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National Bird

By Unknown

HEATHER:

in people's lives.
And you've literally just
kind of hover over their area.
And sometimes you would
watch them for days
and then you'd have intel that...
That this guy is a bad guy.
And you would wait
until he walks out
to the field to meet with
some friends for something
and you'd blow him up.
Drop a hellfire missile on him.
Are you guys going to have
anything to drink tonight?

WOMAN:

water [inaudible].
All right, here you go.
And the bottled water is back
there if you wanna grab one.
Thanks guys, have a good night.

HEATHER:

interested in the Navy
at first because the
guy that I was dating
had been in the Navy.
And I was like, oh, maybe
I'll just join the Navy.
And you know, travel
and see the world.
And fight for my country and
protect people from terrorists.
And I ended up being
recruited into the Air Force
because I actually saw the
posters with the drones.
and I was like, "Wow,
that is so cool."
Like, unmanned aircraft,
like, that's really badass.

And I was still, like, under
the impression that America
was saving the world.
Like, that we were
big brother and we
were helping everyone out.
So when I saw this possibility
that I could get out of,
like, this small town that I was
in, and get out of Pennsylvania
and... and just travel,
and... and I thought that
was the only way to do it.
And they didn't make it
seem like you wouldn't
be... that one of your only
options of places to go
is Afghanistan.
[beeping]

MAN:

hold your position.
What have you got?
Unmanned aircraft is
identifying enemy sniper.
Copy that.
Let's move.

HEATHER:

the military prior
to being in massage school...
I got out two years ago.
I was in Air Force Intelligence.
I flew the drones.
I was part of a unit that...
We fought in Afghanistan.
And I've lost
friends to the war.
I've lost friends to suicide
that were a part of that unit.
And I've seen a lot of
people die in the war.
So for me I brought to
the massage table pain.

And just absolute despair.
And memories, like,
horrible memories.
And along with
that is an anxiety
disorder and a sleep disorder.
And I thought, you know, I came
here I think, subconsciously
looking for healing for myself.
To be able to find
something that in learning
to heal other people maybe
I could heal myself as well.
It was like slow
motion. And it was
like, you're watching
someone just drag
themselves across the field.
When you watch someone
in those dying moments,
what their reaction is,
how they're reacting
and what they're doing,
[sighs] it's so primitive.
It's really raw,
stripped down death.
That's what it is.
This is real. Like,
this isn't... it's not a joke.
I have specific memories of many
of them that I know I killed.
But it's so messy and, like,
they don't report it down to us
who we kill.
Maybe we kill our objective,
maybe we kill a guy who
we thought was our objective.
You don't know.
And I can say the drone program's
wrong because I don't know
how many people I've killed.
After we do a strike I
would ask for a break
and, like, go outside and smoke

a cigarette and just think.
And like, try to
decompress and just try
to push the, like, idea that
I was involved in killing
people out of my mind.
And I try not to think about it.
Sometimes if I
couldn't really get out
of the situation for very long,
I would just go to the bathroom
and... and just
sit on the toilet.
Like just sit there in my
uniform, and just, like, cry.
And just think about
what I was doing.
It was just different
emotional responses.
I mean a lot of times afterwards
I would feel just empty.
And if I was crying it was
because I just didn't know
how to stop feeling like that.
How to stop feeling like a
shell and it was an empty void.
And it was... I was like always
shaking after we do strikes
because it's such an adrenaline
rush. You're killing someone.
You see someone die because you
said it was OK to kill them.

MAN:

and it's already here.
The Predator, it just doesn't
give up. It doesn't quit.
It will find you. It
will hunt you down.

MAN:

the ground control
station which is your cockpit.
You immediately feel like

you're in an airplane.

MAN:

having an eagle or something
over your head, constantly
landing on your arm,
recording what's going on.

WOMAN:

Lets them see what
they need to see.

MAN:

feeling to know that you're
helping the guys on the ground.
That's really why I
think all of us do it.

MAN:

Force makes me feel proud.
And people tell me, thank you.
That's when I remember that I'm
doing something bigger than me.

DANIEL:

joined the military,
I was well aware that
what I was about to enter
was something that I was
against, that I disagreed with.
I joined anyways out
of desperation because I
was homeless. I was desperate.
I had nowhere else to go.
I was on my last leg.
And... if... in the Air Force
was ready to accept me.
I still work in intelligence
as a contractor.
Basically until I go to school
in... in the fall semester.
And I saw the top
secret clearance.
I... it's... Once you're given

a top secret clearance,
it's good for five
years. And then it needs
to be renewed every five years.
And when I leave this job
my clearance will expire.
Nobody ever thinks
about speaking out
against the government
who's worked for them
and hasn't considered what
the possible consequences are.
But I don't dwell on them
because I don't... I don't want
it to affect my voice.
I don't want it to silence my
words, or to curtail my speech.
I generally feel like
they don't... they being
the government, they being
the Justice Department...
They shouldn't hold
that power over me.
This ominous threat that
they'll go after me
in the same way that they've
gone after so many people.
Especially since 9/11.
I didn't find out what I was
going to be doing until I
made it to Fort
Bragg, for the Joint
Special Operations Command.
At the time I didn't
really realize
the significance or importance
of organization itself.
I... I'd simply been told by
some people in the military,
oh they're the,
you know, kind of
like the elite
special ops people
that you hear about in

video games, and in movies.
And that they were actually
responsible for the killing
of Osama bin Laden.
So I would find targets
using signals intelligence,
you know the... I was
stationed at Fort Meade, which
is where NSA is headquartered.
I had a clearance for NSA.
I was so... you know. And
NSA is the Intelligence
Directorate which handles
signals intelligence.
So naturally I would
be put into a position,
you know, overseas working in a
signals intelligence capacity.
And using the technology on
the drone through the means
of signals intelligence... Sorry,
it's really, really tough.
It's really tough.
And I know it's core
and it's central to what
I was doing and, like, my
whole reason for speaking here,
so... but I'm also very unaware
of where that line is drawn.
And... so I have to be
very- extraordinarily
cautious about what I can
and can't say on camera.
The... though it's
something so simple
and so benign that you wouldn't
imagine it were even of, you
know, it would even of concern
there's still- there's no...
There's no doubt in my mind
that if I said the wrong thing
or give away the wrong kind of
information about what I was
doing that I wouldn't...

That I would be safe
from prosecution of any kind.

LISA:

got into the military,
I mean, I was thinking
it was kind of a win-win.
It was a force for
good in the world.
I could actually help
people, I could go places.
I could learn things.
There was nothing
negative about it
at the time, that
was in my thinking
or in my consciousness.
And you know, I
thought I was gonna
be on the right side
of history, and today I
don't believe I was.
I worked on a DGS, a
Distributed Ground System.
As the name implies, I mean,
it's a distributed system.
And it spans the globe,
and it eats data.
And it eats lots, and
lots, and lots of data.
This is global. This
is getting information
anywhere, at any time.
Shooting people from
anywhere, at any time.
And it's not just one
person sitting there
with a little remote
control, a little joystick
moving around a plane that's
halfway across the world.
That's not all there is.
It's like borders
don't matter anymore.

And there's a huge system that spans the globe that can just suck up endless amounts of your life. Your personal data. I mean, this could grow to get so out of control. And we're not the only ones that have this. This is gonna be commonplace, if it's not already. [inaudible] need some water? It's a secret program, and what that means is that I can't just go shouting off the hilltops telling the public what it is. What I can tell you is that to me, one person who worked within this massive thing, it's frightening. If I'm beginning with this really long sentence. "Sergeant Lang also spearheaded the emission security and accreditation process for four coalition computer networks enabling the exploitation of 2,400 sorties, and resulted in the timely and accurate identification of 121,000 insurgent targets in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom." And then it goes on. That means that the system that I worked on basically identified 121,000 insurgent targets. 121,000 lives affected by technology that we control. And in this case, we're talking

about a two year period.
So how many years have
we been at war now?
At least 12. Multiply.
Add up some numbers
and see what's really going on.
Dear Lord, we thank you
for this beautiful day.
We thank you for
friends and families.
Thank you for
everyone, everything
that you've given us.
Bless this food and
nourish our bodies.
Give everyone safety
in their travel.
Amen.
Dig in.

HEATHER:

analyst. And a screener.
My job was to watch
what's happening
in the video... the drones...
The live video of course.
And identify everything.
Another remote duty
station-you'd
have the pilot of course... who
was flying the actual aircraft.
And the sensor operator, who
is moving the camera around.
They were the ones that
actually push the button.
I do not push the button.
I just identify what
necessitates a button pushing.
We can't just bomb
someone and fly away.
We have to follow through.
The bomb hit, and wait for
it to cool down a little bit.
And then you can see,

like, the body parts.
You can identify,
like, that could
be the lower half of his body,
and that could be the leg.
And then sometimes you'll
stick around and watch
family come in and get them.
Or like, pick up the parts
and put their family member
in a blanket.
And a couple of people hold
on to a corner of the blanket
and carry him back
to their compound.
According to my
mental health records,
I was high risk for
suicide because of the way
I acted about my job.
My psychologist called
my first Sergeant
and he recommended that
I be possibly moved
to anything that wasn't
involving watching
people die all the time.
And the first Sergeant said
that our team was undermanned
and that they absolutely
needed me to work mission.
So he would look into
it, but never returned
my psychologist phone calls.
And never gave him
any indications
that I was gonna be
moved to a better
job and I obviously wasn't.
I stayed doing that job until
the last possible moment
when they had to let
me out of process
because I was actually

getting out of the military.
So I guess that's the
cost of a human life
because the fact that I was
on a suicide watch list,
and they still wouldn't allow me
to do something else that might
help me, a little bit. Obviously
didn't matter to the military.
And that... that shows how
much the Air Force cares
about its intelligence troops.
Look down the bottom there.
There's ice on the steps too.
You could tell she'd
have a stressful day
if she'd call me up, and she'd
be crying, or she'd be upset.
But then she couldn't
talk about it.
And then when you ask her, well
you... can you talk to anybody
else about it?
Well, no we're not supposed
to talk to anybody.
So she was having
more and more issues
each day that things went on.
A mom knows these
things. And then
when you hear your daughter
talking to you on the phone,
and you can tell that
she's in trouble.
Just by the emotion
and the inflection
in the stress that you
could hear in her voice,
I knew she was in trouble.
And the only thing I could do
is just stay in touch with her
on a daily basis, so she felt
like she had someone there.
Because I have a feeling if

somebody wasn't there for her,
she wouldn't be here right now.
And her friends, a lot of them
were in the same boat she was.

All drinking. All carrying
on. Trying to forget the pain.
HEATHER (ON VIDEO): I've... I'm
just scared. I'm always scared.
All those little kids were
just scared to go outside.

WOMAN (ON VIDEO):

Now I would like
to play a clip of
President Obama
addressing US drone
warfare at National Defense
University in Washington DC.

PRESIDENT OBAMA (ON VIDEO):
And before any strike is taken,
there must be near-certainty
that no civilians
will be killed or injured.
The highest standard we can set.
Yes, the conflict with al-Qaeda,
like all armed conflict
invites tragedy.
But by narrowly
targeting our action
against those who
want to kill us
and not the people
they hide among,
we are choosing the
course of action
least likely to result in
the loss of innocent life.

DANIEL:

gets up in front of the nation
and says that they're doing
everything they can to ensure
that there is near-certainty
that there will be
no civilians killed, he

is saying that because he can't say otherwise.

Because any time an action is taken to finish a target there is a certain amount of guesswork in that action.

Because it's only in the aftermath of any kind of ordnance being dropped that you know just how much actual damage was done.

And oftentimes we, the intelligence community, is reliance.

The joint Special Operations Command, the CIA included, is reliant on intelligence coming afterwards that confirms that who they were targeting was killed in that strike. Or that they weren't killed in that strike.

LISA:

people die in war.

We all know that.

If we don't, we're diluted.

The fact of the matter is, is that these things, these devices can go pretty much unimpeded anywhere in the world and blow crap up.

And there is no single governing body about how they're used.

And that is something that will promote war, not deter it.

The people that really get the impact, aside from the people at the distant end who are getting hit by these weapons, are all these new recruits

that are coming in.
And you know, the people
that are being affected
are America's children.
People die, things
get destroyed,
and people who are aged
18 to 24 sit and watch it.
How can anyone not
find that disturbing?

HEATHER:

speak about drones,
being precision weapons, being
able to make surgical strikes,
to me it's completely
ridiculous.

It's completely ludicrous to
even make those statements.
It's as flawed as it can
be with people operating
it from across the world.
It they really think they can
send a bomb through a window
of a compound and
hit one militant,
then why are we seeing
so many civilians
dying of collateral damage?

I'd like to ask
those politicians,
have they not been
notified of that?
Do they not know what's
going on in their own war
that they're controlling?

REPORTER (ON VIDEO):

A former US drone
operator and analyst has slammed
American and British militaries
for fabricating
faulty information
on the civilian deaths and the
US led drone war, worldwide.

Heather Linebaugh has questioned the accuracy of the information collected by the drone saying, "The videos provided are not clear enough to detect militants from civilians." The former American analyst also said that drones in the US at wars are not used as protection but rather as a weapon.

HEATHER:

perfect example of what it would look like, unaltered. This is probably the best you'll get on a good day. It's why it's so difficult to make that choice. I say there's at least two possible, possible children. And then one of them runs away. It's like, I care because of what I've... what I've seen happen to, like, my fellow veterans and stuff. Like, how... what I've seen happen to people. Like, my friends have suffered so much. I've had so many friends that are like, oh, man, I can't live with myself for what I did in Iraq. Like, I can't live with myself for the things that I've done. And not... this isn't just for myself. Like, this isn't some kind of, like, self-healing thing for me. Like, I found more

self-healing through doing
massage and everything.
This isn't even that
therapeutic for me.
Every time I do one of
these things I'm like,
I feel awful, because then
I have to talk about it
and tell people about it
and all kinds of stuff.
And people think my story's all
mega important or something.
And it's... I'm not
saying this for, like,
the importance of myself.
I'm saying it because
I need to say it.
Because my other
veteran friends are too
drunk to spend time to
say anything about it.
Or they're not around anymore.
Trying to just get people to
change how they view things
and they're like,
policymakers aren't listening,
policymakers don't care.
It's not going to
change anything.
So I'm gonna put
myself out there,
risk being put on
some kind of FBI
watch list or something
for just saying
that, yeah, the drone program
makes people feel bad.
Like, I'm basically saying
the drone program can give you
post-traumatic stress disorder.
That shouldn't be a surprise.
And like, for me to just
say something like that
and then have people say

it's not gonna make a change.
"You're gonna be the
next Edward Snowden."
It's just- it pisses me off.
And it makes me not
even want to try.
Because if I'm gonna get all
this awful horrifying attention
from like, the government
and stuff, what's the point?
Like, if I ended up... if
someone come in to my house
and puts a bag over my
hand and hauls me away,
then what was the point
of anything I did?
Am I really changing
people's minds?
Or are people just going
to share it on Facebook
and then move along?
[sniffles] I'm
spending all this time
doing all this
stuff and it could
be for absolutely nothing.
Like, I could be
living a normal life,
spending time with friends,
spending time with family.
And like, I'm spending all
this time for this thing
that I don't know if anybody
is going to care about.
And I don't know if anybody's
gonna be like, oh, well, let's
really care about the
soldiers in the drone program
because according
to the left, we're
all a bunch of baby killers.
And according to the
right, we shouldn't
be having any problems

because we're not walking around in Afghanistan. Exposed Facts is dedicated to supporting whistleblowers, whistleblowing, and independent journalism. Our next speaker, Jesselyn Radack, is a director of a National Security and Human Rights Program at the Government Accountability Project. As an attorney, she's represented many whistleblowers. And I'll mention just a few of

them:

Drake, and John Kiriakou. So Jesselyn Radack. I represent seven people, investigated, charged, or prosecuted under the Draconian Espionage Act. Espionage Act prosecutions occur largely in secret, and have been brutal. I hope that will change. I hope also that Whistleblower Protection will be extended to protect people in the National Security and Intelligence arenas who have made all of the bomb shell disclosures about war crimes, about torture, about secret surveillance that you've heard about over the past decade.

HEATHER:

thing first happened, I was so scared because

everybody started calling me
a whistleblower and saying like,
this is another Edward Snowden.
And I didn't think I
mentioned anything classified,
but then they started
saying like, she
mentioned capabilities.
Well most whistleblowers
are not blowing a whistle
on classified, and if
they do have access
to classified
information, they're
able to blow the
whistle on things
without ever getting
into the classified.
And what you're disclosing
that hasn't been out
there is the ill effect in
the horrible negative effect
that this has had on the
actual people doing the work.
And on the innocent
people being blown up.
And the shaky legal reasoning.
I mean all three of these
are the perfect storm
of this cluster-fuck that we
call it the drone program.
From Pacifica, this
is Democracy Now.
America does not take
strikes to punish individuals.
We act against
terrorists who pose
a continuing and imminent
threat to the American people.
And when there are
no other governments
capable of effectively
addressing the threat.
ANCHORWOMAN (ON TV): In a major

policy address on Thursday,
President Obama defended the
secret overseas drone war,
but said the United
States cannot
continue waging what he
described as a boundless
global war on terror.
Obama's comments came one day
after Attorney General Eric
Holder confirmed US drone
strikes have killed four US
citizens in Yemen and Pakistan.

PRESIDENT OBAMA:

(ON TV):

these strikes have saved lives.
Moreover, America's
actions are legal.
We were attacked on 9/11.
Within a week,
Congress overwhelmingly
authorized the use of force.
The people would
defend drones, and defend
the way that they're used.
They always say,
you know, they...
They protect American lives by
not putting them in harm's way.
But what they really do is
they just embolden commanders.
They embolden decision makers
because there is no threat.
There is no immediate
consequence.
They can do the strike,
and they can potentially
kill this person that
they're so desperate to get
and to eliminate because
of how dangerous...
Potentially dangerous...

They could be to US.
But if it just so happens that
they don't kill that person
or there's some other people
involved in the strike,
and you get killed
as well. You know,
there's no consequence for it.
When it comes to
high value targeting,
every mission is to go
after one person at a time.
But anybody else that's
killed in that strike
is just blanketly assumed
to be an associate
of the targeted individual.
So as long as they
can reasonably
identify that all the people in
the field of view of the camera
are military aged males...
Meaning anybody who is believed
to be of age 16 or older...
They are a legitimate target
under the rules of engagement.
If that strike occurs
and kills all of them,
they just say that
they got them all.
[crowd booing]

WOMAN:

more question for John McCain.
Doesn't McCain have a daughter
that's of military age?

CROWD:

send his daughter.
Yeah. How about sending your
daughter, John. What about that?

DANIEL:

times get mixed

up in the anti-drone movement.
Trying to say that we
should just ground drones
and we just eliminate
drones from our lexicon
and never allow them
to exist in this world.
It's just too dangerous.
And I don't necessarily
agree with them
because drones are going
to be a part of our life
here pretty soon.
They're going to be...
Most likely they're
going to be doing things
that we were only able to do
with people in a plane before.
They're gonna be like dusting
crops, or planting seeds,
or are doing
humanitarians surveillance
to... during floods
and disasters...
To try and locate victims.
You know, they're
gonna be there.
But there's also that
other dangerous side
to them that makes
war so easy and so
convenient and so simple
that the people who have access
to this technology and access
to this capability just say,
well, why wouldn't I use this?
It's too easy.
The most disturbing thing
about my involvement in drones
is the uncertainty if anybody
that I was involved in kill
or capture was civilian or not.
There's no way of knowing.

LISA:

they'd drop it. It explodes.
Then what?
Does somebody go down there and
asked for somebody's driver's
license?
Excuse me sir, can
I have your driver's
license to see who you are?
I mean, does that happen?
How do we know?
How is it possible to know
who ends up living or dying?

WOMAN:

to the Commonwealth Club.
We have the great privilege
tonight to have a chance
to talk with General
Stanley McChrystal, who
had a very distinguished
34 year career
in the American military.
His last assignment
was as the commander
of the International
Security Assistance Force
in Afghanistan.
Won't you, Commonwealth
Club members,
join me in welcoming
Stan McChrystal.
[applause]
STANLEY MCCHRYSTAL: Think
about today's world,
and you can get information
from everywhere in real time.
You can talk to anyone
in your organization.
In my situation awareness...
From what we would call it...
We had about 12
screens on the wall,
and they were all showing

operations in real time...
Full motion video we called it.
Like, live TV from Predator.
Unmanned, aerial vehicles
above them.
So we could watch every
one of our operators
land in a helicopter, get out of
a vehicle, move on the target.
And because of a
system we set up
that went through
our secure internet,
we could hear every
radio transmission.
And if I was
sitting in Baghdad,
I could hear radio transmissions
from a raid in Afghanistan.
And if I wanted to,
I could reach down
and talk to Sergeant
X on the ground,
on an objective in Afghanistan.
Now I never did that,
but the technology
now allows you to do that.
So the first thing to
understand is that's deceptive.
It's seductive and deceptive
because if you see things
in two dimension, you get
the opinion that you're
at 10,000 feet, you
see this photograph,
you know what's going on.
You don't know what's
going on. You know
what you see in two dimensions.
[chattering]
Lisa?
L-I-S-A?
Yep.
And I'm...

Go on with the question, please.

OK, so I'm very curious.

I understand that

you're a little

wary about the drone program.

And I'm wondering what your

views of the program are.

Yeah. I think drones are here
to stay and they're necessary.

But you have to understand
how people pursue things.

So it's one thing to do things,
but it's another to anger
a population in the process.

So I think you've got to
make the value decision.

You gotta say... in each
case you gotta make

the decision... is it worth it?

Because you are going to create
some ill-will in the process.

I also think we need to
explain it to the world better.

But again I'm not one of
those people who thinks
it's not gonna be around.

I mean, technology...

- Oh, no.

Doesn't go back.

It doesn't... yeah,

once it's out of the bag.

It's out of the bag.

And it's not immoral or moral,
but it has to be understood.

And it has to be

described to people,

and it has to be carefully used.

I just think it's
that important.

Well, I just want
to say thank you.

I read your book and

I so appreciate...

Well, you're kind.

Thank you so much.
...your understanding
so of the Afghan culture,
and all of that.
It just touched my heart.

LISA:

her name is Asma,
and she was born in Afghanistan.
And she goes there every
year distributing seeds,
and doing humanitarian work.
And Asma was willing
to take me this year
and it's a beautiful thing.
I'm aware that Afghanistan
is a dangerous place.
I'm aware that there is
still war going on there,
but I believe that doing this
is the right thing to do.
I lost part of my humanity
working in the drone program.
And humanity was what
was missing there.
And seeing these
people as human beings.
It'll be nice to
just see it up close.
[non-English speech]
I missed you.
[non-English speech]
[helicopters passing]
[non-English speech]

LISA:

these people, part of it
is making reparations
for my participation
in a program that's
a huge, huge weapon
system that kills more innocent
people than actual targets.
There's no way that I can make

amends, or change anything
that I've participated in.
But if there's
any way that I can
somehow give back
to that country,
that's what I wanna do.
[non-English speech]
I said, give the ladies two.

LISA:

helpful, even just a little bit,
by talking to somebody
who has been directly
impacted by the drone program.
And asking, "What do you need"?
What do you want people to hear?
Basically, how can I be helpful?
Because being a part of a
weapon system can't be helpful.
It can only be hurtful.

ALL:

I'm finally here,
sorry about that.
[chattering]
My feeling of her moving to
California is mixed emotions.
I feel it's an
opportunity for her,
but I'm concerned about a young
lady being that far from home,
without family support
that can't be nearby.
And if she needs help, it
would take some time for us
to get help to her.

HEATHER'S MOM:

at least once or twice a week.
Sees things, hears things.
But it's so hard for our
vets and our soldiers,
and men and women to get help.

And with drone
people, they consider
that they didn't see combat
because they weren't overseas.
And that's not the truth.
They see a lot of
combat, but nobody
takes that into consideration.
It's not just my granddaughter
that has had trouble getting
the treatment she needed.
I know she attempted
to get help.
And she had trouble
finding a therapist
to talk to because
they didn't have
the right security clearance.
And she was in
violation of the law
and could go to prison
for even talking
to the wrong therapist about
what was really bothering her.
And that made me a little
angry at our own government
for putting these
kids through hell.
If we put our young people in
this kind of an environment,
we have an obligation
to look after them,
to help them make the
adjustment back to normal life.
And we're not doing that,
and that's shame on us.

JESSELYN RADACK:

government recently
contacted two of the
drone whistleblowers,
whom I represent.
The government, meaning
the Air Force Office

of Special Investigation and the Federal Bureau of investigation contacted them, told them that they were on some sort of terrorist kill list. In Heather's case, my understanding was that the Air Force Office of Special Investigations contacted her stepfather to relay the message that a known terrorist organization had been searching her name. And on the one hand they said, there was not a specific or imminent threat. On the other hand, they had very tailored solutions for Heather, which was that she needed to tone down her social profile in general. And that would include writing op-eds that would include the use of Twitter and Facebook. It's not like Heather's been out screaming from the rooftop about drones. But clearly the government is very aware of the fact that she had written about drones before. To me that's a blatant attempt to silence whistleblowers, and it doesn't surprise me that that happens to the very few people who have been brave enough to be speaking out against the drone program.

DANIEL:

arrived, it was actually

just hours after I had
turned in my badge,
and was finishing my last day.
I had gotten home, was relaxing,
I had poured myself a drink.
And somebody downstairs
was knocking at the door,
and immediately- both people
at the door, man and woman...
Shoved FBI badges in my
face, pushed me inside
into the kitchen, and
immediately behind them
came... I'd say about 20
agents- basically all of them
with pistols drawn
somewhere, in body armor.
And at this point
I'm extremely scared.
I didn't understand
what was going on.
Altogether, I think there
might have been at least 30
to 50 agents in and out of
the house at different points
throughout the evening,
taking photos in every room
and of everything, searching
for different things.
Once they were done,
they left and I
didn't even have a phone on me.
So I had retained a number...
One of the agents allowed me
to retrieve a number
from my phone...
And then I used that to call
my friends in DC to ask them
if they could... if they
could help me get in touch
with the... the right
people that knew
how... that knew how to deal
with these kinds of cases.

Once I was in touch with Daniel, we met at one location and promptly moved to another location. And he started telling me what was going on. And it became very apparent that he had been subject to search warrants that he had brought with him and showed me. And I drafted up an attorney-client agreement... A temporary one... on a napkin so I could provide immediate representation and then eventually was able to do a full agreement with him, but he was terrified. Everything that we know so far between me and my attorneys, I've been keeping in here. And it's basically just the warrants that were issued that day, and the items that they took. And so there were three warrants issued. One for the room, of the house that I was in, and the house itself. The... there's a warrant issued for me and my smartphone, that I may have in my possession. There's this... there's one for my motorcycle, and then there's a list of all the things that they took. So basically there was a list for electronics, and there was a list for papers. The next was just an explanation

of what they were looking for.
So under category 1:
"Information and documents,
in any format or medium, all
originals, computer files,
copies, and manipulated
versions of that
are the property of the
United States Government,
or any agency of the
United States Government,
including the NSA,
the NGA, JSOC,
the Department of Defense, the
Department of the Air Force.
All classified information,
materials, or documents
are defined in 18 U.S.C. 1924."
So those five
departments or agencies...
However you look at
them... those are all
places I have worked for.
793E, and 130A1.
130A2B, and 1924.
So I'd have to actually
do some research on that.
I should've probably done
that if I... if I were
more responsible for myself.
But I'm pretty sure,
you know, they're all
just intels in generic blanket.
This is a criminal
investigation for Espionage Act.
The Espionage Act is one of
the most serious charges you
can level against an American.
It's like, treason,
it's that serious
because basically it paints
you as an enemy of the state.
And it's a David versus
Goliath struggle.

It is a single person
against the entire executive
branch of the United
States Government.
And that's the
kind of power we're
supposed to reserve for
going after our enemies,
not after people
who are patriotic.

LISA:

some of the families that have
been affected by drone warfare.
I want to respect them,
and so I'll stay back.
Because I can't imagine how
they'd feel seeing somebody
that worked on the system
that killed their child,
or killed members of their
family, or took limbs.
So I'll stay back,
and Asma
will be there and talk to them.
[helicopter passing]

SENSOR:

on the back of the pickup.
One, two, three; at
least five people so far.

MC:

the rear of the SUV.

SENSOR:

teenagers can fight.

MC:

and you're a combatant,
it's how that works.

PILOT:

PILOT:

finishing up praying
and rallying up near all
three vehicles at this time.

SENSOR:

I'd try to go through
the bed, put it right
dead center of the bed.

MC:

PILOT:

screeners are currently
calling 21 military
aged males, no females,
and two possible children.
How copy?

JAG25:

And when we say children, are we
talking teenagers or toddlers?

SENSOR:

Not toddlers.
Something more towards
adolescents or teens.

JAG25:

to the ground force commander.
But like I said, 12-13
years old with a weapon
is just as dangerous.

SENSOR:

Yeah.

MC:

master plan, fellas?

PILOT:

Hope we get to shoot the truck
with all the dudes in it.

SENSOR:

Sensor is in, let
the party begin.

PILOT:

so this plan is man,
are we gonna watch
this thing go down.
The helos are gonna take
out as much as they can,
and when they Winchester
we can play clean up.

SENSOR:

MC:

SENSOR:

MC:

SENSOR:

And... Oh, there it goes.

PILOT:

SENSOR:

[chattering]
[non-English speech]
[crying]
[screaming]
[crying]
See, this is what pisses me off,
where these fucking
assholes are like...
They're saying in
here DGS supposedly
sees women and children.
They're saying DGS
supposedly sees it.
We went to school
for almost a year
to be able to identify
women and children.

And this was a... this
is a daily thing.
Where the pilot and the SOs
and everybody that's at Creech
is constantly saying, no
no DGS is full of shit,
they don't see anything.
This happened all
the time, and I'd
have to literally sit there
arguing with these dick heads,
and have them just be saying
shit like this to the people
that I can't talk to.
Because I don't have
access to talk to them.
God damn the DGS fucking hated
Creech, because they were
always trying to kill people.
They always wanted to
be blowing someone up.
And all these officers...
The [inaudible],
the pilot, all these people...
It looks good on their resume
if they kill more people.
And then here they're saying
that everything supposedly...
DGS is supposedly
calling this out.
And then they just
have an outright lie
that DGS didn't call out
any women or children prior
to this point when about an
hour before that was when
they killed all those people.
And DGS was saying,
right before they killed
them that they saw children.
I know what... I know what
crews did this mission
and it wasn't at my base.
I can safely say that.

Because I remember
this... this call sign,
but it's... this wasn't...
These crews weren't... this
DGS wasn't my DGS.
But they're all set
up the same in terms
of the people that
are working them,
and it's just such bullshit.
There's this one
thing in here where
the pilots typing, "The
lady is carrying a kid." "Huh?
Maybe."
And then sensor operator
says. "Uh, yeah."
If you were to read a DGS
transcript - which you'll
probably never be able to
get your hands on... you
would see lingo and jargon,
specifically designed
to make statements short and
make them possible, probable,
or confirmed.
You wouldn't be seeing
people saying, "Maybe it's
a kid." "Uh, we don't
know." "Uh, we think it's
possible woman." [scoffs] I
couldn't talk about this stuff
because it's classified, but now
that I have this unclassified
thing sitting right in front
of me of these dickheads
saying all this shit about us.
[sighs] We were the ones who
had to really try to stop
them all the fucking time.
You shouldn't have to
stop your own people
from killing civilians.
To the great people of

Afghanistan, as-salamu alaykum.
I've spoken with
President Karzai,
and apologize to him and
to the Afghan people.
I've instituted a thorough
investigation to prevent
this from happening again.
We're extremely saddened by this
tragic loss of innocent lives.
I've made it clear to our
forces that we're here
to protect the Afghan people.
I pledge to strengthen our
efforts, to regain your trust,
to build a brighter
future for all Afghans.
Most importantly, I
express my deepest,
heartfelt condolences to the
victims and to their families.
We all share in their
grief, and we'll keep them
in our thoughts and prayers.
[chattering]
[non-English speech]
What did they tell you?
You know, there was
three buses full of people
from this village.
And one of the story
was that the wife
lost a... a husband and a child.
And she went outside with
the child, and lifted up
and showing the child
to the helicopters,
and the drones that this
is a really peaceful
family caravan going someplace.
By the time he turned
around, it was hit.
They're not stupid.
They knew, they know

exactly what it is.
They know what drone is, they
know what a helicopter is.
They told us drone is a...
It's a plane from above,
it has cameras,
and they can watch
and look and take information.
They thought drone
was not for striking.

JESSELYN RADACK:

in the worst of all worlds
because the government
clearly has an espionage
investigation into him.
And now this is a sword of
Damocles hanging over his head,
that he could be
indicted any day,
or years from now for espionage
because the government suspects
that he is a source
of information
about the drone program
that the government doesn't
want out there.

DANIEL:

with my lawyers
to the full extent,
everything that I
think that this
investigation could be about.
A lot of that is
details that I simply
could never talk about on film.
But what I will say is that
it's likely to do with the fact
that I'm someone
who has both worked
for the intelligence community,
and who's politically active.
And therefore they

are suspicious of my...
Of my background.

DANIEL:

Yeah.

You probably remember back in
like, August, I called you out
of nowhere, and asking
you about- yeah.

So there's a long story to that.

I'm OK, but it's... it's
a bit of a legal matter.

No, thank... I just wanna
thank you again for like,
being available.

That's really very... like, if
I couldn't get a hold of you,
I would... I didn't know
what I was gonna do.

It's in the middle of
being resolved, hopefully.

But as far as now is concerned,
I can't talk about it.

Right now my biggest
concern is... well,
it's certainly not school,
even though I'm in school.

And it's basically like
the least- the thing
I'm least focused on.

Even though it should be
the number one priority
I have right now, but right
now I'm just constantly going
over my head and constantly
thinking about what I'm saying
and who I'm saying it to.

And making sure that I'm not
saying anything to somebody,
whether a stranger,
or somebody I know,
somebody I think I can trust,
or I know I can't trust.

I'm just- I'm always afraid

of saying the wrong thing,
the wrong time.
And I'm always second guessing
my words everywhere I go.
I mean, me personally, like,
I just live every day trying
to become more and more
comfortable with the idea
that it's probably gonna happen.
That I'm probably gonna get
indicted and I'm probably going
to get charged with a crime.
And that there's
probably a real chance
I'll have to fight to
stay out of prison.
I think it's kind of funny... a
little ironic too... because so
far I'm probably
the only adult male
in my entire family
in media and external
that has not been
to prison so far.
So I come from a long lineage
of prisoners, actually.
Great proud
tradition of fuck-ups
who get drunk, and go driving,
or sell pot, or, you know,
carrying a gun
when they shouldn't
be carrying a gun in the
wrong place, the wrong time.
A lot of that where...
Where I'm from.
But I've... I don't know.
Is it scary to think about
one day being in prison?
Yeah, I don't have a
good answer for that
because it's scary in prison.
Yes, that's it.
[chuckles] That was a

fucking three minute yes.
All the clients
I've represented...
Although I've represented them
pro bono... we have to involve
criminal defense attorneys.
And all of them owe legal bills
upwards of a million dollars,
and that usually only goes
before trial even began.
The million dollar
bill, that doesn't even
take you through at
the beginning of trial.
So the economic
price alone... not
to mention the personal
price of your relationships...
Because you can't talk to
your friends and family
about what's going on.
You can't even talk to...
Theoretically-a therapist
about what's going on.
The emotional costs
are indescribable...
And it's not an exaggeration
to say that most of my clients
who've been under espionage
criminal investigations...
Is not at all unusual for
them to end up blacklisted,
and bankrupt, and broken.
At a minimum almost
every one of my clients
who had to deal with
this has suffered
from severe anxiety,
and depression,
and suicidal ideation.
And in terms of what it
could actually do to him
it could imprison
him for decades.

It's kind of... it's a big day, but it's also good because, like, tomorrow I can wake up and not think, like, I wonder when I'll hear from the VA. Like, it'll... whether, you know, whatever they decide at least I know that I don't have to worry about it anymore.

[GPS talking]

I'm sure they won't even know what my job was in the military. That's gonna be interesting. Because- they're, like, if it is a civilian company that they're outsourcing to. So they're probably be like, what?

What's a... what's a Predator? What's a Reaper?

So that should be interesting, and that should probably have a lot to do with if I don't get my disability... Don't get the disability. We will see.

I can see they have ample parking. I don't care about the money. It's about- it's about recognizing that someone can see terrible things and still need to talk to someone about it. And still need to figure out how to heal from that without having to get shot at, or without having to be in the war zone. It's about understanding that people see traumatic things.

And that can affect
them just as much as
if you're involved in
the traumatic things,
because we're all directly
involved in the drone program
whether people think
they are or not.
But they'll decide that for me.
When I went in I was like...
I was expecting like,
the whole thing to be them
coming up with reasons
why I don't have PTSD.
And the guy sat down,
and he was so nice.
And he sat down and he
was like, so I was looking
at your papers, it
seems like you saw
a lot of really awful things.
And he was like,
he had me describe
some of them and stuff,
and I started crying.
And he's like, gave
me tissues and he's
just like, I'm so sorry.
And he's like, I'm so sorry
you had to see these things.
And he's like, you're way
too young for that, you know?
It's... it's really tough and
we're gonna try to get you
the best help we can get you.
And like, it was...
He was like, you
know it's good that
you're coming in here
and I'm really glad you're
seeing a therapist regularly.
And he's like,
these are all things
that can really help you.

And he's like, I see a
lot of people with PTSD.
And he's like, I promise it's
not always gonna be like this,
you know, you're
gonna eventually have
days where it's a lot easier.
He's like, hopefully,
you know, you won't feel
as guilty as you do, forever.

DANIEL:

tough to... to describe
what that feeling is like.
You know, having the image
in your head of, you know,
just taking your
own life is... like
it's... it's not a good feeling.
It's not something
people should...
Should have to deal with.
And... And yet despite...
And yet we do.
Yet we do have those thoughts
sometimes when we are in our,
like, in our darkest places,
we have a lot to worry about
and the future is uncertain.
And we are... you know, we feel
guilty about our past actions,
or something of that sort.
I'm not sure.

WOMAN (ON VIDEO): A
federal jury in Virginia
has convicted former CIA officer
Jeffrey Sterling of nine felony
counts, including espionage.
Prosecutors accuse
Sterling of leaking
classified information
to journalists
James Risen of New York Times.
Supporters of Sterling described

him as a whistleblower.
But prosecutors
claimed he leaked
the information to settle
a score with the Agency.
Sterling is scheduled to
be sentenced in April.
He faces a maximum possible
sentence of decades in prison.
I was told that they forgave
me for the part I played
and what happened to
them and that's amazing.
And when you think about that
these people are considered,
you know, of military age,
terrorists, all of that,
you can see people's hearts.
I just want people to
know that not everybody is
a freaking terrorist,
and we need to just
get out of that mindset.
And we need to see these
people as people, families,
communities, brothers,
mothers, and sisters
because that's who they are.
Imagine if this was
happening to us.
Imagine if our children were
walking outside of their door
and it was a sunny day, and they
were afraid because they didn't
know if today was the
day that something
was gonna fall out of the sky
and kill someone close to them.
How would we feel?

DANIEL:

would be, I am primarily
optimistic about the world,
you know, for all the cynicism,

and pessimism that
comes out of me.
I think that when
it really comes
down to it you just have a...
You have a love for humanity.
A love for human
beings and one another,
that you believe that there
is the possibility of change
and that another world
is possible, as they say.

HEATHER:

about the drone program
or something and,
like, see how people
talk about cold hearted
killers, things like that.
That was me, like,
that was my job.
Of course, like, it still is me,
that's... you are your history,
but if you have any
conscious at all, you know
that what you did was wrong.
And you know that for
the rest of your life
it's going to be that.
You can't undo what
he did, and you
can't bring those people back.
So it's something
that you live with.

LISA:

United States of America,
and we are participating
in an overseas war.
A war overseas, and we
have no connection to it
other than wires, and keyboards.
Now if that doesn't scare
the crap out of you...

It does out of me...
Because if that's
the only connection, why stop?
[music playing]
[music playing]
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