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[Intro]

Joe-Hi there. Welcome to another episode of Thinking Sideways. I am your host, Joe, joined by my co-hosts...

D-Devin.

J-And...

Steve-Steve.

J-And this week we're going to talk about a really, really interesting World War II mystery.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah. A lot of cool stuff happened around World War II time.

D-Kickin' it old school.

J-Yeah. So, our story begins in the year 1941. Germany had overrun much of Europe and was at war with Great Britain, as we all know.

S-Uh huh.

J-Or you should know, anyway. Rudolf Hess was the Deputy Fuhrer of the National Socialist Democratic Workers Party, aka the Nazis, at the time. And he was the third most powerful man in Germany, after Hitler and Goering. So he was a VIP. On May 10, 1941, Hess did something kind of strange. He climbed into a Messerschmitt Bf 110 fighter bomber. By the way, did I mention that Rudolf Hess knew how to fly?

D-Nope.

S-Not yet, but we know now.

J-Yeah, yeah, he knew how to fly. And he flew to Scotland. His intention, he said, was to negotiate a peace between Britain and Germany. So what the hell was he thinking? (All laughing).

S-Yeah.

J-Yeah.

S-Good question.

J-Yeah. Was he deranged as Winston Churchill and Adolf Hitler both said? And also, the general consensus is that Hitler was not aware before he left on his flight that he was going to leave and go to

England.

S-Which is a little strange.

J-Yeah, yeah. And that's the general consensus, but really, is that true? Did Hitler really not know?

D-That his, that his third in command was going on a little trip?

J-Was going on a little peace mission?

D-A little trippy poo.

J-Yeah.

D-Can I briefly ask, maybe you'll talk about it later, why Scotland?

J-Well, there was a guy living in Scotland...

D-Ok, so we'll get to it.

J-Yeah, the Duke of Hamilton, yeah.

D-Got it.

J-Who he felt might be sympathetic to his cause. Yeah.

D-Ok, so we'll talk about that in a minute.

J-Yeah. We will.

D-Great.

J-And also Rudolf Hess left us with one last little mystery, which is how did he die? The official story is that he committed suicide, but...

D-Ha ha.

J-...but other people think that he was murdered.

S-Yeah, I've read up on this, and I can see how they would think that.

J-Yeah. A lot of people think he was murdered.

S-Uh huh.

J-But, well let me tell you a little background on Rudolf. He joined the Nazi party in 1920 after hearing Adolf Hitler speak at an event in Munich. He was member number 16, so he really got in on the ground floor of the whole thing.

S-And that was at the time when Hitler was considered more charismatic and less crazy-talk.

J-Yeah.

S-So he was much more of a, very motivational speaking.

J-Uh huh.

S-I mean, I imagine that's how he got a lot of people in the beginning.

J-Yeah. Well, and this is post-World War II...

S-One. Post-World War I.

J-Yeah, exactly. My bad (Steve laughing). Post-World War I and a lot of Germans, of course, you know they were under the Versailles Treaty, the terms were quite harsh, and a lot of Germans were very, very angry about the outcome of the war.

S-Yeah.

J-And so Hitler tapped into that pretty nicely.

S-Oh, no, he definitely did.

J-Yeah.

D-It turns out it's not so hard for crazy people to rally around the guise of fixing everything.

J-Uh huh. Yeah, I know. Well, Hitler fixed things real good.

D-Well.

J-Heh.

D-Like I said, the guise.

S-NOT.

J-Yeah.

D-The guise of it.

J-Yeah. You guys have, I'm sure, heard of the famous Beer Hall Putsch in the, 1923, when Hitler and Hess and a bunch of other Nazis went into a German beer hall where they were holding a Bavarian town meeting. Basically tried to start a revolution.

S-This, I have read about this briefly, and it never made sense to me. Like, it never seemed how, I never understood why they thought it was a good idea.

J-Me neither. I never did either. But it turns out, yeah, it didn't work out so well for them. They wound up, Hitler and Hess, both went to jail for a while. And it was at that time that Hitler wrote his magnum opus, "Mein Kampf," in jail. And Hess helped him edit it. So he was part of that too. And at this, this is really when they started becoming, you know, really good friends. A very close, very close relationship between these two.

S-And they always had a very close relationship.

J-Uh huh.

S-I mean, through the years. Not just, at this point forward, is what I'm getting.

J-Yeah, I think that their time together in jail really kind of cemented the relationship, though.

S-Uh huh.

J-Yeah. Hess, as you all know, rose to power along with Hitler. And Hess is the guy who introduced the concept of Lebensraum to Hitler. He had gotten the idea from one of his university professors, at the University of Munich. And lebensraum in German means, quote, "let's go conquer most of Eastern Europe so we can live there." Unquote (D and S laughing).

D-Right. The direct translation, right?

J-Yeah, exactly.

D-Yeah.

S-What, what actually does it mean, Joe? (Laughing).

J-It means "living room." And not, not the living room in your house.

S-The room to live.

J-Space to live, yeah.

S-Ok.

D-Ah, ok.

J-Yeah. Yeah, they felt that...

S-I like the original translation better.

D-Yeah, I do too.

J-Yeah, I know. Well anyway, as we all know, Hitler really took to the idea.

D-What?!

J-Yeah, he did. In June 1940, Hitler was heard to say that what he wanted most was peace with Britain.

S-And they'd been at war with Britain for about a year and a half at this point?

J-Around that.

S-Would that be correct?

J-Yeah, around that.

S-Ok.

J-And he said that he felt there really was no need for the two countries to be at war, and besides, I'm sure he had better use for all those military assets that he was throwing at the Brits. Because in June 1941, of course, Operation Barbarossa got underway. That was the invasion of the Soviet Union.

S-But prior to that they'd been sending plane after plane after plane after plane, just bombing the holy crap out of Britain.

J-Uh huh, yeah, yeah.

S-Which is a lot of, that's a lot of material.

D-Uh huh.

J-Yeah, which it could be more usefully spent on bombing Russians instead of Brits, you know?

D-Right.

J-In June 1940, when Hitler said he wanted peace, it looks like Hess started planning his peace initiative about that time.

D-Hm.

J-Rudolf Hess first learned to fly in the German military, near the end of World War I. And after the war, in 1929, he got a private pilots license. Owned several different planes, not all at the same time, I don't think. I don't think he was that wealthy. But he got pretty good at flying single-engine planes. In October 1940, he went to the Messerschmidt Aircraft Works in Augsburg, Bavaria. I hope I pronounced Augsburg right. And he told them that he wanted to start training on the Messerschmidt Bf 110, which is a twin-engine airplane with a lot better range than your typical single-engine. And he received instruction on how to fly from a Messerschmidt test pilot. And the company held a plane for his own personal use, which is nice of them.

D-Well, I mean...

S-Yeah.

J-Yeah (Devin laughing).

D-You're one of Hitler's best friends, you're not going to be like, "Um, no."

S-You're government number three, guy number three, yeah.

D-Nah.

J-Oh yeah, absolutely.

S-They probably didn't make him pay for it, either.

D-Uh uh.

J-No, I'm sure they didn't. They probably didn't even make him pay for the gas.

S-Or all the upgrades.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah. Yeah, they upgraded it a bit. They installed a radio compass, long-range drop tanks, which are fuel tanks.

D-Uh huh.

J-Reportedly modified the oxygen delivery system, although I'm not sure exactly what was done there. That's all I heard.

S-I would imagine that if they were extending the range of the plane regarding fuel...

J-They might want to add some oxygen tanks?

S-They would probably have upgraded the oxygen system to match it.

J-Probably. Yeah.

D-I would guess that as well. It seems like oxygen would be an important component to flight.

S-Right. And directly following fuel, yes.

J-Uh huh.

D-I don't know. Oxygen might be even more important than fuel. One could argue.

S-You could have a ton of fuel, and if you can't breathe and black out, it doesn't matter.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah.

D-Alternately, if you run out of fuel, you might be able to pilot the plane to a safer landing.

J-Maybe.

D-Even if the fuel runs out, as long as you have oxygen.

S-So we're both right.

D-Yeah!

J-Ok.

D-Yeah!

J-Yeah, I'm going to call this a win-win (Devin laughing). So where are we at here? May 10th, the day of reckoning, at 5:45 pm, Hess climbed into his Messerschmidt, took off from the airport at Augsburg, and flew northwest, eventually turned north, hit the coast of the North Sea right around Bremerhaven, Germany, turned east for a bit to stay out of the range of British radar, and then turned north-northwest. At 9 pm, he turned west-southwest and headed towards the northern part of England.

S-Hang on here, Joe, just so people get an idea. He took off, he headed, and he basically did kind of a zigzag north, is what he was doing.

J-Uh huh.

S-Until he got to Scotland, and then he was hanging basically a 180 degree turn, correct?

J-Not a 180, really...

S-Or...

J-It was a zigzag, but yeah, he went west-northwest, and then basically made a 90 degree turn.

S and D-Uh huh.

J-And headed, no excuse me, he headed north-northwest, and then made a 90 degree turn and headed west-southwest.

S-Ok.

J-Yeah. So I think part of it is he was killing a little bit of time.

D-Hm.

J-Because he wanted it to be dark when he actually hit England, and so it was dark. He actually did sort of kill some time out at sea, too, waiting for it to get dark. And then, flew over the northern part of England at about 50 feet of altitude, so he was picked up on the radar, and some RAF fighters were scrambled to intercept him, but they couldn't find him, because he was flying so low.

S-You know, but the thing that I didn't understand for a long time when I was doing the reading, is if he, why was he killing so much frickin' time? Why didn't he just leave later in the day?

J-That would have been a good idea.

S-Well, it turns out he was following a, um, is it the Blitzkrieg?

J-Uh huh.

S-Yeah, he was following a group of planes and tagging along on their navigation to get himself to Britain.

J-Uh huh.

S-So he was following a suite of bombers that were heading for London that day.

D-Hm.

J-Uh huh.

S-That's the reason he left when he did, instead of saying, "Why don't I leave, like, an hour and a half later, and then I don't have to dink around in the middle of the ocean flying in circles?"

J-Uh huh.

D-Yeah. Prob, I mean, that was probably a good idea just for radar, as well.

J-Yeah.

D-You know?

J-Although, you don't want to be tagging along with those guys when they actually reach Britain...

D-No.

J-...because the RAF is going to be after you.

S-Oh yeah (laughing).

J-Yeah, but (laughing), yeah.

S-A lot of flak in the air at that point.

J-Oh, that too, yeah. So yeah, you understand why he didn't, like, fly just directly to London and then north from there (laughing).

S-He didn't lead them.

D-Yeah, that was not a good idea, yeah.

J-He wouldn't do that, no. Yeah. A little after ten pm he was picked up on radar, as I said, and he flew north into Scotland. He was mostly navigating by landmarks, which would be kind of tricky in the

dark.

S-Yeah.

J-Yeah. He was having trouble finding his destination, which was a place called Dungavel House, and I could be pronouncing that incorrectly. I looked it up on the internet, and I got three different pronun...pronunciations out of it.

D-Pronunciations, yeah.

J-Yeah (laughing).

S-Yeah.

J-Yeah, so.

S-Well, and the reason he was having such a hard time in the dark though is because it's wartime.

J-Yeah.

S-Everybody was keeping their lights off at night.

D and J-Yeah.

S-Or shuttering their windows.

J-I know.

D-Uh huh.

S-So there was nothing to navigate by.

J-I know, so, well, there's landmarks still. There's water...

S-But I mean, no light on the ground to say, "Oh, this should be x town."

J-"That this should be this town." Yeah, I know. That would be, it was a tricky thing, and, but anyway, Dungavel House is the home of the Duke of Hamilton. It's not that anymore. Now it's, like, an immigrant detention center. So somehow the Duke of Hamilton lives somewhere else now.

D-Hm.

J-The Duke was a friend of Hess' friend Albrecht Haushofer, who had a lot of English contacts. In fact, there were lots of, there was lots of contacts between the British aristocracy and a lot of the German aristocracy, because they all knew each other. The aristocracy.

S-Uh huh.

J-They're all like, they're all like kind of family. Hess thought that Hamilton was, would be sympathetic

to his peace mission, and again, there's a little bit of back and forth about exactly why he believed that. I'll talk about that in more detail later. Some people think that perhaps MI-6 tricked him into thinking that there was a whole bunch of people in Britain that would be really receptive to his peace proposal. So that's one theory that's out there.

S-And then there's also the, what is it, the Anglo-Germanic Society, was that what it was called?

J-Yeah. I think it was the Anglo-German Friendship Society.

S-Something like that, yeah.

J-Yeah, yeah.

S-Yeah, that was, that was, I think, also one of the big theories of why he thought he would be sympathetic.

J-Yeah, yeah. And also, the Duke had access to King George VI, and that was, that'd be a big bonus. And also, best of all, Dungavel House had an airstrip, because...

D-Uh huh.

S-Highly important for an airplane.

D-Very important, yeah.

J-Yeah, and the Duke of Hamilton, as it turns out, was also an airplane enthusiast like Hess, so they had something in common there. I should also note, it was rumored that a number of members of the royal family were pro-German, or at least not in favor of war with Germany. Which really wouldn't be too outlandish when you think, consider that they're actually part German themselves. You know, the House of Windsor actually did not begin until, like, 1917.

S-Uh huh.

J-When they changed their name from, what was it? The House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, which doesn't exactly sound British.

S-No (laughing).

D-No.

J-Yeah.

S-No.

J-Yeah, yeah. So the name change was due to anti-German sentiment in World War I.

S-Which there was a lot of.

J-Oh yeah. I'm sure. And so, now they're the Windsors. Anyway, back to Rudolf Hess and his plane. He

was having trouble finding the Duke's house, so he turned and flew west to the Firth of Clyde, where he oriented himself. And then he flew back inland, but by the time he was back in the vicinity of Dungavel, he was low on fuel and he had picked up a little company.

D-Shocking!

J-Yeah, I know. Yeah, an RAF interceptor finally began pursuit of him. And this is, I forget the name of the plane. It's an interesting looking plane. Instead of having forward guns in the wings like most fighters you think of having, you know? This one didn't have those, but it had, behind the pilot there was a turret with a couple of gun barrels sticking out of it.

S-Really?

J-Yeah.

S-I didn't look this plane up. I didn't...

J-Yeah, it's a strange little, strange looking little plane.

D-Weird.

S-So, it would almost have been, if you were to imagine it being a two-seater, the second seat was actually the gun?

J-Yeah, it was actually the gunner, yeah.

S-Weird.

D-Hmm.

J-Sitting there in the raised, is a raised turret over the, the pilot's seat. So, you know, handy because you could shoot to your side, I guess. You just got to be careful not to shoot your wings off or anything (Steve laughing).

D-Yeah, seriously.

J-Yeah. It's probably the first thing they cover in training.

S-Yeah (laughing).

D-Yeah, it seems like.

S-Day one, don't shoot the wing.

J-Yeah, that's right. You'll get a black mark in your record.

S-That was, that was at 10:30 at night, you said?

J-Yeah, that was at 10:30 at night. Hess decided it was time to bail, so he climbed to six thousand feet

and jumped out. Luckily he had a parachute on. And he landed about ten miles northwest of his destination, near the village of Eaglesham, or Eagle-shom. Which is actually pretty close when you consider it was dark, and he didn't have much in the way of navigational...

D-Yeah, just like a compass, right?

S-Yeah, super lucky.

J-Yeah, a compass. Yeah.

D-Yeah.

J-And that was, so he was seen parachuting in by a local farmer named David McLean. McLean found him on the ground wrestling with his parachute. He had a very badly wrenched ankle. McLean was armed with a pitchfork and essentially took him, took him prisoner. And...

S-How did he see him coming down? That's what...

J-I'm not really sure. Maybe there was a moon that night?

S-There must have been. If he was navigating at that time of night by landmark, there must have been...

D-There had to have been, a little bit.

S-...at least a half moon.

J-There must have been some good moonlight, yeah.

D-Yeah.

J-That's what I'm thinking.

D-I would expect, also, if you heard a plane above, like, you know, two planes kind of in hot pursuit above you...

J-Uh huh.

D-...you might look up and then you might see something kind of pop out of one and think, "Huh?"

S-True.

J-Yeah. And I don't know if he was on the ground by the time his plane crashed. His plane crashed very shortly after he bailed out.

S-It was several miles away.

D-Well, yeah.

J-Yeah, yeah, but there, even in the distance there must have been, kind of a big "kaboom."

S-Yeah, that, that probably, you've seen the photos of his plane.

J-It was pretty messed up.

S-It did, it did not survive that, that landing (laughing).

D-Yeah, no.

J-No, not so well. A fun aside about this farmer. He actually went to where the plane wreckage site was, after the Home Guard came and got Hess, took him off hands. He went over to, and he found the plane crash site, and he hid some parts in the bushes. And then after they'd hauled all the rest of the wreckage away he went back and got those. And so he had those. He had those around for years. And I think he eventually sold them.

S-Oh, his trophies?

J-Yeah, yeah. He gave one or two away, and I think some of the other ones, a couple of the other ones he sold. Yeah. Part of Rudolf Hess' plane, you know? Very collectible.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah. So, they hobbled back to his cottage, that's McLean's cottage, and they had a cup of tea (Steve laughing). And McLean contacted the Home Guard, who showed up shortly thereafter with some police.

S-Hess was operating under a different name at this point though.

J-Uh, yeah, he said his name was Captain Alfred Horn and he needed to speak with the Duke of Hamilton. And in another account I read he said, he told the Home Guard guys "to tell the Duke of Hamilton that I have arrived."

D-But he was German, right? So he would have had a relatively thick accent?

J-Uh, yeah. Yeah. I mean, he spoke English fluently.

D-Sure.

J-He was actually raised in the English section of Alexandria, Egypt.

D-Ok.

J-So he did speak English.

D-So do you, but do you know about accent?

J-Oh, I'm sure he had...

D-I mean, if you have a German accent...

J-I'm sure he had an accent.

D-...in, you know, 1941 in England, people are going to be like, "Ok, Mr. Horn. I'll get right on that."

J-Yeah (laughing).

S-I am absolutely positive he had a fairly distinct accent.

J-Oh yeah.

S-He, his, his English was good to speak. He evidently wasn't that good at interpreting English, though.

J-Uh huh.

S-That was a difficulty for him for quite a while.

D-Uh huh.

J-Which is weird. You know, whenever I've tried to tackle a foreign language, I always find understanding it is easier for me than speaking it.

D-It's interesting...

S-Really?

J-Yeah.

D-...I have some friends who are fluent in, like, a stupid amount of languages, and a couple of them have been fluent since birth in both languages.

J-Uh huh.

D-And for them, it is hard to translate, because they just think in both languages, so it's like a concept, and whatever language you're speaking in, they just know the words that they're trying to think, but they have to actually really think about what the word for that in the other language is.

S-Process it.

D-Yeah. They have to actually take a step back and say, "Ok, but if I were having this conversation in this other language, that lamp would be called that other word." You know? So I wonder if there was something like that going on.

J-Yeah, I don't know. But anyway, so there were some communication difficulties in this whole thing.

D-Uh huh.

J-Back to the Home Guard. They took him away to their little HQ, and according to one source that I found, there was actually a reception committee of military intelligence officers waiting at the airstrip at Hamilton's estate. I only heard that in one place, so I'm not sure if that's true or not.

D-Hm.

J-So apparently Hess' capture by the Home Guard was a little bit of a hitch in their plans. It might be, if they had indeed lured him under false pretenses to Britain. Maybe they were planning on just secretly spirited him away, and never telling the public anything.

D-Uh huh.

J-But because he got captured by the Home Guard...

S-I hadn't thought about it in that way.

J-...it was hard to keep that secret. Yeah.

D-Yeah, and maybe that they were actually planning on trying to work something out, but that wouldn't necessarily be a popular opinion, so you would kind of want to take it slow.

S-Well I was, actually, as Joe said that, I was like well maybe they're trying to work something out of him with fists.

D-Uh huh.

J-Yeah (laughing).

S-And do it completely under the radar and nobody would ever know where they got their intelligence.

D-There's, I mean, there's a lot of reasons that you would not want to publicize that that guy was in your country.

S-Uh huh.

J-Yeah.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah, I know. Probably Hitler would have kept it quiet too.

D-Uh huh.

S-Oh...

J-It was embarrassing for him.

S-Yeah.

J-Yeah. So yeah, the whole thing could have been kept a secret except oops, he didn't make his target, so yeah, he got captured. Anyway, it was supposedly this reception committee that caught up with Hess in Home Guard custody, and they persuaded the Home Guard people to finally let him go, and so they took him to Maryhill Barracks near Glasgow, Scotland. And then the Duke of Hamilton did arrive the

next day to see Hess. And that's when Hess revealed his true identity, and said, I think the words were, quote, "I am here to save the world."

S-Are you kidding? (Laughing).

J-Something melodramatic like that.

D-I'm sure, yeah.

J-But yeah, he, he wanted to work out a peace deal.

S-That's the one thing I love about Germans, is they are so direct.

D and J-Uh huh.

S-It's, "I'm not going to work up to it, it's I'm going to save everybody. Let me do that now."

J-Yeah. "Well, I'm not really going to save the world, just Germany and England."

D-Well, that's all the world that he cares about. Right?

J-Pretty much, yeah, yeah. One of the concessions that he apparently put forward was that Germany would withdraw from western Europe, except for parts of France, like Alsace and Lorraine they were going to keep. They would allow Britain to keep its overseas possessions. And in return, they wanted a free hand in eastern Europe and Russia. They would also try to mediate a settlement between Britain and Italy, and also they said that they would buy the full output of Allied war industries production while they were converting back to peace time uses to help avoid any economic downturn.

S-So I have a lot of problems with this, but I'm going to wait until we get into the theories section.

J-Yeah.

S-Because there's all kinds of holes in this for me.

J-Yeah. Well, apparently Hess had a, a full-blown peace proposal, which was eventually, I think, presented to Churchill. He met with the Duke of Hamilton, Churchill did, that is. And they met with the War Cabinet, and apparently there was no interest in a peace deal. They didn't tell Hess this for a while.

D-Well, I mean, it's not surprising to me that Britain didn't think that there was, there was any reason for a peace deal, right? I mean, the whole reason that everybody was going to war was, like, because, "The Nazis are bad and we don't like what they're doing." Right? It wasn't, "Oh, they're coming to get us so we have to defend ourselves." It was more of a proactive approach?

J-Yeah.

D-So it makes sense to me that they wouldn't necessarily...I mean, that would, if they did have a peace deal, it would just basically give tacit consent to what was going on in the rest of the world.

J-Well...

D-That the Nazis controlled.

J-Exactly. Because that's why Britain declared war, is because they had, you know, they had had a treaty with Poland, you know? One defends the other. Well, when Poland was invaded, well, you know? They had to come, they actually had to do something about it. And so, it was like that whole sense of honor.

D-Yeah.

J-But at this time, the war was not really going that great for Britain.

D-Right.

S-No, no. Speaking of Poland, when I was doing the research, one of the things that I always am really interested in, and this is just a weird thing about me, is posters from different eras. And one of the ones that was in Britain at the time was the Polish flag, and you know, it's in that typical 1940s illustration style. It's all torn up, and it just says, "Poland. First to fight."

D-Uh huh.

S-It was really, really, it was really well done. But it was just so iconic for the era.

D-I love all those war time posters. They're so cool.

J-Uh huh. Well, some of them. Some of them are a little offensive, though.

D-Uh, just stylistically. I'm sorry.

S-Oh, no, no, no. There are some serious stereotypes...

D-Super offensive.

S-...going on in some of those old posters, I will agree.

J-Well, yeah.

S-They are very, very brutal at times.

J-You know who actually produced some interesting World War II propoganda cartoons? Dr. Seuss.

D-Yeah.

S-Yeah.

J-Have you ever seen any of his cartoons?

D and S-Uh huh.

J-Some of them are seriously racist (laughing).

D-Yeah. Oh, a lot of, almost all of it is. I mean, yeah.

J-Oh yeah. I mean, I especially like the one where Uncle Sam is in an alley. He's backed up and he's got all these, these rats that are coming after him, and they all have little Japanese faces on them (laughing).

D-Of course they do.

S-And it is very, very stereotypical.

D-Oh yeah.

J-Yeah.

S-But let's get away from that. I have another question, because this is something I've also never understood about Germany, is why didn't they quit when they were ahead? I've never understood, and this is maybe just because I haven't...

J-Are you talking about the invasion of Russia?

S-Well, yeah. Why did they, why did they decide to do that. Why did they continue to push on into North Africa. I mean, they had, they had essentially rolled through a huge part of western Europe, and if they had just stopped and sat...

J-And eastern Europe, yeah.

S-...that's how countries have been formed for thousands of years, is we took it over and we just stayed, and eventually everybody just went, "Ok, well that's yours. We don't like it, but that's yours."

J-Uh huh.

D-Why didn't the Romans stop when they were ahead?

S-Well, I don't understand that either. That's why I'm asking, is I've never understood why they didn't say...

D-Here's a question.

S-..."We took Europe. Let's just hold on to it for a while."

D-Here's a question for you Steve. When you go, like, gamble...

S-Uh huh.

D-Do you stop when you're ahead?

S-Yeah.

D-Do you?

S-Yeah.

D-Do you actually?

J-I quit.

S-Absolutely. I have a system.

D-Ok (laughing). Ok, cheating doesn't count as a system.

S-No. I have x amount of money I'm going to gamble, and that money's in one pocket.

D-Uh huh.

S-And if I win, I put it into another pocket. And when the original bank is empty, if there's money left over, I walk out.

D-That's not stopping when you're ahead though.

J-It's a good way to go.

S-Oh, but if I win. If I, let's say I'm on a slot machine.

D-Yeah.

S-And I hit, and I win a hundred bucks on a nickel slot.

D-Uh huh.

S-I'll say all right, well I know my bank, I can't go below, let's say, eighty bucks.

D-Right.

S-So I'm continually setting a bar that I will not drop below so I'm always ahead.

D-Right, so the...

S-I do stop when I'm ahead.

D-I think the thought process is that you, like, ok so, yeah, they were ahead because they had, like, a bunch in their winning pocket, right? But they still had money in their other pocket, so it still felt like I'm winning, even though you know, "Ok, well if I gamble this, like, one nickel..."

S-Strategic, you know, gambling is not the right, is not the right metaphor.

D-You're right. You're probably right.

S-It is such a big area that strategically, the resources don't make sense to me. It's something that I've never understood.

D-I think, I think people have a hard time stopping when they're ahead.

S-And that's probably it. I mean, Hitler had gone a little cuckoo for Cocoa Puffs.

D-I also think that you get delusional.

J-It could have been that, yeah. It, he definitely did bite off more than he could chew.

S-Uh huh.

J-I mean, he should have looked at the lessons of history. I mean, Napoleon didn't fare that well in Russia either, did he?

D-Nobody fares well in Russia!

J-I know.

S-Russians barely fared well in Russia (laughing).

J-Yeah, they didn't do so well either.

D-What's the joke? It's like, come to Russia and our country will fight you (Steve laughing). The actually terrain just kills people.

S-Yes.

J-Yeah.

D-The people of Russia don't have to do anything.

J-They have a, there is a lot of strategic depth there, too.

D-Yeah.

J-I mean, they can afford to surrender a lot of territory, and just...

S-Oh yeah. You can continue to just give, and give, and give.

J-Yeah.

S-And the ground will just eat up the troops that are invading.

D-Yeah.

J-Oh yeah.

S-I'm sorry, I took us way off-track.

D-That's ok.

J-Yeah, we are way off-track. By the way, so far I haven't mentioned what happened back in Germany when Hitler found out about all this (Devin laughing). This was the day after. This was May 11th. Hess had given his adjutant, a guy named Karlheinz Pintsch, a letter to deliver to Hitler the day after Hess left. And also to basically tell him what he had done.

D-Hm.

J-So Pintsch delivered his report. Apparently Hitler blew his stack.

S-He delivered it directly to Hitler?

J-Yeah, he did.

S-Ok.

J-Yeah. And he was rather upset. It was unfortunate for, for Pintsch, because, you know, it was like shoot the messenger and all that stuff.

D-Uh huh.

J-He was arrested and jailed, and also a lot of other people around Hess were also arrested.

D-Uh huh.

J-Pintsch was later released, but then he was sent to the Eastern Front to fight the Russians.

D-Oh.

S-So he really wasn't released? (Joe laughing).

D-Yeah, not really.

J-Yeah, that basically was a big step down for him.

D-Did, do, is the allegation that Pintsch knew what the letter contained? Like, did he know that Hess had left?

J-Yeah, yeah. I think that...

D-It wasn't just, "Ok, I'm going to bed. Give this letter to Hitler tomorrow?"

J-Well, I don't think it was just him giving the letter to Hitler. I think he also gave him an oral report, basically saying, you know...

D-Oh, ok.

J-Hess has gone to, Hess has gone to Scotland.

D-I can understand why you would, you would arrest him then. I mean...

J-Yeah, he's a co-conspirator.

D-...it's more than just, yeah, at that point, right?

J-Yeah.

D-Yeah.

J-It totally, it totally is true.

D-Ok. I just wanted to be clear on that it wasn't just, like, literally, he was like, "I don't know. Hess just gave me this letter to give to you. I don't know what's in it."

J-Yeah.

D-Ok.

J-Yeah, but no, apparently, and besides which, even if he hadn't said anything like that, I'm sure there would have been suspicions.

D-Yeah. Oh, yeah.

S-Then poor Pintsch was then captured by the Russians.

J-Oh, yeah, yeah. Yeah, he was captured by the Russians.

S-And tortured.

J-Tortured, held in captivity for, like, ten years or something like that.

S-Wrote some crazy, eleven page account, story or something. Confession.

J-Eh, it was a twenty-eight page, I don't know, confession, or just telling all he knew or whatever.

S-Yeah.

J-But that was eventually found in the historical archives many, many years later.

D-Hmm.

J-So Hitler said at the time that he felt like it was a huge betrayal because Hess was such a good friend. He also said, as I said earlier, that he thought that Hess had just gone over the edge. And again, Winston Churchill agreed with him on that one. They didn't agree on a whole lot.

S-No (laughing).

J-Yeah. And also Hitler apparently gave orders that Hess was to be shot on site if he returned to Germany. Well, back to Hess in Scotland. He was shuffled around to various places. Eventually he wound up spending thirteen months in a place called Camp Z.

S-He was in the Tower of London for a while.

J-Yeah, before that, yeah. I was, I just didn't want to give a laundry list of all the places (Devin laughing).

S-Yeah, I just, when I noticed that I was like, oh, he's another one of the, because there were only two Germans that were in the Tower ever, and he was one of them.

J-Uh huh. Yeah, lucky him. Camp Z was a mansion in the town of Mytchett outside of London, kind of southwest of London. And by the way, I'm sure I'll get at least one email telling me that it's actually pronounced "Mitch," or "Muh," or "Mit." (Steve laughing).

D-Or "Meh."

J-I did look it up in the, on the internet, and supposedly it is pronounced Mytchett, so I hope that's right. Well, yeah, if I'm wrong, let me know. So at this point, Hess really saw himself as a diplomatic emissary, and he demanded to be sent back to Germany. Well, the British didn't see it that way.

S-Under asylum.

D-That's interesting.

S-No, not asylum. What is it called?

J-Like diplomatic immunity or something.

S-Thank you. Yes.

D-Yes.

J-But now it's like, the problem was is Hess swore the whole time that Hitler never had any clue that he was going to leave and go to Britain. And so because of that, because he essentially really hadn't been sent by the German government as an official emissary, Churchill and the gang felt like, well, we can keep him.

S-Yeah.

D-That's, I, ah, yeah. I mean, I think I understand that empirically, but I understand Hess' argument too, right? He's like third in command of, like, of the German government, so he sent himself on a mission, and they're saying, "No, no, no. The German government didn't send you."

J-Yeah.

D-But...

S-I, I, well, the problem is is that his position was a puppet position.

D-Oh, for sure.

S-He had absolutely no power. He had been progressively pushed farther and farther out of the power structure of the regime...

D-Right.

S-...for years.

J-Yeah.

D-But we all know that guy, right? The Dwight Schrute of, of the group, right?

S-Uh huh.

D-That's, you know, assistant to the manager, and he keeps saying, "Yeah, I'm the assistant manager." And you're like, "No, no, no. You're the assistant to the manager." You keep getting pushed out and told no, but you think that you're so much more. So I can understand his argument. It may mean that he went kind of loopy, but.

J-Or it might be...

S-Overstepped his bounds, yeah.

J-Yeah. It might be he thought this was a way to really, you know...

D-He thought Hitler wanted this.

J-Yeah, he did. He...

D-He thought he was doing a good favor for his good buddy.

J-Yeah. He was extremely loyal to Hitler. I mean, you know, even though Hitler said he thought this was a betrayal, I don't think Hess saw it that way at all.

D-No.

J-He was trying to do him a favor.

S-And it's alleged that maybe Hitler didn't think that at first. But I know we're going to get into all of this stuff, so we'll...

J-Yeah, there are people who say otherwise, yeah.

S-Yeah.

D-I was just going to throw out there that it's also possible that, you know, Hitler said off-handedly, "Yeah, I totally want peace with Britain." And didn't remember it at all.

J-Uh huh.

D-And then, you know, Hess starts planning and plotting and thinking, "Oh my gosh, this is going to be the best surprise for Hitler when I'm done."

J-Yeah. "He's going to love me." Yeah.

D-"He's going to love it." And Hitler's like, "What do you mean I said that? I never said that." Oh.

J-Yeah. "Yeah you did."

S-"Oh. Oh crap."

D-"Well, I was joking." (Laughing).

J-"It's in the papers, dude."

S-"Remember that time you bedazzled an entire fighter plane for me and I said I didn't really want that? Same situation."

J-Uh huh.

D-"Same thing." Yeah. Anyway.

J-Yeah, all right. So anyway...

D-Having a hard time. I identify with Hess. I'm sorry (laughing).

S-It's because you like to bedazzle things.

D-Yeah. It's true. And steal planes.

J-And history, certainly if Hess had been successful, history would have turned out a little differently.

S-Oh, absolutely.

J-Yeah. Anyway, back to Camp Z. Hess was there for thirteen months, as I said. He was, of course, I'm sure, being interrogated.

D-Oh, surely.

J-Yeah. At one point he tried to kill himself by throwing himself over a staircase railing, cause he, apparently he was depressed. He was pretty disappointed that his peace plan hadn't worked out.

D-What?! His peace plan didn't work out.

S-Understandably.

D-He was a prisoner.

J-Yeah.

D-He was, like, he couldn't be friends with his friends anymore.

J-Yeah.

D-Probably being tortured.

J-He wasn't going to see his family again.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah, I'm sure there was a lot to be depressed about.

D-Yeah.

J-He might have also felt that he had a patriotic duty to kill himself before the British wrung too many secrets out of him.

D-Uh huh.

J-Unfortunately, he didn't succeed, or fortunately, depending on how you look at it. He just broke his leg. Pretty severely too. He had to be in traction for, like, twelve weeks.

S-Ugh.

J-Yeah. That would not be fun.

S-No. No fun (Joe laughing).

D-No. No fun.

J-Yeah.

D-Just a note to our listeners, throwing yourself down a staircase: not the best. Or over a staircase, really. Not the best way to do it.

J-No. Not really.

S-Well, if it's only two or three steps, you're not going to hurt yourself (Joe laughing).

D-Really not.

J-Yeah. It was more, it was more than that.

D-You might twist your ankle (Steve laughing).

J-Yeah.

S-Wrench it, severely.

D-Wrench it severely, excuse me.

J-Yeah. Anyway, after he recovered from his leg thing, Hess was sent to a military hospital in south Wales. He stayed in this military hospital until the end of the war, and apparently that was a good place. It was a hospital not only for military members, but also for POWs, so it was a fairly secure place. Not like your ordinary hospital.

D-Uh huh.

J-It actually required fewer guards than Camp Z did.

S-He tried to kill himself when he was there too, didn't he?

J-He did. He tried to stab himself with a bread knife. That didn't work out so well either. Apparently...

S-So many jokes.

J-...two stitches.

D-Two stitches!

J-To sew it up.

D-Man, my brother busted open his chin and it took more than that.

J-Really? Yeah.

D-Yeah.

J-So it was a half-hearted attempt. I don't, I could never stab myself to death.

D-That would be a hard way to go.

J-That would be tough. People do it, but it would be hard.

S-Oh yeah.

D-I think people, uh, yeah.

J-You must, you really would want to have to die.

S-Have some serious resolve.

D-Uh huh.

J-Yeah. Well, as you know, in the end, Germany surrendered. You guys did know that, right?

D-What?!

J-Yeah.

D-I thought they won.

J-No.

D-I thought that we were speaking German right now.

S-No, that's "The Man in the High Castle." That's not real life. No.

D-Oh.

J-Not real life?

S-It's TV.

D-I might be from an alternate universe, then.

J-You probably are.

S-We've wondered that about you for a while.

D-I know. I'm sorry. Also, it's "Berenstain," not "Berenstein."

J-"Berenstein." After the surrender, in October 1945, Hess was sent to Nuremberg to face the International Military Tribunal, aka the Nuremberg Trials. You've heard of those, I'm sure.

D-Yep.

S-Yeah.

J-Pretty well known. He was charged with conspiracy to commit crimes, crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

D-Aw, crimes against peace?

J-Yeah, I know.

D-Come on, dude.

J-He was trying, yeah, he was trying to make peace.

D-He was trying.

J-Yeah. Well, anyway, luckily for him, since he sat out most of the war, it was really pretty hard to get convictions on the war crimes and crimes against humanity. But he was found guilty of conspiracy and, again, crimes against peace, and sentenced to life in prison. Apparently the Soviets, the Soviet judge in the trial wanted him to die by hanging.

D-That doesn't surprise me.

S-They, they had a real thing against him.

J-They really did. They really did.

S-It's strange.

J-Yeah. Yeah, it is. But yeah, they really didn't like Hess. And anyway, the French judge wanted to give him 20 years in prison. Which is probably a little more fair.

S-Correct me if I'm wrong, nobody else got life.

J-Um, there were, uh...

S-Or was it that there was a couple who got life who didn't live for very long?

J-There were, yeah, there were three that got life. Of the seven people that were, that were sent to prison, three of them got life, and then the other four got 15 or 20 years, depending. I don't remember which ones.

S-Uh huh.

J-Yeah. Most of them got released early.

S-Except for Hess.

J-Except for Hess. Yeah, he went to Spandau Prison in West Berlin, which was used exclusively for the seven prisoners who were convicted but not put to death. So this prison was a fairly large one. It has 600 cells, or I should say it had 600 cells. It's not there anymore.

D-But they only had seven prisoners?

J-But only seven prisoners.

D-Ah.

J-Yeah. They were these former high-ranking Nazis. It was run by the Four Powers. That's the US, Britain, France, and the USSR, and they all supplied the guards. In along about 1966, there were only three prisoners left in Spandau. As I said before, it had 600 cells.

D-Hm.

J-Yeah. You could be rattling around that place.

D-Uh huh.

S-For days and not see anybody.

J-Yeah (laughing). In October 1966, Albert Speer and Baldur von Shirach finished their sentences and they left. And so from that time on until his death in 1987, Rudolf Hess was the only inmate of Spandau Prison. Twenty-one years. That's a...all by yourself in this prison.

S-And you can't talk to anybody.

J-Uh, he could have very limited visits with his family.

S-Well, but...

D-There were guards, though, right?

J-And there were guards. You could talk to the guards. But the guards were constantly rotating in and out from different countries and stuff.

D-Hm.

S-But I also remember that there was, there was sanctions on what he could talk about.

J-Yeah, he wasn't allowed to talk about his peace mission.

S-Or certain things about what he had done while he was with the Nazi Party. I remember there was, it was just, it was strange to me, the clamp down on certain topics.

J-Yeah. No, it really is true. He was not just allowed to talk freely.

D-I mean, did that not apply to all of the prisoners?

J-You know, I don't know. I just sort of researched this from the Hess point of view.

D-Uh huh.

J-I'm sure there were a lot of restrictions on, also on their behavior. I mean...

S-But even if, even if it was that way for everybody, it probably didn't end up being as extreme because they had other German prisoners to associate with, so they at least had some, some shared common bond.

D and J-Uh huh.

S-Whereas when it's a set of guards who rotate every year...

D-Yeah.

J-Uh huh.

S-...you can't make any personal connections.

J-Yeah, not really. I mean, there were a few longer term employees. Like he had a, a friendship with the

warden at one time.

D-Hm.

J-I'll tell you more about that later. That was interesting. But I imagine it was probably a lonely existence anyway.

D-Yeah.

J-And even Winston Churchill, who was really no friend of Nazis, once said that he felt that the treatment of Hess was really overly harsh, especially considering he had come to Scotland in good faith to try to broker a peace.

S and D-Uh huh.

J-But, and there was, the other three powers had talked about releasing him, and had said they would be willing to do so, but the Soviets always vetoed it. And it's because, again, they just didn't like him that much.

S-I'm guessing it required a majority vote.

J-Yeah.

S-Or it required a unanimous vote, I should say.

J-A unanimous vote, yeah. And so, and so anyway, that's pretty much the end of it. He died in 1987 by hanging. He hung himself. Although, again, that's a mystery. But our mystery right now is did he go of his own volition, or did Hitler order him to go, on his peace mission?

D-Oh, to the peace mission, yeah.

J-And there's still some debate about that. I mean, generally the historians agree that he just went on his own, and that Hitler was really upset about it.

D-Uh huh.

J-But there's, there's some evidence that maybe he didn't just decide to go on his own. Or maybe it was his idea, and Hitler signed off on it. Maybe Hitler ordered him to do it. The other thing is what made them think that this was a good idea?

D-Uh huh.

S-Uh, yeah.

J-Yeah, I mean, really?

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah. So there are theories.

D-So we're going to tackle that first, and then we'll tackle the, the death, the cause of death?

J-We'll tackle the mystery of the suicide.

D-Ok.

J-Or murder.

S-Second.

J-Yeah, second.

D-Ok, got it.

J-So the theories. Well, he went on his own. And after all, this is what Hess always said, and that's what Hitler said. And Hitler supposedly did get very furious when he heard about this flight. Doesn't sound like some guy who knew in advance. And plus the night that Hess landed in Scotland, the Luftwaffe bombed London very heavily. Not really something you're going to do if you're trying to put forward, you know, peace feelers.

S-Ok, so I'll play devil's advocate on that, is that's a great way to distract from your secret peace emissary coming to the country.

J-That's true too.

D-Uh huh.

J-Yeah.

D-Yeah, you're going to assume that the RAF is going to be kind of tied up with that...

S-They're going to be really busy.

D-...and not so interested in this one bogey over there.

S-Yeah.

J-Uh huh. So that's, that's one theory. The other is that he went with Hitler's permission. And actually I read an article that was written, I think, in 1943 or '4...I can't remember when, and I forgot the magazine it was published in. But according to this theory...

S-Is this the one that was in three parts?

J-Yeah.

S-I mean, the article was all continuous in the format we looked at...

J-Yeah.

S-...but it was broken into three parts.

J-Yeah.

D-Uh huh.

S-Yeah. This one, I found this one a bit outlandish.

J-Yeah, I don't know how supported that stuff was. But essentially the idea was that, is that he had to have had Hitler's sign-off on the whole thing, because otherwise what's the point? He can talk about making all the concessions he wants, but if Hitler doesn't want to do that, well, you know, you're not going to get very far. There was an article about this. Did you want to say something?

D-No, I was just, I was just agreeing with that. I mean, that does stick out to me as, it's not as though this is one of those situations where Hess would come back and say, "Listen, the Brits are being really reasonable. You're going to kind of look like an idiot if you don't accept it." Hitler, it would have been really easy for Hitler to say no, I don't want to do any of that, thanks.

J-Uh huh.

D-Versus going with some of, knowing what Hitler's willing to give...

J-Uh huh.

D-...that makes for a much more powerful situation.

J-Uh huh. Yeah, I definitely think that it increases your odds of success.

D-Uh huh.

J-Cause frankly, yeah...

D-Although, I guess there is something to be said for, if he was close enough to Hitler, it wouldn't be very hard for him to say, "So what's the deal breaker for you?"

J-Yeah. You know, what's important for you to keep, and what are you willing to give up?

D-Yeah.

J-He could have, he could have...

D-Just in casual conversation, over the year that he was planning his trip, right?

J-Yeah, yeah. He could have done that, yeah.

S-Yeah. My whole thing with, Hitler had to know, because I mean, Hess is quoted as saying, "Hitler is the Party, and the Party is Hitler."

J-Uh huh.

S-And other statements that equated to him believing that, that the Fuhrer was God.

J-Uh huh.

S-That he was so powerful and he was, had to be followed, that I just can't see him suddenly turning away and doing something without the permission of his, his leader.

J-Yeah.

D-But he didn't see it, I'm sorry to be trampling all over this, cause I know we have more information in this theory, but he didn't see it as treason, right? He saw it as...

J-Yeah.

D-...he saw it like, it was a surprise party for Hitler.

J-Yeah.

D-You know?

S-But his, but his personality never supported it. They called him the 'brown mouse.'

D-Hm.

S-Meaning he was meek and mild and he was only around because he was wearing the brown shirt.

D-Yeah.

S-He didn't have any initiative. That's why for the three years prior, everybody else had been, you know, jockeying for position, and he slowly got pushed out, and he was given a made up, honorific title.

J-Yeah.

S-Like, the guy had no gumption of his own (laughing).

J-Yeah, I know. He was definitely not, not a hard ass like, say, Hitler or Goering or any of those people.

S-Yeah.

J-Not at all, yeah.

S-No, he wanted to serve the Fuhrer.

J-Yeah.

D-Uh huh.

S-He wanted to serve the cause.

D-Right.

J-Yeah.

S-That's the impression that I've always got.

D-Right. But I guess my, my counter to that was that he thought he was. You know, but I...

S-He could have been completely misdirected, I'm not disagreeing with that at all.

D-Yeah. And I totally hear what you're saying. This is one of those amicable moments. I totally hear what you're saying, but you know, but he wouldn't have had, he wouldn't have taken that initiative.

S-His character didn't show this to me.

D-Right, right.

J-Yeah. But it is possible that he went there entirely on his own, and he was just kind of delusional and actually thought he was going to succeed. Back to the Hitler thing, where Hitler had...

D-Uh huh.

J-There is some evidence that Hitler did know well in advance. Hess', Rudolf Hess' son, Wolf Hess (Devin laughing). Yeah, I know. Wrote a long article about this...

S-(Whispering) Great name.

J-Yeah, I know. Wolf.

D-I'm going to name my first child Wolf.

J-I know. It's a cool name.

S-With your last name? Nah, I wouldn't do it.

J-Well, she'll have a different last name.

D-Nope!

S-We're going to make it up.

D-Yeah.

J-Oh, ok. Oh, anyway, yeah, Wolf Sideways.

D-Yeah (Steve laughing).

J-That'd be a good name for your kid.

D-Yeah. That's hard. Wolf Sideways is a hard, Sideways is a hard name to plan for, it's true.

J-Yeah. Back to Wolf's evidence. Ok, he says that Hitler and Hess met for four hours on May 10th, just a few hours before he left to fly to Scotland. And Hess, as we have said, was pretty much sidelined in Germany by now. And he really wasn't involved with the war effort, or with foreign affairs, and so I'm finding it hard to believe that Hitler would have carved out four hours for him if it didn't actually involve the war or foreign affairs.

S-Oh, I, I can totally tell you what they were doing.

J-What was that?

S-They were watching the latest Michael Bay "Transformers" movie. Those are four hours long (Devin laughing.)

J-Oh, that's a good point.

D-He was watching "Lord of the Rings."

J-They were watching "The Hobbit."

S-Yeah (Joe laughing). That's an easy four hour time commitment.

D-No, no, wait.

S-Get some time off.

D-No, no, wait. This was the 1940s.

J-Oh, they didn't have that yet?

D-Nope.

J-Oh. Damn it.

S-Crap.

J-Yeah, I think it was right around this time that Tolkien was writing "Lord of the Rings," wasn't it?

D-Uh huh.

S-Yeah. Pretty close.

J-Yeah. Oh anyway, back to...

D-So, ok so Hess was involved with foreign affairs in the war?

J-No, he wasn't.

D-Oh.

J-He wasn't. He was involved with more domestic stuff.

D-Oh, I see. Ok. Yeah, ok, got it.

S-Yeah, why would Hitler take the time unless it wasn't one of those things?

D-Got it.

J-Yeah, he was busy planning Operation Barbarossa, and the bombing of London, and everything else.

D-Uh huh. And we're saying Hitler didn't have any kind of love for friends?

J-Oh no, no. I mean, he did, I'm sure, but I don't know that he would have had four hours to spend with Hess, just hanging out, one...

D-Just to catch up?

J-There was so much going on.

S-He's got a lot of work to do, a lot of politicking to do.

J-Yeah.

S-You take 20 minutes and you hang out with your buddy and you have a drink. You don't take four hours.

J-Yeah.

S-I get where this is, that's what this is coming from.

D-Again, I see both sides of that.

J-This doesn't prove anything.

S-No.

J-But it's interesting.

D-Uh huh.

J-The next thing, as you mentioned, as we mentioned earlier, Karlheinz Pintsch, the adjutant who delivered the letter to Hitler?

S-Yeah.

J-And was captured. They, an historian came across, what was his name? Matthias Uhl, discovered this document in the Russian State Archives, written by Pintsch. It was hand-written. And according to what

he said about the encounter with Hitler, Pintsch said that, quote, "Hitler calmly listened to my report, and dismissed me without comment." Unquote.

D-Hm.

J-Yeah. Pintsch said that Hitler had known about the flight plan for a long time. And so...

D-That was the impression that he had.

J-Yeah.

D-So when did, where did the "mad as hell" story come from?

J-Uh, you know, I'm thinking that might have been cooked up to reassure the Japanese and the Italians that Hitler wasn't trying to stab them in the back.

D-Hm. Uh huh.

J-By making peace with Britain.

D-Ok.

J-And I think that's why Hess was loyal to the, to the end, and always said all along that it was his idea.

D-Hm.

S-Well, his family also never got any kind of retribution from the Nazi Party. They never, they never went after them.

J-Well yeah, that's the other thing, is that yeah, a lot of people surrounding Hess, even, like, his astrologer and all those people. In fact all kinds of astrologers were rounded up and arrested.

S-Because that was, Hess was really into that stuff.

J-He was into astrology and all that stuff, yeah.

D-Well, who isn't? Let's be fair.

J-Yeah, I know.

S-I know. I'm reading my signs all the time.

J-Yeah. So all kinds of people suffered retaliation except for Hess' family. Actually, Hitler personally intervened to make sure that nothing happened to them.

D-Hm.

J-Yeah.

D-Yeah, that's hard. Again, you know, it's hard if you're really good friends with somebody, you don't necessarily want to see their wife and kids hurt...

J-Yeah.

D-...just because he made a bad choice. But, I don't know that Hitler necessarily strikes me as that kind of guy.

J-Yeah.

S-No. Again, his character didn't reflect that kind of behavior, that we know of.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah. But, I don't know. It could be that just, you know, past times and all that, you know, I'm going to look after his family.

D-Uh huh.

J-It might just be that he...so none of this definitely proves anything, although Pintsch's document is pretty interesting.

S-Well, it came out in, they printed that in, what, "Der Spiegel?"

J-Yeah, that came out in 2011. An article in "Der Spiegel," yeah.

S-We've talked about that magazine before, haven't we?

D-We have. Yeah, we have.

J-"Der Spiegel?" Yeah.

S-Ok, I knew we had.

D-Ok, so is this, like, what, his journal or something, that they found?

J-I think it was more on the lines of a confession to the Russians.

D-Hm. Ok.

J-Like he, yeah.

S-It was, they, so the Russians used to like to make people write these long confessions denouncing everything.

D-Yeah. But so, that's my problem with it.

S-Well, but that's, that's it, because they're, if you ever read any of them, they're always crazy long.

J-Yeah.

S-And they always have a very set style and certain verbiage in them. And it's, I believe this falls right into that category.

J-Yeah. It's, it's almost as if they told the guy what to write.

S-Yep.

J-You know? They might have.

S-Well, if it's the same set of interrogators, using the same book.

J-Yeah. It doesn't mean that everything in there was a lie, but, you know?

S-But you base it on the truth.

J-Yeah. Anyway, after the war some other people gave, you know, talked about various things, and there were two other high-ranking Nazi Party members hanging with Hitler at that time, when he received the letter and the news that Hess had left to go to Scotland. And they said that Hitler wasn't angry at all. Hitler's valet said, after the war, that Hitler's behavior at the time indicated to him that he must have known in advance. He too said Hitler wasn't upset at all.

D-Who did he say that to?

J-That was his valet. He actually...

D-No, but who did the valet say it to?

J-I, I don't, if it was a reporter or who he said it to. All I read is he said that after the war.

D-Hm.

J-The valet did say he was actually afraid to ask Hitler if he had known ahead of time.

D-Hm.

S-Understandably.

J-So he didn't ask him. But he said his behavior just indicated to him that Hitler was not mad.

S-So here's my other problem with the, with this theory in particular, that Hitler knew. As we talk, I started to talk about this earlier, is the concessions of peace that he was supposedly willing to give.

J-Yeah.

S-Germany had just spent the last two years marching south through, is it Norway? And then into France, and they would have kept going...

J-Norway is kind of north of France.

S-No, not Norway. What's, um, what's the other one, just north of France?

J-Oh, Belgium.

S-Thank you. Netherlands and Belgium, that's where I got the 'N.' But they had spent two years working their way south through all of that, and they would have kept going into Spain if Franco hadn't been just jerking them around the whole time and saying yes, no, yes, no games.

J-Uh huh.

S-But my point is, if they just spent all that time and effort to secure it, they've wiped out the local governments. They've installed all their own people. Why would they then suddenly say, "You know, we'll just leave. It's cool. You can have it back. We just wanted to check the place out."

J-Uh huh. Well.

S-That doesn't make any sense from, from a war time perspective to me.

J-Well, you know, I don't know that they expected to occupy all of France forever. They did intend to keep Alsace and Lorraine.

S-Uh huh.

J-Even, but they were going to withdraw from the rest of it. So they didn't really need to be running France. I mean, they could have, if they had their chunk of Poland, and other parts of eastern Europe, that was all they really needed.

S-Well, but they also, what they would do, though, is like in, in France, they moved in and they put in their own people, and then eventually when they took over all of France, it's the, the Vichy Government?

J-Yeah, the Vichy Government, yeah.

S-The Vichy Government, yeah. Those guys were technically still running the country, but they knew that they had to keep the Germans happy.

J-Yeah.

S-And the Germans did this. They were like, "You can live, and do what we say, or we can kill you and put our own people in."

J-Uh huh.

S-Which is way easier (laughing).

J-Yeah.

S-And that's what they did. So why would they do all of that, though?

J-No, you know, it might be that this, some of this stuff was misreported. It might have been basically, "We're not going to withdraw from western Europe, but we will leave you alone."

S-Uh huh.

J-"We'll buy, we'll buy your munitions supply, you know? For the sake of your economy. And we'll leave your overseas possessions alone." You know? So that might have been all the concessions they actually planned to make.

D-I mean, you don't plan for the peace to happen, right? You install your government, and you say, "Ok, we're good here. But, you know how valuable this is to us, and we are so committed to peace that we are willing to give you this thing that obviously we fought a lot for. So you understand how much we're willing to give up for peace. That's how much we want it."

J-Yeah.

D-Right? And if they say no, you've got your thing. You're covered. It's fine. You still have your country there that you've taken over. If they say yes, great. You've got this huge piece of leverage to say, "Great. You're going to give us pretty much the rest of Europe."

S-Yeah, it's just their sunk cost for what they did was so large, it's just so much, it's such a thing to walk away from.

J-Actually, they didn't really expend huge resources taking over France. It was actually a pretty quick thing.

S-Well, but then they spent a bunch of money, you know, bombing Britain...

J-Oh yeah.

S-...and then defending France. I mean, a lot of munitions. And maybe, maybe what I'm responding to is more what happened after that for all, everything that took place. But it just seemed like it was such a big friggin' investment.

J-Yeah. Yeah.

D-I don't think, I don't, I just don't think so.

S-Ok.

D-I mean, in my mind, you know, strategically, it makes a lot more sense to be willing to give up something that is, appears to be very valuable to you, that you may or may not actually care about, in order to be able to leverage that to get you more things that you actually do care about in the future.

J-Yeah.

S-Yeah. That could be. I don't know.

D-Maybe it makes me a horrible person versus you (laughing).

J-Yeah, it does.

D-I don't know.

S-No, that means I'm the guy who will never back down. "Nope. I made it here! You can't come in!"

J-Uh huh, that's right.

D-And I'm the one who'll be, like, "Oh yeah, it totally looks like I care about this jewelry." (Steve laughing).

J-Yeah.

D-"You can have it, but I'm going to take your first child."

J-Uh huh.

S-Devin, for everybody who doesn't know, just made the creepiest big-eyed face at me (Devin laughing). I'm never having children now.

J-Ah, yeah.

D-Now. Oh, now.

J-I'm kind of leaning towards Hitler knew.

S-Uh, yeah.

D-I agree.

J-Yeah, I think so.

D-Are there, I mean, are there any other choices? Is it just the two?

J-Kind of those two. That's the question that everybody's been wondering for all these decades. And it really is an historical kind of mystery. And then, of course, my other question was, is how could they have thought this was going to work? How could they have thought this was going to be a good idea? And that's what gets us to the whole MI-6 angle.

S-Oh, I thought it was because Hitler was a vegetarian.

J-Yeah, it might have been that too. Yeah, Hess was a vegetarian also. He was, he was, like, really new-agey and all that.

S-See?

J-The Nazis, the Nazis were all new-agey.

S-Eggplants are bad for you.

J-Yeah. Maybe they're not good for your mental health.

S-Don't eat them. See what happens?

J-Yeah. But, but the theory about MI-6 is that Hitler and the Germans were putting out some feelers towards influential Britishers in the early 1941, 1940, 1941, regarding peace negotiations. And of course, there was the angle of German Friendship Society, or whatever that was called.

S-Yeah, great name.

J-Yeah. Yeah.

S-Rolls right off the tongue.

J-Yeah. And so they were, this is, like, aristocracy to aristocracy, you know? Talking back and forth. And Germany eventually proposed a meeting on neutral ground. And that was rejected by the British, as the story goes. And so they finally offered to send a delegate to England. And they proposed a guy named Ernst Wilhelm Bohle as the delegate, and there was no response from England about this. (Devin laughing). Yeah.

S-I'm guessing that's because they were busy dealing with the Luftwaffe?

J-Yeah, that's probably it. But, they were doing a good job of playing hard to get. Eventually Hitler, they were getting kind of nervous about this, because this was actually kind of important to Hitler, I think. To actually not have that second front with Britain when he went after the Russians.

D-Uh huh.

J-So Hitler came up with the idea of sending a really big Nazi to England. Somebody with a lot of stature. Somebody who's close to Hitler, who could credibly speak for Hitler. And who else would that be? Rudolf Hess. I mean, he wasn't really important to the war effort.

D-Uh huh.

S-And he was highly expendable.

J-Yeah.

S-Actually, all things considered.

D-Yeah.

J-He was kind of, yeah.

S-Obviously the war continued on without him without a hitch.

J-Quite well, yeah.

D-Uh huh.

S-For a number of years, at least.

J-Actually, Hess was...

D-Well, some hitches.

J-Yeah. Hess was not really violent. I don't think he was really into the whole war thing.

S-No, he was just supporting the cause.

J-Yeah, I know. Well, and you know, Germany in a sense had a good reason to feel some grievance after the way they'd been treated after World War I. I'm not saying they were justified or anything.

S-No, but they, I can, I understand why there was a lot of angry Germans after World War I.

J-Oh yeah. Definitely. Yeah. What actually was happening is apparently, so the theory goes, and there is a little evidence to support this. We're not going to find out for a little while, but they were actually negotiating with the British Secret Service, and not members of the royal family or the British aristocracy, like they thought they were.

S-So it was a game. It was a ruse.

J-It was a set up, yeah. It sounds like they just wanted to get their hands on a high-ranking Nazi, and just interrogate the heck out of him, which is probably what they did.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah.

S-The only, the only qualm that I have with this, and it stems back to that Friendship Society.

J-Uh huh.

S-The things that I have read are that as soon as war broke out, the Friendship Society was dissolved.

J-That's what I heard too, yeah.

S-"Yeah, we're not friends anymore. You, like, blew up my house and stuff. So no, we're not friends."

J-Yeah.

S-Absolutely (laughing).

D-Yeah.

J-Well, obviously you're not going to be overt, but there was still contacts between the British aristocracy and the German aristocracy.

D-Yeah. When, if you have a personal friendship with somebody, and they're saying, "Dude, I'm sorry that my Fuhrer blew your house up." They're not going to be, like, "Yeah, I know. You ordered the bombs." You're going to say, "Thank you. I'm so sorry." You know, blah blah. But also, it's underground, you know? It's very easy to, even if it had been totally dissolved, it would be very easy for a member of MI-6 to say, "Oh, no, no. I'm part of this thing. I know that you think that we're dissolved, but just kidding. We're still underground, so."

S-That's a good point. I hadn't thought about the, the clandestine side of the Society still existing.

D-Right. "So that's why you need to meet us in Scotland, not, you know, at Scotland Yard, or London proper," or anything like that.

S-"And don't follow the Luftwaffe into town." (Laughing).

D-Seriously.

J-Yeah, you don't want to do that. Let's go talk about this. So anyway, do you guys have any favorite theories there?

S-I think we've...

J-Hitler knew? Hitler didn't know?

D-Hitler knew.

J-They were tricked by MI-6?

S-Hitler had to know.

J-I, I'm thinking he did.

S-I know that Hess just stood by that he did it independently, but I just, I can't buy it.

D-Yeah, I think Hitler knew, but I also do give some credence, it wouldn't surprise me to find out that MI-6 had something to do with it too.

J-Oh yeah.

S-The Brits did, pulled off a lot of ingenious plans.

J-They really did.

D-This would have been good one.

J-They did some amazing stuff. In fact, there was another one that I stumbled across, I won't mention it now, in the course of my research for this that was another interesting little mystery.

D-Uh huh.

J-But we'll talk about that later.

S-Oh yeah, no, they were really crafty.

D-Oh yeah.

J-They were very good. Oh yeah.

S-Well, when your back's against the wall, you do whatever it takes.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah. No, they did a great job of turning all the, all the German agents against each other.

D-Uh huh.

J-Against Germany too. They totally controlled their entire network in England. Yeah.

S-I also think that part of it, though, is that, like we said, I was saying before, is that the one thing that I like about the Germans is they're just, "It's this! And we're going to here! And how could you think it would be anything else?" And the Brits are like, "Uh, nobody else thinks that way, dude. Totally used it against you. Thank you."

J-Yeah.

D-Uh huh. Uh huh.

J-Yeah, the Germans in World War II actually did not practice good trade craft when it came to spying.

S-Uh uh.

D-No.

J-Not at all, yeah. Oh, anyway, so yeah, I'm thinking that they wouldn't have done it unless they had received encouragement from Britain. And I think that probably came from MI-6. It might have come from, say, members of the aristocracy, but I think it probably came from MI-6.

S-Possible.

J-Yeah. Well let's get on to our other mystery, which is how he died. He died in August 1987, in Spandau Prison. Cause of death was suicide by asphyxiation. The prison had a garden. It had, like, a courtyard in the middle with a garden in it. It had a small summer house that Hess used as a reading room.

D-Aw, that's nice.

J-Yeah, I know.

D-I mean, it's nice to think, right, you kind of think well, he was in jail for a really, really long time,

and he just had to sit in his cell the whole time. But I guess there was this whole entire complex that he was the only one in.

J-Yeah.

D-So it's nice to know that they gave him a little place where he could read and stuff.

J-I, I think, you know, as the years went by, they got more relaxed.

D-Uh huh.

J-You know, at first it was very, very stern, you know? Very regimented. You could only be visited for, like, thirty minutes a month by anybody. And of course, the guards had to be present and he couldn't talk about a whole laundry list of topics.

D-All those things, yeah.

J-And that, eventually that got relaxed somewhat.

D-Yeah. You would assume.

J-Yeah. But anyway, back to his death. He took an electrical extension cord and wrapped one end around a window latch in the summer house, and then the other around his neck, and he hung himself.

S-That doesn't sound pleasant or easy.

J-No, it doesn't. Yeah. He was 93 years old.

D-That's, whoa.

J-He lived to be a ripe old age.

S-That's, and that is exactly where the conspiracy comes from, is why does a man at the age of 93 suddenly decide that he's got to take his own life?

D-I don't know if he suddenly decides.

S-I understand it. I totally, I totally get this, and I don't think that this is a conspiracy in any way, shape or form.

J-Uh huh.

S-But I know that's where it comes from. "Wait. He was super old. Why would he do that at this point?"

J-Yeah. Well he did, there was one thing going on. His lawyer and his family had been campaigning for a long time for him to get released. Because everybody else had been released. I mean, and several of them actually had life sentences, and they were released early. Hess, for everything he did, he did do some bad things, but he wasn't nearly as monstrous as some of those other guys were.

S-Especially seeing as how he was out of the war for four years.

J-Uh huh.

S-He couldn't have been involved in all of that other stuff.

J-Oh yeah. But the thing about it is, is every time the issue came up, the Soviets, as I said previously, always vetoed the idea. And they might have still been mad about Barbarossa, and maybe they figured Hess was part of the planning of that. I'm not sure that he was. Probably not. I know he was aware of it.

S-Awareness is not responsibility.

J-Yeah. But the thing about the Soviets too, is Russians are still mad at us over World War II. They really are. I mean, you know, we let them bleed for years before we finally did something about it, and then, I think that some of them at least, don't really like us, you know?

D-Yeah. Oh yeah.

J-Yeah. So, I'm not totally surprised that the Soviets had a grudge against him. But also Spandau was located in West Berlin, which gave the Soviets a really nice opportunity to send spies in for a look see. Some of those guards maybe weren't just straight up guards.

D-Hm.

J-Yeah. That's kind of a shame to keep one guy locked up...

S-Explain that to me.

J-Well, West Berlin, they wanted to actually be able to go in and look around and gather intelligence.

S-Uh huh.

J-And so being able to send your personnel to Spandau meant you could...

S-Oh, in the commute from the border to the prison, they could take a diversion and look around, is that what you're getting at?

J-Take a diversion, look around, maybe, maybe pick up stuff from spies, from dead drops, things like that, you know?

S-Ok, I understand. I, when you said that, I took it as something at the prison which didn't make sense, but that makes a whole lot more sense. I get it now.

J-Yeah, yeah. So they could have, it could have been totally just for espionage. And it's kind of a shame to keep this one guy locked up for 21 extra years, but, you know?

S-He was a tool at that point.

J-He, yeah, and so that might be one of the reasons why they kept insisting that he not be released. But

things began to change in 1987. Mikhail Gorbachev was in power. Relations were thawing out a little bit between the east and the west, and the Soviets began to express a bit more, I guess, receptivity to the idea of letting Hess go. And there was a report published, again in "Der Spiegel," in April 1987, that said Gorbachev was now taking the view that releasing Hess would be seen world wide as a, quote, "gesture of humanity," unquote. Now, I'm sure that, I'm sure that remark was read by everybody in the British, French, and American intelligence services. And some people believed that this might have set off alarm bells in the British Secret Service.

D-Hm.

J-Yeah.

S-Why?

J-Why? Well, we'll get to that in a sec.

S-Ok.

J-But from Hess' point of view, if Russia is finally going to agree to let you go, he might have actually been just a few weeks or months from freedom.

S-Uh huh.

J-And even though he didn't have a hell of a lot longer to live, you know, if you've been locked up all those years, wouldn't getting out, and at least being free to look around and take in the world, and you know, all that stuff, wouldn't that be a worthwhile thing?

D-Do you think he knew, though?

J-What, that he was going to get out?

D-That it was possible that he was going to get out. Or, I mean...

J-Well.

D-...would that necessarily have been communicated to him? Is there any proof that it was communicated to him?

J-He did get to read the papers and stuff. But I don't know if the stuff that was about him, or, they censored his...

S-They probably censored the hell out of the paper.

D-You would think.

J-Yeah, so he might not have found out. But he was, by this time he, for years he didn't have any visits from his family.

D-Uh huh.

J-But he started having regular visits from his family, so I'm guessing that sometime...

D-So you think it's reasonable to assume that he did know?

J-Yeah. I think that sometime between April and August he probably had at least one visit from his lawyer and his family. And they probably...

D-And they probably said...

J-And they probably said something like, "Hey, good news. You might be getting out."

D-Ok.

S-And even a month of freedom after 40 years of prison.

J-Yeah.

S-Would be the best month ever. Even if all you could do was get pushed around in a wheelchair by your family.

J-Uh huh.

S-At least you're with your family and not in that frickin' prison anymore.

J-Yeah.

D-I don't know.

J-Don't you think?

D-I don't know.

S-You think there's the fear of being released? Cause that's a common thing.

D-Uh huh. I think there's a little bit of the fear of being released. There's a bit of the fear of perception. Not knowing how people will react to you. To be going home to a place where people think that you are a traitor.

S-That you're a monster.

D-That you're a monster.

J-Uh huh.

D-Being labeled as a Nazi who, you know, committed crimes against humanity, whether you were convicted of that or not. I mean, I think there's a lot of things. It's, I mean, I guess it's possible, I guess this, this would be for the "he committed suicide" argument.

J-Uh huh.

D-That not only is there the he lost the will to live, it's also it does coincide with the fact that he might have the possibility of getting out, and that could be a really, really scary thing to him. He could have just decided no.

J-Uh huh. Yeah, maybe.

S-"I don't want to go."

D-"I don't want to."

J-Yeah.

D-And there's no way to keep yourself, right? You can't just be like, "Ah, I'm just going to stay in jail. Thanks, though."

S-"I'm going to hold on to the bars and you can't drag me out."

D-Yeah, you can't say that.

S-Cause that works so well for not going in.

J-Yeah.

D-So that, I mean, I guess that could have been a thing too.

J-No, it is possible.

S-Yeah.

J-I mean, people do lose the will to live, you know? And especially he was pretty feeble by this time.

S-Uh huh.

J-Maybe he just decided to just, and he had committed, or attempted suicide in the past.

S-Yeah.

D-Uh huh. When he was younger.

J-Yeah. And so, so maybe he just felt like, "Even if I get out now, what kind of a life am I going to have? I can't, I can barely even walk." You know?

S-Cause he was very, very frail at that point.

D-Yeah.

J-Oh yeah. He was very weak, yeah.

D-I mean, he would be, right?

J-Yeah.

D-And yeah, again, I think there is something to be said for saying he doesn't know what he's coming to, you know?

J-Hm.

D-He, he probably thinks he's labeled as a traitor, he's going to have a villain's welcome. Nobody's going to love him.

J-Probably not.

D-He's going to be hated. I mean, I mean, I agree, probably that wouldn't be the reception. Probably somebody would say, "Oh look, an old man." Right? They wouldn't say, "Oh, that's Rudolf Hess. He's the one who blah blah blah..." Cause there also wasn't very much love for the Nazi Party at that point in Germany.

J-No, not really.

D-But, I don't know. I guess...

J-Well, there were a lot of, a lot of...

D-I can understand.

J-Yeah.

D-That fear.

J-Well yeah, there's that. I think, I think that the positives outweighed the negatives. It's also possible maybe, maybe he didn't know, because the family wasn't necessarily allowed to talk about just anything with him.

D-Yeah, that's true.

J-Again, there was, there were definitely restrictions. Back to the murder theory, though. Wolf Hess, who I've mentioned before.

D-His son.

J-Yeah, his son, who Devin is going to name her child for.

D-Yep.

J-Yeah. He lay out some reasons for suspicion. Number one, he did say that his last visit with his father that Hess was so weak and frail that he couldn't walk without a cane on one side and a guard on the other side supporting him.

D-Hm.

J-So how could he have managed to actually hang himself?

D-I mean, I guess it's not, it's, you step off a thing.

S-Yeah...

D-That's sounds morbid and horrible, but.

S-I know, but I've had the very, I've thought about the same thing, is that...

D-It doesn't take a lot of power.

S-...you sit there and you toss the cord until it gets up there and you tie a knot and you just pull it down and then you tie a thing, and you...I mean, it's, it's completely possible to do with very little effort.

J-Yeah. Oh no, it's, it's...

S-It's not as if he climbed a ten foot spire and then leaped off of it.

J-Yeah, I know. I think it's, it is possible.

D-Uh huh.

J-That's just what he says. That's why he thinks he didn't commit suicide. But the family also got the body after this, and they had a second autopsy done. And the report from this one noted ligature marks around the neck that were horizontal across the neck, which is, like, more consistent with being throttled by somebody...

D-Being strangled.

J-...than hanging. Because obviously, they're going to go, like, across and then up past your jaw and your ears and all that stuff.

D and S-Uh huh.

J-And yeah, so it looks like somebody might have actually choked him to death.

D-Hm.

J-Yeah. And there were supposedly two strangers in American uniforms who were present at the site of Hess' hanging. There was a Tunisian medical orderly named Abdullah, I'm not sure how to pronounce his last name...

S-We'll go with that.

J-Yeah, ok. Abdullah, we'll just call him Abdullah. He worked in Spandau, he'd been working there for, I don't know, seven or eight years looking after Hess. Abdullah wrote an affidavit that, quote, "When I arrived at the garden summer house, I found the scene looking as though a wrestling match had taken place...the ground was churned up and the chair on which Hess usually sat on the ground, or sat lay on

the ground a considerable distance from its usual location.” Unquote. And then he noted those two strangers, and he said that was unusual because contact with Hess was strictly forbidden. If you're one of the guards, that's one thing, but unless you have a reason to be in contact with Hess...

D-Uh huh, then no.

J-...no. A big no-no. And so it was strange that those two were there.

S-I'll wait, go ahead. Keep going.

J-Ok. At this time, August '87, US guards were in charge of the, in the prison. Again, it varied from French, US, British, Russian. I guess that the theory Wolf has, Wolf Hess believes that it was the British Secret Service that murdered his dad. And I guess his theory is that it wouldn't stink quite so bad if Hess had died while the Americans were in charge of guarding him. Whether that's true or not. And so he believes that those two strangers were actually British SAS.

S-Why would, why would, why did the Brits...

J-Uh huh?

S-...knock him off? That's, this is the thing that I, this is my biggest problem with this. I don't understand why they would do it.

J-Yeah.

D-Particularly because weren't the Brits one of the ones that said no, let him go?

S-Yeah. It was only the Soviets who wouldn't, who would not agree to his release.

D-Although, I guess on the other hand, the Brits may have been saying, “Yeah, let him go so we can murder him in his own home.” (Steve laughing).

J-Or they might have, yeah.

D-I mean, you know? (Laughing).

S-A little duplicity?

D-Yeah.

J-Well, it was a safe bet for them. They could easily play the good cop and say yeah, knowing that the Soviets are always going to veto it. There's no harm in saying, “Hey, yeah, we're open to that.”

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah.

D-That's true.

J-They might have changed if the Soviets, and so since we did have that change in the sort of Soviet posture...

D-Well, what's the policy, here's a question. What's the policy of torture for prisoners of war at that time, in World War II?

J-Torture?

D-Yeah.

J-I believe it was not sanctioned.

S-Yeah. There's, it's the, the Geneva.

J-The Geneva Conventions.

D-Right. So I guess the, that could be, not to jump ahead or anything, but that could be a reason that the Brits would want to murder Hess, is if they thought, if they were scared that he might come out with his story of what they did to him.

S-Oh, so for four years, so you're saying for four years he was water boarded, or something.

D-Or something, yeah.

S-You know, and tortured brutally.

D-Right.

J-That might be, I don't know.

D-And they were trying to keep him quiet. But I, but you know, on the flip-side, at 93, probably if he was going to say something, he would have said something.

J-Uh huh.

D-Right?

J-I think that, yeah, they wanted to keep him under their control, so, but the question is is what was it that, what was the big secret he was sitting on?

D-Yeah.

J-So he couldn't talk about the war or the peace mission that he went on. Everything was carefully supervised. The theory is that, one theory is that Winston Churchill kept the war going with Germany when it wasn't necessary...

D-Hmm.

J-...and a lot of people died, and so that would have been, like, a huge scandal. That's one of the things

that Wolf Hess thinks. I think there might be another reason.

D-I mean, that's a good, yeah. That, that would upset a lot of people. You would want to keep...

J-It might. Although it's kind of ancient history by this point in time, by 1987.

D-Oh well, yeah.

J-You know?

D-Right. Cause when did Churchill die?

J-Oh God, it was the '80s?

S-I don't remember.

D-It was before '87 though, right?

J-Uh, I think so, yeah.

D-He would have been dead by then, so it wouldn't have really, although you don't want to sully the...

S-You don't want to sully his name.

D-...the memory of...

S-No. I've actually just started a search for a good Churchill book, cause I want to read up on him more. Cause I don't, he was really weird and interesting.

D-He was weird.

S-That guy was intriguing.

J-He was, he was amazing, actually.

D-Yeah.

J-I mean, he...

S-He was a quirky little guy, but there was some serious brain power going on.

D-Yeah.

J-Oh yeah, he was a...

D-But, I guess, you know, if there was a revelation like that, there would be some serious precedent for reparations, right? To families...

J-Eh, no.

D-It would at least make the Brits look not super great.

J-Well, yes and no. I mean, because here's the, here's the deal, is that, like it would have saved some British lives, but at the same time, is it really a great idea to allow the Nazis to consolidate power on the continent?

D-Right, no. Exactly.

J-I mean, exactly. I mean, you might have peace now, but that doesn't mean they're not going to come after you later.

D-But as I was saying, it just gives that tacit consent for everything that they're doing.

S-You take a break. You recover. And you go after it some more.

D and J-Yeah.

S-But here's, here's my thing. Here's my issue with the scene of his suicide.

J-Uh huh.

D-Yeah.

S-Let's stop, I know, I want to circle back for a second.

D-Yeah.

S-So he, the description of the scene is that it looked like a wrestling match had happened. The ground is churned up, and the chair is knocked over and far away. Well, there's a couple of things that can, that can explain this. It could have been that somebody ran in seeing him hanging there, and flung the furniture out of the way to try to get to him to keep him from hanging, from dying.

J-Yeah.

S-It's also entirely possible, I don't, I've never seen an image of this room, and we never will cause the place has been destroyed.

J-Yeah.

S-That this hook and where he was at, he may not have been truly hanging. There are examples of people...

D-Uh huh.

J-I don't think he, I don't think he was truly hanging.

S-I don't, so it could have been that he was, you know, just a little bit at an incline, and so when he was, in the death throes, his feet are going, they're churning up the dirt around him. He's flopping around. That's going to give that false impression of a struggle between multiple people...

J-Uh huh.

S-...when really it's his body in the, the death spasms.

J-Yeah. Well, and here's the other thing too, is that if these were two, two actual British SAS guys, they would be in really fit shape.

D-Yeah.

S-Uh huh.

J-And two guys against one very frail 93-year-old man...

D-Yeah.

J-...there's not going to be a huge death struggle, probably.

D-There should not be, no.

S-Yeah. Well he, he, yeah, he probably didn't have, you know, his Nazi jiu jitsu skills anymore.

D-No.

J-Yeah.

D-And, I mean, frankly it could have been as simple as he missed a couple of times with the power cord.

S-Uh huh.

D-Right? You know, you've got the heavier end on the power cord, you kind of toss it up and it falls.

J-Uh huh.

D-And then you drag it back and you toss it up and it falls.

S-And he's walking back and forth.

D-It's a little kicked up.

S-And stumbling.

D-You know?

S-Yeah. I mean, there's a million ways...

D-Yeah, absolutely.

S-That's why I, I look at this and think, this doesn't, this doesn't sound nefarious to me at all.

D-Yeah.

J-Uh huh. Not necessarily.

D-Very, very few things sounds nefarious to you, Steve.

S-That's true.

D-That's what I know about you.

S-I am Captain Rational.

J-Oh, ok. Well there are some other interesting little tidbits, though, here. Lieutenant Colonel Eugene Bird, he was Commandant at Spandau Prison from 1964 to '71.

D-Ok, so like, what's that? The commandant is...

J-He's like the warden.

D-Ok. Yeah.

J-Yeah.

D-That's what I was looking for.

J-Yeah, yeah. I guess maybe they thought, they saw it as more of, I guess you have a warden in a prison, but in a POW camp there's always a commandant.

D-A commandant, yeah.

S-It's a military installation, so yeah.

J-Yeah, I guess, so. But he got to know Rudolf Hess very well. They actually became friends, and they started working on a collaboration on a book about Hess and his peace flight.

D-I thought he wasn't allowed to talk about that.

J-Well, apparently there's some exception. And maybe it was kind of surreptitious, I think.

D-Hm.

J-Yeah. But when Bird's superiors got wind of this, in March 1971, Bird was placed under house arrest. And he was interrogated extensively. He wrote about it later. He was eventually forced to resign.

D-Yeah.

J-And you got to wonder, what's the big secret here? What's the big deal? I mean, I would think that would be a positive thing. If Hess wants to tell his story, what's wrong with that? And Bird eventually did publish a book, called "The Loneliest Man in the World," about Hess.

S-When did the, in the US, when did the ruling come down that prisoners couldn't make money from anything related to their acts. Do you know what I'm talking about?

J-Yeah, yeah. I don't know if that was a ruling that came down. I think it was a law that was passed.

S-Right, right. The point, though, is that I, I just wonder if it was kind of, that had set a general precedent among the world wide audience, of "Oh wait, you're a Nazi. You shouldn't be able to commemorate yourself in this way." Do you know what I'm saying?

J-You're talking about him writing a book?

S-Yeah.

J-Well, you know...

S-Yeah, potentially making some cash off of it.

J-I don't think the plan was though, I don't know if they were really going to make any cash out of the deal. But, and what was he going to do...

S-Nobody writes a book to write a book.

J-Well, that's true, but what was Hess going to spend the money on anyway? He was in prison.

S-He would have, he could have bequeathed it to his relatives.

J-Uh huh.

S-He could have, in a way, made some money to benefit people he knew.

J-But, the thing is, other Nazis...

S-I'm just wondering if that's the reason that they put the squash on it.

D-I feel...

J-There were other high-ranking Nazis who wrote memoirs after they were released from prison. And they probably...

S-Key phrase right there.

J-And they probably made money off of it.

S-After their release from prison.

D-I just, I just think that it would have, I mean, they would have said that, right? If they had arrested Bird, they would have come out publicly and said, "Listen, there's this law that we have that he was breaking."

S-Or a belief.

J-I don't know that there was that, any law like that.

S-That's in the US only.

D-Ok, well.

S-But I know where you're heading.

D-You know, that you would say, "Listen, this guy was helping this war criminal write a book, and we don't think that's right. That's why we arrested him." You wouldn't say, "But don't worry about it. Nope, nothing to see here people. It's fine." And keep it under wraps.

S-It's almost as if you've never watched a governmental body do that kind of weirdness before, Devin (laughing). They do that all the time.

D-I live in America! We do not do that! (Steve laughing).

S-Except for all the time.

D-Nope. This is America.

S-Ok.

D-Freedom. Eagle screech.

J-America.

S-All right Joe, let's please move forward before she throws the eagle at me (laughing).

J-We're talking about Bird. Bird actually did say that he thought Hess was murdered.

S-No, not the eagle. Just Bird.

D-Just Bird. I'm sorry. We're going way off track here.

J-Ok, oh yeah, we are. Back to Bird, though. He, he did publicly say that he thought that Hess might have been murdered.

S-Well, of course he did.

J-Yeah. Two other men who were serving life sentences in Spandau were released early, in the 1950s, believe it or not, cause they were old and sick. So for humanitarian reasons. By the mid-80s, Rudolf Hess was also pretty old and sick. So why wasn't he let go? Again, it seems to me the reason was to keep him quiet about something, cause I can't see any other reason. I mean, all kinds of people were, were saying that he should be let go. Churchill said he should be let go.

S-He probably said a lot of bad things about British cuisine.

J-Maybe. Yeah, maybe.

S-That's probably what it was.

J-Yeah.

D-He said tea was awful.

J-Yeah (laughing). Yeah, you can't get away with that.

D-No.

S-Baked beans for breakfast? What?!

D-What?!

J-Yeah. He mispronounced Mytchett. That's probably what it is. So I've already said that I don't think the scandal was Winston Churchill refusing to make peace. But there might have been another reason.

D-What?

J-Yeah. Well, it has been said there were members of the royal family who were sympathetic to Germany.

D-Hm.

J-And could it be that there actually were discussions between the aristocracy and the Germans that the, the British Secret Service hadn't been aware of until after the fact, perhaps? Or maybe even at the time. And Hess was knowledgeable about these things. And depending on what was said, and who said it, that might be a secret worth keeping.

D-I...

J-I can't think of any other reason to keep this guy locked up for all these years.

D-But then why...

J-And that's a reason to kill him, if he was about to get let out.

D-Oh. I don't know.

S-I, I really, I understand the fear of scandal and embarrassment. But I, I also just wonder how much credence people are going to give to a convicted Nazi war criminal?

J-He was not convicted...

D-Who's spent most of his life in jail.

J-And he was not a convicted war criminal.

D-Yeah he was.

J-No, he was convicted of crimes against peace, but he was exonerated...

S-Ok, a convicted peace criminal.

J...he was not convicted of, he was not convicted of war crimes, or crimes against humanity.

D-Ok.

S-But in everybody's mind, he's a war criminal.

J-I guess.

S-He spent forty some years in Spandau. He's a friggin' war criminal.

D-He's a close personal friend of Hitler.

S-In the general population's mind.

J-Yeah.

S-So he is so easy to discredit. I mean, I...

J-Uh huh.

S-That's, it doesn't make sense.

D-I also, I also guess I don't know what the, why you would murder him instead of just saying, "Hey Russians, ya'll just keep saying no."

J-Yeah (laughing). You could do that.

D-"And we'll give, we'll give, we owe you two big favors."

J-It could have been that.

D-Right? I mean, why would you not just...

J-Yeah. But again, I'm still, I still honestly wonder. I'm not saying I'm sure he was murdered, but I still honestly wondered what it was that they didn't want Hess talking about. What it was that he knew that they didn't want the world to find out about.

D-Totally. Totally.

S-Based on what Devin said, it's that British use the term "ya'll."

J-Yeah, it could have been that. I don't know. But, but it seems strange, because, you know, after, in the aftermath of World War II, there's historians out there. There's journalists. There's all kinds of people

who want to know, who want to sort out the story of what happened. They want to talk to as many people as they can.

D-Absolutely.

J-To find out the entire history of World War II. And this guy had some interesting stuff to tell us all.

D-Yeah.

J-And, but he was, he was gagged. He couldn't say a word.

S-You know, so this just kind of dawned on me, and I wonder if maybe this is the reason, if indeed he was killed.

J-Uh huh.

S-What happened to Spandau after he died?

J-They tore it down.

S-They tore it down.

J-Yeah.

S-Why?

J-Well, some people think that they tore it down just to conceal the, the evidence of the crime, which I don't believe. No, they, they tore it down because they didn't want it to become a neo-Nazi shrine.

S-Exactly.

J-Yeah.

S-So that is one of the things that I suddenly, I'm like, wait a minute. Cause that movement had been gaining traction for a while at that point. You know, it was on the rise again, and it could have been that he would have been hailed as some kind of martyr or messiah or saint, or whatever.

J-Yeah, yeah. I know.

S-So that could have been a serious fear.

J-Well, so, but the, why do you need to keep him gagged?

S-If he comes out and anything he says, these people are going to get a hold of.

J-Uh huh.

S-And latch on to, and take as a motivation, I could see that as a giant fear for the Germans alone, cause the German government in the '80s was really combating this, this neo-Nazi movement that was

happening, I could see they would be concerned about it. I mean, it's just, it popped into my head.

J-Uh huh.

S-Right or wrong, I can suddenly, eh, maybe.

J-I don't, but again, they didn't try to stop any other former high-ranking Nazis like, again, Albert Speer, et cetera, from publishing their memoirs.

D-I almost wonder if that would be a good argument for suicide, though? If Hess was really not, he didn't have that really war-like nature in him. He didn't have that hate so much.

S-His conviction was to the party, not to the things the party did.

D-Well, or to the, you know, kind of, "we're going to make this world great," part of the party. Not the, like, "and also kill a bunch of people," part of the party (laughing).

S-"And enslave the others."

D-You know, and that...

J-Yeah.

D-...maybe somebody did, you know, maybe somebody did say, "Oh, yeah, there's this, you know, neo-Nazi resurrection, and it's going to be great when you get out, you know. This is going to happen."

J-Eh.

D-Maybe he thought, "Oh my God, this is what I," maybe he had a realization. Maybe he had that self-realization...

S-His legacy was not what he wanted it to be.

J-Well...

D-Yeah, absolutely.

J-...it didn't have to be that way, though.

D-It didn't have to be, but...

J-If they came and said, "Hey, address our next rally, dude." He could have just said, "Screw you, I don't support you people at all. Look how things turned out."

D-But I don't know that that necessarily...

J-He wasn't bound, you know? And, and I'm sure the terms of his release, he would have been required to not do any neo-Nazi activities.

D-Sure, I, no, but I think that, you know, I think there's, there's that chance of having that reflective moment.

J-Uh huh.

D-Of somebody saying, "It's so great you're going to get out. And all these people are here to support you. And this is what they believe."

J-Uh huh.

D-And for you to have that moment of realization of, "Oh my God, this is my legacy."

J-Well yeah, but it didn't have to be that way.

D-It didn't have to be, but you're also 93-years-old and, like...

J-They were probably not going to announce to the world so that he could have a big, you know, reception committee outside the prison waiting for him, you know?

D-Absolutely, yeah.

J-But they probably would have been quiet about it. But, yeah.

D-This is very cynical. I have a question. How soon after he died did they get rid of the...

J-Did they bury him?

D-No, the prison.

J-Oh, the prison? I'm not sure exactly when it was torn down.

S-Oh, within a year, I think.

J-Yeah, it was, it was pretty soon.

S-Yeah. It wasn't as if ten years later they finally got around to tearing the thing down.

D-Hm.

J-It's kind of too bad. It was a, a cool old building.

D-Yeah.

J-It was kind of castle-like. It was, and so it's kind of a shame, but.

D-This is going to sound really horrible.

J-Yeah?

D-And I almost wonder if they just needed to tear it down?

J-It might have been they wanted the real estate too.

D-Oh.

S-Well, no, I think that, I don't disagree with that. "We just needed to tear this thing down."

D-"And there's this guy who has lived for way longer than we ever thought he would live."

J-Yeah.

D-"So we just got to get rid of him."

J-Oh, they really spent a ton of money keeping one guy locked up.

D-They really did.

J-All those years (laughing).

D-Yeah. I mean, so almost, I wonder, I know that sounds really horrible...

S-The plumbing in that place had to be terrible.

D-...I know it sounds horrible and cynical, and I'm really, really sorry, but I almost wonder if they just thought, "This guy's got to go. We need, you know, the bulldozers are here."

J-And maybe it was real estate developers. It could have been.

D-Yeah, I mean, it's (laughing).

S-Real estate developers are the ones that killed him.

J-Yeah.

D-If this was Portland, I would absolutely say yes (Steve laughing).

J-Yeah. They...

D-A hundred percent.

J-They dressed in military uniforms.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah. And they killed him.

S-They were Remax agents.

J-Yeah.

D-Yeah. No, but I mean...

J-That's possible.

D-I guess, you know, who would have thought when you locked the dude up, that he would live for that much longer.

J-Yeah, yeah. He was a relatively young man, and...

S-He was.

J-...some people just live a long time.

S-That's the thing. He was young. I mean, he was only a couple of years older than I am now.

J-Yeah. Yeah.

S-So it, that is a very young age to get locked up.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah.

D-And all of the rest of his people had been released in the, like, '60s.

S-'60s.

D-Right, twenty years ago.

S-Yeah.

J-Some of them were, yeah...

D-And so they probably just assumed, "All right, this guy is going to be dead in a couple of years. It'll be fine." And then, you know, twenty years on, they're thinking...

J-Yeah, I know.

D-"Oh, man."

J-I know.

D-"We can't afford this."

J-Maybe that was it. "We're just sick of this, and we want to get rid of the guy."

D-I don't know. I don't know.

J-It's crazy. But, oh, and speaking of shrines, his, his body was buried in the family cemetery, and I can't remember the name of the town in Germany. It's somewhere in Bavaria, I think. And it unfortunately became kind of a shrine for neo-Nazis, who would have annual gatherings there at his grave. And so, alas, the government dug up the grave and burned the body and scattered the ashes.

D-Hm. I guess that's just upsetting cause it doesn't feel like what he wanted. You know?

J-What? To be burned, you mean?

D-No.

J-To be cremated? Oh, to have those neo-Nazis come?

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah, he probably, the thing about the neo-Nazis is, frankly, I don't know, I don't really know much about these guys. I suspect that it's not even so much about politics or the socialism or anything. I think it's just about anti-Semitism.

D-Yeah.

S-It's about racism. Yes.

J-It's about that...

S-Which is not what the Nazi party was started for. And I agree...

D-Yeah.

J-Well, they were racist, but that wasn't the whole thing with them.

D-But they were racist later.

J-Yeah.

S-Well, yeah. There was, it's, it's based on a very common sentiment of if they weren't here, I'd do better.

D-Uh huh.

S-No matter what that people is, there's always one group saying, "If you weren't here, it'd be better for us."

D-Oh yeah. You see that everywhere in the world.

S-It's that kind of thing, yeah. But that was, that was the very...

J-Uh huh.

S-I'm going to say naïve beginning of the racism in the Nazi Party, and then it escalated to a horrible level, and we can all agree on that.

D-Yeah, oh yeah.

J-Yeah.

S-And so I agree that he probably, it is terrible because it wasn't like he was like, "Yeah, I want a bunch of drunk skinheads on my grave." No.

J-I'm sure he wouldn't have cared for that, yeah.

S-So the poor guy really...

J-Yeah. I don't think he would have cared for that at all. Yeah.

S-He got, he got the short end of the stick for forty years.

J-And the thing to remember about the Nazis is it wasn't just because they were racist, but it's also because at the time they came into being, there was real huge intellectual fad let loose in the world called the Eugenics Movement.

S-Uh huh.

J-And which began here in America, by the way.

S-Yeah (laughing).

J-Yeah. And...

S-Great job.

J-Yeah. And then, you know, of course leave it to Hitler and the gang to take this to an industrial scale. But they actually thought that they were saving the human race because there were all these inferior people out there, and if you weed, take their genes out of the gene pool...

S-Uh huh.

J-...it's going to make us all better off down the line. And so, that's where that came from. Obviously eugenics is, like, I mean, it's still out there. You still see the Darwin Awards, and there's movies like "Idiocracy."

S-Yeah.

J-Which, you know, embodies the same ideas. And so there's still lots of people who really believe that. Hopefully we're not going to, like, see a return to, you know, the Holocaust.

S-I, please, no.

J-Hopefully not.

D-God, no.

J-Yeah. All right. Well, enough of that. Do you guys have any other theories or anything like that?

D-Uh uh.

S-I'm done. I'm totally done.

J-Yeah.

D-I think, I think that Hess was sent by Hitler, and I also think that he didn't kill himself.

S-I think the chupacabra did it.

J-Hm.

D-Of course you do.

J-It could have been Chupie, yeah.

D-He is about that right age.

J-Yeah. I think he was sent by Hitler. I think they were both duped by MI-6 probably.

D-Yeah.

J-And I think it's highly possible. I obviously don't know, but I, given the fact that it was, for so many years, it seems so important to keep him muzzled, you gotta wonder.

S-Yeah.

J-And then all of a sudden, he might be let go. Oops. I guess it's time for him to commit suicide.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah, you gotta wonder.

D-Yeah.

J-I'm not saying I have definitive evidence or anything, but it's, I'm wondering.

S-No.

D-Uh huh.

J-All right. Well, anyway, I guess we'll just call that one solved and sign off for the week (Steve laughing).

S-Totally.

D-Solved by something.

S-Totally. Those historians, they don't know what they're talking about. We got it.

J-Aw, damn it. We've got a hundred percent record. That's awesome. Well, hey, time for a few, a few things that you guys probably want to know about. You probably want to know, do we have a website? Yeah we do. It's called thinking sideways podcast dot com. You can download episodes, listen to episodes, check our links. We always put links up for you. And you can also, well, until recently, you could also leave comments. We actually turned off the comments because, well, some people were getting a little unruly.

D-Turns out the internet is full of anonymous jerks.

S-Yeah.

J-Yeah. And I apologize, because we had some other people who were posting really great, insightful, thoughtful...

S-There was good conversations.

J-There were. So it's sad.

S-But there was a small group who ruined it for everybody.

D and J-Yeah.

S-I'm sorry guys, we couldn't police it anymore.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah, it's just...

D-So, we do have some other options, though.

S-Yes.

J-Yeah, yeah. You can always go to Facebook. We are on Facebook. And you can like us. You better like us, damn it! (Steve laughing). And join the group, of course. We have a, and there's also iTunes. You could subscribe and leave us a review. Hopefully a good review. And you can also stream us from all kinds of places, although I don't know. It seems to me that we get more complaints from people going through streaming services than from anybody else.

S-Yeah. Unfortunately, that's the streaming service, not us anymore (laughing).

J-Yeah.

S-Anymore. It used to be, but it's not us anymore.

J-Yeah. So if you are having issues, find another streaming service, or maybe just, I don't know, go somewhere like our website.

D-Yeah.

J-I don't know. Where else? We're on Twitter. The Twitter.

D-We are.

J-The Twitters.

D-The Twitter.

J-Yeah, yeah.

S-We do twits all the time.

J-Yeah, we do. Thinkin sideways, that's without the 'g'. You can also...

S-We got the Reddit page. That's another page for people who used to be at the website can go to.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah, absolutely.

S-Is we have the Reddit.

J-Yeah, absolutely. We have a subreddit.

D-And there's a new discussion every time that we post an episode.

S-Each episode.

D-Yeah.

J-Yeah.

D-Which they're, you know, they're small right now, but go say your thoughts, and those will be really, really great.

S-Uh huh.

J-Yeah. We want to hear what you guys think. Good or bad. Preferably good. And also, if you want to contact us privately, you can always send us an email. We're thinking sideways podcast at gmail dot com. So, send us an email if you've got any ideas for a mystery or something fun like that.

D-Or if you want to be an expert, or you just want to chat.

J-Uh huh.

S-Chat about the mystery in general. Yeah.

J-Yeah, yeah, yeah. Or if you happen to know something about one of the mysteries.

D-We reply to every single email we get.

S-We do. Sometimes they're not as speedy as we want.

D-But literally every single email we get, we reply to.

S-Yep.

J-Yeah. Or our bot replies, because it's...

D-No. It's just us (laughing).

J-Ok.

S-We have a Joebot.

J-Yeah. We don't have a bot yet, but we will.

D-We will. His name's going to be Justin (S and J laughing).

S-We finally found a use for that intern.

J-Yeah. Oh where else, what else? Also, if you want to support the show, this is totally optional, of course, but there is Patreon. You go to patreon dot com slash thinking sideways. And if you want to, you can pledge a certain amount of money per episode. Be aware of that, you know.

D-Yeah.

J-Because you get charged that amount for every episode. So if you're giving us fifty bucks...

D-Don't do that.

J-...make sure, oh no, you can if you want. But just realize that it's going to be every week that we're going to get fifty bucks.

S-Which is the reason that we have the Paypal option as well for a one time donation. Or we've got the merchandise.

D-Which does support the show.

J-You can always buy merch.

D-And you get to also sport some sweet shirts, or have a mug, or a nightlight, or some stickers.

S-Somebody bought the Mary Celeste shirt.

D-Ooh (Joe laughing).

J-We have a Mary Celeste shirt?

D-Yep.

J-I didn't know that.

S-You saw this.

D-Duh.

J-Ok, yeah, duh. I'm just kidding (all laughing). All right, so that's about it for me. You guys have any last thoughts before we sign off for the week?

S-I got Nazi else.

J-Oh my God.

D-Oh my God, no.