

SARASOTA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

(The following may contain unintelligible or misunderstood words due to the recording quality.)

AR: Detective Andrew Rowe *AR*

CASE #: 22-80828

MB: Melania Binder

DATE: 9/24/22

TIME: 10:53 A.M.

AR: Today's date's Saturday, September 24th. Time is 1053 hours. I'm Detective Rowe, ID 2187. This is referenced to case number 22-80828. We're presently at -- what's your address here, ma'am?

MB: 1823 Highland Road.

AR: 1823 Highland --

MB: Road.

AR: And I'm with Melania.

MB: I am -- my name is Melania Binder.

AR: All right. Can you spell your first name for me?

MB: M-E-L-A-N-I-A, Melania.

AR: Melania. All right. Can you raise your right hand for me? Do you swear and affirm the statement you're about to give is the truth to the best of your knowledge?

MB: Yes, I swear.

AR: Okay. Go ahead and put your hand down. Okay. The time -- all right. Melania, do you have a middle initial or middle --

MB: No --

AR: -- name?

MB: -- I don't have a middle name.

AR: What's your last name?

MB: Binder, B-I-N-D-E-R, Binder.

AR: Your birthday, ma'am?

MB: May 4th, 1968.

AR: And if I needed to contact you again, what's a good phone number for you?

MB: 941 --

AR: Uh-huh.

MB: -- 405-2242.

AR: Okay. Uh, let's see here. And we were talking briefly, you said you worked for the state attorney's office in Sarasota?

MB: Yes, I'm a temporary, uh -- I'm on, uh, that 'cause, uh, unemployment company's payroll but I work since 23rd of August for --

AR: That's a long time.

MB: -- state attorney's office.

AR: Okay. So, Melanie, is how you wanna go?

MB: Yes.

AR: Okay. Uh, we're talking about the incident that occurred just outside your residence here this morning. Uh, you were briefly telling me you may have witnessed it kinda sort of. Uh, so can you kinda tell me again what happened, that what you heard, what you saw and everything that transpired afterwards?

MB: Okay. So, I don't know exactly what time was it, around 7:00 in the morning.

AR: Okay.

MB: I just woke up and I wanted to do laundry so, I was right about here in the hallway when I heard a terrible sound like -- like an explosion.

AR: Okay.

MB: So, I was right next to the door so I opened the door and what I -- I heard the man -- so, I didn't quite see the man because he was further to the left from my angle of view.

AR: Uh-huh.

MB: I just saw a young boy, uh, running, not too fast and he looked okay. And I heard -- I don't remember the -- the words but somebody was very pissed and he said, "I'm pissed," and something and he was yelling with all his power. And I didn't see him exactly. I even think he was laying down like this, I don't know.

AR: Who was laying down?

MB: The man.

AR: Okay.

MB: The man was farther away and then I saw a young boy running. A tall, young boy. I don't know his age but he looked like a teenager.

AR: Okay.

MB: And then I saw -- I went inside and I decided I'm still sleepy and I went to bed and then I heard the helicopters and --

AR: Okay.

MB: -- much later I came again outside and heard from the neighbors what happened.

AR: Okay. Uh, so the young boy that you saw running, have you ever seen him before?

MB: No. No, I've never seen him. Even if I live here I don't go outside. I don't have a dog. I don't -- I mean, I just say hello to my neighbors but I don't go in the street like them so they --

AR: It seems like a very dog friendly community. Like you have to have a --

MB: Yes.

AR: -- dog in here.

MB: It's a very -- but, now that they said who was the other man, I know him because I see him around -- like walking his dogs every day and --

AR: So you know --

MB: -- I -- yeah.

AR: -- you know the other gentleman?

MB: Yeah, I know the other --

AR: Okay.

MB: -- gentleman, he --

AR: And his name is David. Do you know him as David?

MB: No, I never know his --

AR: You just know --

MB: Yeah.

AR: -- who he is?

MB: I just -- he -- I just see him and his wife always they are walking the dogs
and he's always holding the little dogs in his arms.

AR: Okay.

MB: And --

AR: Uh, have you ever seen him be aggressive with --

MB: No.

AR: -- anybody before?

MB: On the contrary, they -- he looks so nice but --

AR: Okay.

MB: -- I can't believe --

AR: Has he told you of any altercations that he's had in the neighborhood with
anybody?

MB: No.

AR: Have you ever spoken with him?

MB: We -- we just -- I just let -- he just let me pet his dogs --

AR: Okay. Just in a passing thing?

MB: No --

AR: Okay.

MB: -- it's a passing thing. I don't --

AR: All right. So you don't really know this gentleman --

MB: No, I don't --

AR: -- uh, you don't know much of his history in the neighborhood, you just --

MB: No.

AR: -- see him and his wife walking their dogs?

MB: No, I'm -- I'm just shocked that the neighbors are on his side and they say bad things about this boy that I never saw. They saw -- they say he has mental problems, that he's under medication and how bad he is, that he's a bully, that he's harassing everybody. And --

AR: But you've never witnessed any of that?

MB: No, I've never witnessed any -- anyone and this morning -- well the other guy was saying horrible words and the boy was saying nothing. He was just --

AR: Okay.

MB: -- running away.

AR: Uh, have -- have you seen cop cars in the area, uh, recently a lot?

MB: What?

AR: Our -- our -- our -- our -- the -- the sheriff's --

MB: No.

AR: -- cars, have you ever seen 'em come to the -- any houses around here lately?

MB: No, but the -- the neighbor said that they called the cops on the -- on the young boy but I never --

AR: You've never seen us out here?

MB: -- no. No, I've never seen --

AR: Okay. All right. So, just so I have it in my mind correctly, uh, you got up roughly 7 a.m., I'm not gonna put you at an exact time, um, you were coming out here to do laundry. You heard a loud explosion of some sort, you thought maybe it was a firework or something at first --

MB: Yes, I was -- I was certain it was -- I was --

AR: A firework?

MB: Yeah.

AR: Okay.

MB: Firecracker --

AR: Uh, you were able to -- were you inside or outside when you were looking at everything?

MB: I was outside.

AR: Okay. So you were outside your door and you kinda saw a young boy running --

MB: Yeah.

AR: -- away as you heard --

MB: And he looked fine.

AR: -- as you heard someone else yelling?

MB: Yeah, yelling like and saying bad words that I don't remember, only that --

AR: Okay.

MB: -- I'm pissed. I'm pissed or something.

AR: And you saw the -- the boy run away and that was pretty much it for you and you just went back to bed?

MB: Yeah, I -- I -- I decided that it's just a fight between a father and the son.

AR: Okay.

MB: And --

AR: Okay. So you thought --

MB: -- (Unintelligible) --

AR: -- it was just a family fight going on?

MB: Yes, I thought it was a family fight. I thought it's a father pissed off at his son.

AR: Okay. And you've never seen that young boy before, you don't know where he lives --

MB: No. I'm -- I'm not -- I pretty much stay in my house and --

AR: Okay. I -- I do the same thing in my neighborhood, so --

MB: Really?

AR: Oh, yeah. Yes. I understand.

MB: I'm not the kind of --

AR: I don't like hanging out with people.

MB: Yeah. No, it's not that I don't like hanging out with people, it's just I have my own problems and --

AR: Yes. Okay. Um, so I think that'll do it. The time is 11:00 and that'll conclude this interview.

(CONCLUSION OF INTERVIEW)

Transcribed by: ssc/ssc/ms