me find her.

BC: I think I've told you.

AM: Okay, so, did she get back in your car then?

BC: No.

AM: Did you get out of the car and follow her?

BC: No. Definitely not - I didn't get out of my car a single [unintelligible].

ES: Okay, why not? Was it because of the kind of neighborhood you were in?

BC: I don't know anything about that neighborhood so um -

ES: Did she run away from you? Did she stand there?

BC: No, she stood there, looked at her phone and I drove away - so - I don't remember her going any direction so that's - that's what it is - I mean --

ES: Did - when - are you sure that you left - let her out of the car in the - in the neighborhood - are you sure you didn't let her out more towards the heart of Champaign? Maybe close to the railroad tracks? Are you sure you didn't drive her further West into Champaign? It wasn't when you first took that left after - after Goodwin?

BC: I don't remember how far it was, um, I thought it was shortly after. I don't remember like crazy specifics like that. I don't know - um -

ES: You would remember this drive.

BC: Not specifics like that. I - like how far are you talking - like a mile or two? No - not that far. I don't think so.

ES: Okay, so you're telling me that when we find her, we're gonna find her phone is what you're telling me. Is that what you're telling me? Because when she got out of her car - or your car - she had her phone in her hand.

BC: I have no idea - she had her phone, yeah. I don't know if you're - I don't know the answer to that question - so - I don't know.

AM: Well, certain questions we ask you, we know the answers to - we're - we're seeing if you're being truthful with us

BC: Okay.

AM: You know. If I ask you a question I know the answer to and you give me a different answer, I know you're not being truthful with me

BC: Hum.

AM: you know, um - this is part of the reason why we're - we keep askin' ya - help us find her, um - I appreciate your - you - you being honest with her getting into the car, um, it tells me that you're tellin' the truth because I knew the answer to that - um.

BC: So - I want to bring her back to her family.

BC: Okay.

AM: Okay. And what happened in that car? I know she was looking for directions - things went sideways - tell me what happened.

BC: That's what happened. I -

ES: Did you - were you attracted to her at all?

BC: A reasonable amount.

ES: I mean she's a good looking girl. Did a thought cross your mind?

BC: Yeah the thought crossed my mind but it'd have probably happened with anyone.

ES: I mean maybe she's into that is my point - and I'm not - I'm not judging you if she got in your car and she wanted to have s - go to another location - you guys have a - have some fun rollin - roll around - have sex - consensual sex - somethin' happens - you panic. Is that a possibility?

BC: No.

ES: You sure?

BC: Yeah, I'm sure.

ES: So you're tellin' me you never had sex with her?

BC: I never had sex with her.

ES: Never penetrated her with your fingers? Any of - any parts of her body?

BC: No.

ES: With your penis?

BC: No.

ES: With your fingers?

BC: No.

ES: Never had sex with her - did you kiss her?

BC: No. No.

ES: Okay. Are you afraid - are you afraid to tell me if you did because it - it seems like you're - you're tryin' to think, instead of just answering the question, you're tryin' to think about three steps forward

BC: Well -

ES: of where I'm goin' with it. And I think I've demonstrated enough - I've shared enough with you that you know that I know that you - you didn't drop her off in that - in that neighborhood. You you know that we can follow her phone.

BC: Okay.

ES: So where did you drop her off at?

AM: Where'd you take her, Brendt? We need to find Yingying.

ES: Tonight.

BC: I think it's time that I stop answer - answering questions. I know the typical advice is to get a lawyer before you answer anything and I think I've tried to help enough.

AM: Okay. And I -

BC: I think I'm being pushed into --

ES: Nope. Fair enough.

AM: Yeah. And, that's your right and I appreciate what you've given us, I really do.

BC: I thought it was Saturday and -

AM: And

BC: I'm sorry -

AM: and that's okay. I understand that sometimes we get days mixed up.

BC: I mean - I would have told right away if I thought it was the same girl - I mean - yeah, I know they were there looking for an Asian girl and stuff - I'm not stupid, but -

AM: All right. We'll I'll tell you what, hang tight here for a sec - let me gather up my stuff, um, Eric's gonna gather up his stuff - we'll be back in a minute, okay? Do you need some water or anything?

BC: Yeah, some water please.

AM: I can - I can see if I can get you a bottle of water, okay?

BC: Thank you.