

**SPEAKER:** 7472.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** On this day, police are watching a known heroin trafficking house in North Minneapolis, an area they say, offers a smorgasbord of drugs. Police received word from an informant that business will begin within the hour. A narcotics officer watches the house through a surveillance camera by clicking a remote control. The TV monitor shows part of an alley, a backyard, and several young children playing with a bicycle, and two yellow toy trucks.

**SPEAKER:** The majority of the people living up here are real good people, they're trapped in this neighborhood. It's been overrun and just ridden with drug dealers that move in here. Some of them take over houses, literally hold people hostage while they deal drugs out of there. They'll look for a woman that's not working. She's on public assistance, and she's got kids, and they'll come in and they'll offer her large sums of money, \$200-\$300 a day to use her house.

We've got activity here, now.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** A Ford explorer pulls up the alley and swerves into the house's driveway. At the same time, a man walks out of the house and down the alley.

**SPEAKER:** He's an early warning device. It's basically what he is. You can see, he's moving down the alley here now. He will stand at the mouth of the alley while they're doing their work up there. That way, if a squad car comes rolling along, all he'll do is turn around and whistle. And that'll let everybody up at the house know that there's a squad in the area.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** About 10 minutes later, a maroon Taurus with chrome wheels pulls up. A skinny man gets out and meets another man at the house. The two exchange a wad of money and a little white bag.

**SPEAKER:** See the cash? There's a cash there with the heroin. That was it, you just watched the hand-to-hand. He just did a hand-to-hand deal. He handed him probably \$200, \$300 cash and picked up a sack of heroin.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** Why would somebody do something like that right out in the open and not just go in the house?

**SPEAKER:** [SIGHS] Ignorance, boldness. They're not too worried about-- they felt comfortable coming in here because they know that there's not many squads here.

Same guy that did the deal before just came out, and he just collected the cash. Right now, he's counting it, and they got it. And they're going to be getting in the car here. You see him counting the money there over the hood?

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** He's got it inside of a tennis ball?

**SPEAKER:** Yeah. He's got a plastic baggie that's got the heroin in it. And right now, he's just taking out what this guy wants. See the money?

**MAN (ON RADIO):** Captain Laker, 4155, Lyndale, a juvenile's waiting outside.

**SPEAKER:** The deal went down. And this guy that's got the heroin is keeping his left front pants pocket.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** Over the next three hours, a parade of cars, trucks, even people on foot visit the house and quickly leave. The raid begins, and about 15 men and women converge on the house.

**MAN (ON RADIO):** Move it. Move it.

**SPEAKER:** That's our guy, just running up to it, his gun out. See, the entry team came around to the back. They put everybody in the back down on the ground. And then they're making the entry into the house. Our guys are going up there and they'll take custody. Everybody on the outside--

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** A few minutes after the raid, a woman calmly greets police in her kitchen.

**SPEAKER 1:** Hello.

**SPEAKER 2:** Hi.

**SPEAKER 1:** How are you?

**SPEAKER 2:** I'm fine. How are you?

**SPEAKER 1:** Good.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** Police searched the house for drugs and weapons. Four small children sit on the living room floor watching *Star Trek*. The youngest is a toddler, the oldest, about seven years old. Up some cracked steps to the second floor, an officer questions a man and woman in their early 20s. The woman looks gaunt and ill.

She sits across from the lone piece of furniture, a weathered orange chair surrounded by an open, half-filled ketchup bottle, and what appears to be a glass drug pipe. In an attached room, officers find a semi-automatic rifle.

**SPEAKER 3:** That's an AK47. Let's see if they can make it.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** How much can that fire?

**SPEAKER 3:** 19 rounds.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** In the backyard, several men sit on the grass in handcuffs while police record their take. One of them asks police to, quote, "Give a Black man a chance," something that infuriates one of the Black officers.

**SPEAKER 4:** Why? Because you sitting here broken, dumb?

**SPEAKER 5:** Yeah.

**SPEAKER 4:** OK.

**SPEAKER 5:** Yeah.

**SPEAKER 4:** OK, because I grew up in the same shit you grew up in.

**SPEAKER 5:** Exactly.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** The children crowd the doorway, their attention focused on their father. He sits in handcuffs on the ground next to a yellow toy truck. A police officer looks at the man's arms, his veins puffed up like a curving snake crawling under his skin.

**SPEAKER 6:** Right there, look, that's from shooting.

**SPEAKER 7:** That's something from dialysis, man. I'm a dialysis patient. That ain't from shooting no motherfucking dope. Hey, look, that's from dialysis.

**SPEAKER 6:** I can see them.

**SPEAKER 8:** He was right in your category.

**SPEAKER 7:** Now you show me where you see me shoot some damn dope there.

**SPEAKER 6:** Right there, man.

**SPEAKER 7:** No, I'm not. Dude, you've got to be crazy.

**SPEAKER 8:** He didn't even have a gun.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** The smallest child in the doorway wants to know where his father is going.

[CHILD CHUCKLES]

[CHILD MUMBLES]

**SPEAKER 8:** No, no, Daddy all right. Go on, sit down. Daddy, all right. Go sit down.

**SPEAKER 6:** Mom and dad are in narcotics. They grew up with it, and they see it as a way of life. First, they try to make money. And a lot of them get caught up in using it. And it just starts a chain reaction.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** What about these kids in here? What's going to happen to them?

**SPEAKER 6:** Right now, nothing. With these kids, there's not much we can really do. All the drugs were outside the house. On the upstairs, just the walls. So normally, if there's dope in the house, and there's kids, the kids will go to St Joe's for evaluation.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** What level are these people at as far as their kind of pecking order in the--

**SPEAKER 6:** They'd be considered an upper street level. Anybody that's out and actually in the street dealing is not real-- usually really, really, high. A lot of them that deal the dope here have to report to somebody, who reports to somebody, who reports to somebody, and it goes up. And believe it or not, most of the dope that's coming up ends up in the white collar in areas of the suburbs.

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** Again, the children are back to watch.

**BOY:** Where's daddy going?

**SPEAKER 4:** Get in the house, fellas.

[BOY CRIES]

**SPEAKER 8:** Come here.

[INDISTINCT CHATTER]

[BOY CRIES LOUDLY]

**ELIZABETH STAWICKI:** On this raid, police seized crack cocaine, a tennis ball filled with heroin, two semi-automatic guns, a pickup truck, and money. They arrest five people. For the FM news station, I'm Elizabeth Stawicki.

**BOY:** I want Daddy.

**SPEAKER 8:** Daddy all right. Go and sit down. Thank you.

**SPEAKER 9:** Bye-bye now.

**SPEAKER 8:** Bye. Come here!

**BOY:** No!