

Common Mystics Podcast

Season 2 Episode 5: Dr. Greed's Treacherous Deeds in Independence, MO- Part 1

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00:01:11 On this episode of Common Mystics we relate the extraordinary story of the Swope family tragedy. At the turn of the 20th century, the Swopes were a prominent family, pillars of society in the greater Kansas City area. But by 1909, the family would be preyed upon by one of their own. I'm Jennifer James. I'm Jill Stanley. We are Common Mystics. We find extraordinary stories in ordinary places. And today we have a story for you out of Independence, Missouri. Jennifer, we have to warn the people. This is a lot,

00:01:50 This is a hundred percent a lot, and I am fully emotionally invested in this. You are crazy. I love this family so much and I, I just I'm angry. Like, I haven't let it go yet. You're a little possessed. I think you are channeling the Swopes right now. I love them so much. It's a little scary. Yeah, just dial it down, dial it down.

00:02:10 I just want to warn folks that because I am so emotionally involved in the story, there may be a couple F-bombs that come out just along the way, but also I want to say right up front that a lot of the research that I did on it was, um, taken not only from newspaper articles at the time, but also the biggest source is a book that I found called Deaths on Pleasant Street by Giles Fowler. Very good. Thank you. I read it and it's a great book. You guys have to read it. This story is mind blowing. Tell us, Jen. Also, this is part one of a two-part series on the Swopes. So we have a lot for you. We're going to go over the events and a lot of moving parts this week and next week we'll get into the exciting conclusion. Very good. Very good. So let's get into it. Jill, we were on our road trip when we found those stories. Right. We stopped in Cahokia and learned all about, uh, Jeanne Marie. Marie Jeanne. And then we went into Missouri and stopped in Fulton.

00:03:14 This was like our second day. We woke up in the morning and we left our hotel and we were driving south and we set our intention. And what is our intention? As it always is, we wanted to find a verifiable story that we were unaware of. But most importantly, we asked the spirits to lead us so that we could give a voice to the voiceless. That's right. And as we were driving south, we wanted to stop in the little town of Fulton, Missouri, where we were compelled to stop at one of the college campuses. I believe there's two colleges in the town. So we stopped at Westminster. We sure did. Well, the campus is really pretty. There's a lot there. A lot of memorials, a lot of structures, a lot of buildings. You drove on, you were driving as you always are, and you drove onto the campus and immediately stopped at the site of the former William Chrisman Swope Chapel. Okay. Remember? And I got out of the car because you're like, go see what's there. I got out of the car. It looked like a big deal. It did. And then it was like, WAH WAH, because nothing was there. Like, it was literally a plaque that said, uh, there was something here and now it's gone. Well, what was there? Well, the memorial commemorates the sight of, like I said, the William Chrisman Swope Chapel, which was a Gothic red brick building with buttresses. So it was really extravagant and airy. It was beautiful. Um, I imagine that it was. The chapel was completed in 1919, but unfortunately was demolished in 1967 due to some structural difficulties and the site there commemorates this chapel.

00:04:57 So what was on the grounds today? So on the grounds, obviously there's no chapel, but there are two columns and a bench there and a rose garden. And also importantly, two

plaques. Okay. And one of the plaques says "In Memory of William Chrisman Swope, 1878 - 1909" He graduated from Westminster in 1900. It said "Faithful to every duty, self sacrificing and helpful. A loyal officer in his church, a sincere and devout Christian. This building has been erected by his mother and his memory." Now, remember it says "this building," but there's no building there. Right? That was probably the original plaque. Exactly. And then plaque two is about his mother. It says "In honor of Mrs. Margaret Chrisman Swope benefactress of Christian education. Donor of William Chrisman Swope Memorial chapel and James Chrisman Memorial Organ." Okay. So I get out, I read these plaques and I hop back in the car and I say, "there was just a chapel here. It's nothing, let's keep going." Right.

00:06:07 So we drive a little further on the grounds of the campus and I pull over, we get out of the car and we're walking around and I am feeling it as if a theft or an alleged theft was happening. What were you picking up on? I was feeling someone with really heavy breathing and I kept hearing the words "bleeding out." "I'm bleeding out." Oh, wow. Yeah. It was really creepy. Goodness. Yeah. I was channeling someone who was in the process of dying. Wow. That's crazy. I was feeling water, water, dirty water, dirty water. Well, that's interesting because there's no water or pond or anything near. Yeah. You would have to walk down a hill or over a hill to see the water. How interesting. Oh yeah. And I was seeing a cook making bread, like a cook in the kitchen, an old fashioned cook. Great. Yeah. I remember you saying that. Yeah. And I think the last notable impression I was getting was a group of anxious women. I was seeing in my mind's eye, the scene from *Gone with the Wind* where the women are reading Charles Dickens and you can just see their eyes and they're like looking at the clock and then they're looking around and they were like, anxious. "Chapter One, I was born. I will start at the beginning of my life..." That's the worst. I think it's *David Copperfield* that they're reading. Anyway. So very interesting. So we were getting these impressions and as always, we had no idea what any of them meant until we went into our research. So who are these people? Who are the Swopes? Let's begin with the matriarch of the family, Maggie. I love my Maggie. Margaret (Maggie) Chrisman Swope. We're going to call her Maggie. She was the mother and the matriarch of the family. Uh, we've already read, we learned about her through that plaque where she erected this chapel for her son. Now Maggie's husband, her beloved Logan Swope, died in 1900. He was a successful banker. He made millions in real estate in the Kansas City, Missouri area. Now the Swopes had a mansion on Pleasant Street in Independence. It had a long winding driveway that was paved. Wow. Yeah.

00:08:27 Which at the time was notable. How long was it? Didn't you say it was like a city block long, nearly a city block long? I know that must have felt really extravagant. They had a complete ballroom on the third floor that had a platform for the musicians to play. And also it had modern amenities that were not common at the time. Like electric lights, indoor plumbing. That is major for sure. They even had a telephone. Right? So this was, like, a cutting edge mansion, a game changer. Totally. Now it was here in this mansion on Pleasant Street that the entire Swope family would become gravely ill during 1909. Oh my God. And some of them would die.

00:09:19 It's heartbreaking. I love them all. So let's talk about who William Chrisman Swope is.

00:09:27 He was the first child to survive of Logan and Maggie's. And Maggie just doted on her boy. Chrisman, he did not want to be far away from home and was really a momma's boy. He loved his mother and the farthest he ever went from home was when he attended college at Westminster in Fulton, Missouri, where we were. He was said to be sickly. Now we can't find

any documentation on what exactly that means. Just that he was a sickly boy and young man. So he wasn't really strong though. There's no formal diagnosis as far as we could find. Gotcha. And we already know from the plaque at the Westminster College Memorial that he died in 1909 at the age of 30. I know. Poor kid. Does he have any brothers or sisters to speak of?

00:10:17 He does actually. He has a lot of brothers and sisters, but right after him was his sister Frances. Now Frances Swope was her mother's confidant and friend. She was known to be a beauty of a woman. And she was also strong-willed, proud and stubborn. Hmm. So she's a chip off the old Maggie block. It would, it would appear so now. But Maggie relied on her a lot because she was such a strong, independent woman. Maggie could rely on her oldest daughter to keep things running smoothly. Yes. There's a parallel. She could rely on Frances for matters regarding the family and the estate there. That was Frances. Sure. So she and her mother got along always. They were like besties for evs. No, not for evs because Frances actually met a charming young doctor whom she would eventually marry and her mother never approved.

00:11:14 I can tell you right now. If I brought a doctor home to mom, she'd be like, "Oh, let me get you something to drink. Please sit..." He'll come up again. Don't worry. Yes. But that caused a rift in the family. So Frances and Chrisman had a brother Thomas. Now Thomas was known as Tom Jr. because he was named after an uncle, Colonel Tom. Okay. But, um, Thomas was the third child to survive of Logan and Maggie's, but interestingly, he was kind of an adventurer. It seems he moved out to Nevada and was a miner. Wow. Except that he had a terrible tragedy, There was a mining accident and his right arm was mangled in machinery. Terrible. Right? So after that mishap, he came home to live in the mansion. They had a sister, Lucy Lee. So Lucy Lee Swope was kind of a celebrity of her day. She was wealthy of course, but beautiful and worldly. And at the time our story takes place in 1909 she was off studying in Paris. What an exciting place to be. Now, there was also a daughter Maggie, but we're going to call her Maggie Jr because, of course, her mother's name is Maggie. She was the third surviving daughter and she was around 20 or 21. And the last two girls: Stella was 15 and Sarah, 13. That was the entire Swope brood. Is there anyone else living in the mansion? There is, in fact. Remember I mentioned Colonel Tom, the uncle? Well, he lives there too. Now, I love him so much. I swear. He's my soulmate. Why don't you tell us a little bit about Colonel Tom? Cause I love him.

00:12:51 You are so crushing right now. First of all, he's 82. I like them older. I feel a little uncomfortable being in the room. In 1909, he was 82 years old and he had just given up drinking. He was a heavy drinker his entire life. And he was like, you know what? Not so much. I'm going to slow it down. I'm going to reel it in, in my eighties. So he also swore a lot, which makes me happy inside just to think of this like, old, crotchety, foul-mouthed man. And he lives in the mansion on the second floor suite and people can hear him swearing through the door. He'll be like, "SON OF A GUN" but like swearing. This is really funny. Was he wealthy because he was a Swope ,or was he wealthy in his own right?

00:13:36 This man was wealthy in his own right. And he was the kindest. When you think of wealthy, you think of Scrooge, right? Like Scrooge or the Stock family. Complete opposite. When you say Stock family, you're talking about the Stocks out of Michigan... Hillsdale, Michigan. Okay. Right. Nothing like the Stocks. Like the exact opposite. He was a philanthropist, and his special causes that he really threw his money at: He donated to women with children who had less means. Another passion of his was animals. So he donated money and land to a zoo. He donated land for a hospital and a park, a huge park.

00:14:19 There is a Swope Park in Kansas City, Missouri. The thing about him was that he didn't take himself too seriously. Even when he was old and crotchety, he was still really sweet and really generous. So there's a great anecdote in the book where he's walking around town, like, "I'm an idiot," like literally. And a little kid, a boy heard him and he was like, "Sir, you're not an idiot. You're the smartest man I know. And you're super rich." And he's like, "Anyone can do this. I just bought land cheap and sold it for high money." He's like, "You can do it too." It's the cutest thing in the world. So did he ever marry? He did not. He was living as a single bachelor. See he's eligible. And he was living in these gorgeous hotels until he got sick. And then he moved into the mansion. Probably, I think it was like a few years before things went down. Okay. So Colonel Tom is the old uncle and he lives in the mansion on Pleasant Street with the rest of the Swopes and he's kind of crotchety and he's swearing. And he is, uh, he has an entire second floor suite to himself. Does anyone else live there with him? Well, he has a nurse that takes care of him that also lives in the house.

00:15:28 Nurse Keller. Yes. And we'll talk more about Nurse Keller and her role. I'm also a big fan of hers as well. So another, there was another long-term guest though that spent a lot of time in the mansion. He is also family. It's Colonel Tom and his brother Logan's cousin Moss. His name is James Moss Hunston, but we're just going to call him Moss. And he, Jennifer, is he important to the story? Well, first of all, he was the sweetest, most cuddliest man ever. He looked like Santa Claus and he would walk around town and really do up that image for the kids. And they'd be like Santa! and he'd be like, Ho! Ho! Ho! Really sweet. There's not a person that said anything bad about him. I know. But he was also a really close confidant of Colonel Tom's and like his bestie. He was also the executor of Colonel Tom's estate. Ah, interesting. And everyone knew it. Like Colonel Tom having millions and no kids.

00:16:26 Everyone knew. Oh, that's a good point. Right? The question is: Who's going to get his money? Exactly. When he's 82 and he's sick. Right. So it was on Colonel Tom's mind a lot during this time, especially because he gave up drinking, had nothing else to do but think about, think about the future when he's gone. Exactly. Wow. Okay. Okay. Very interesting. There were some other people too who lived in the mansion. Well they lived on the grounds. So there's a cook and the cook's two children, there was a man servant, they called them, and they had a cabin on the grounds. They did not have plumbing, but they had an outhouse. They had their own cabins on the grounds, but away from the house.

00:17:08 Okay. Gotcha. Gotcha. So we have this cast of characters, Maggie and all of her children. We have Colonel Tom in the mansion on the second floor. And then we have people like nurse Keller who attends to Colonel Tom. We have Moss who's a frequent visitor because he's close to Colonel Tom. And then we have the staff. Right. Also on the grounds. And every single one of these people are in danger. Oh my gosh. Late in 1909. Wow. Okay. Let's just go right there. You brought it there. Let's do it. Okay. What is the first sign there's a problem? Okay. So remember Frances? Yes. The oldest daughter of Maggie. Well, Frances is suddenly dating this young doctor. You said that. And mama don't like him. Okay.

00:18:04 First, stop. Hot tip. If your momma don't like him, there is a problem. Thank you for that PSA. Yes. So now tell me, what is it that Maggie is upset about? Dr. Hyde was his name. And apparently he had been accused of swindling two single ladies out of some money. Yes. Prior to hooking up with Frances. How did he come about swindling this money? So he was actually, he had proposed to them. They were engaged and then he, like, borrowed money. And

then he was out of there. He was like the original ghoster. Right. For the first one, he borrowed \$2,200. That's a lot. It's a lot today. And then the second one, he quote unquote borrowed \$4,000 and then was like, "later!" Exactly. So, people knew about this. This was big news. And after Frances and Dr. Hyde announced their engagement, those two ladies brought suit and sued the doctor.

00:19:07 Hey, Maggie. I'm with you girl. You must've flipped your shit. Yeah. Well we don't know. It was settled out of court. So there was some settlement. All of this is in the papers by the way. Oh yeah, because this is high society in Kansas city. The Kardashians of the day. People are writing about these people. Right. Where they're going, where they're traveling. And apparently this was scary.

00:19:29 What else do we know about Dr. Hyde? Dr. Hyde apparently was handsome. Well, you could see how he would be charming these rich ladies. And he was, like, six foot one. He had, he was "well-built" (that's what the book says, not me). And he was really handsome. And apparently, ahead of his time. He was a forward thinker. He had a lab in his office where he was on the cutting edge of developing medicines and vaccines for problem diseases at the time.

00:19:58 Hmm. Interesting. Um, in 1905, he actually became surgeon to the Kansas City police. Oh, that's cool. Except he was fired two years later. Oh weird. That is weird. This is kind of weird... but I guess at the time it wouldn't have been weird: He was known to recite Bible passages and Shakespeare. Like, legit, that is weird. I'd be like, yeah, no, not so much. I think he was trying to show that he was a learned man. Right. Do we know anything about his background? Like where he came from?

00:20:27 Yes, he was, he was the son of a minister, a Baptist minister. He was born into a family of modest means. And he was a scrapper, worked his way up. Well, he had, he would have had to have worked hard to become a doctor. Mm. Right. That's right. So did Maggie ever warm up to him?

00:20:48 Well, yes and no. She never liked him. However, do you remember Tom Junior's mishap in Nevada that I was talking about? If I ever lose an arm and you call it a "mishap" I'm going to be so mad at you. You mean that tragic life changing event that nearly killed Tom Jr.? Yes. Right. Well, when he came back, and he had his "arm issue"? Yeah. That, you know, that bummer, bummer of an arm issue, it was Dr. Hyde, Frances' husband. That would actually, he took really good care of his brother-in-law, Tom Jr. And Maggie saw the care that he showed him. And so she warmed up a little bit, but she still never liked him. But it was somewhat redeeming. I got it. I got it. Bring me to late in the year of 1909. Okay. We're at the mansion. Tell me what's going on. Okay. so it's 1909. We're in Independence, Missouri at the mansion on Pleasant Street. Dr. Hyde and his wife Frances are actually living in Kansas City in a house that was bought for them by Uncle Tom. The good old Uncle Tom. Yeah. Well, not really. He's crotchety and off-putting yeah. That's a really nice wedding gift. Lucy Lee, the daughter, is living in Paris, studying, and Maggie is in her mansion with her children: Chrisman, Tom Jr., who had had the arm incident, Maggie, Jr., and Stella and Sarah, her younger daughters. Now Colonel Tom is in his second floor suite. He rarely leaves his room by now. Like he's pretty much a recluse.

00:22:27 Right. And if he does leave, it's like to go on a buggy ride with Nurse Keller. Right. Right. Also cousin Moss is staying in the mansion as well. Cousin Moss being close friends with Colonel Tom, and also the executor of his will. Great guy to have around. He's just a sweet man.

Right? So Jennifer. Yeah? Uncle Tom. Yes? He buys the Hydes a house. He does. He does. But that's really unusual for him because he's said not to really like the kids. Oh yeah. Right. Yeah. He kind of feels like Maggie's kids are kind of spoiled and entitled. Exactly. So it was kind of, it was quite a surprise that he would spend money on a house for Frances and her new husband, especially because no one really liked Hyde.

00:23:17 Right. That's true. They were on team Maggie. So why? How did it come to be that he would spend his money, his money on Frances and her new husband? Well, here's the thing. Colonel Tom, like we said, was crotchety. He and foul mouthed and kind of depressed at this point and would be a bummer to be around. He, like you just said, did not think highly of his nieces. And he thought they were rich and spoiled and he lives in the house and nobody ever visits him. Nobody comes and visits him. So one of the people, strangely, or coincidentally, maybe, that comes and spends some time with Colonel Tom after their Sunday dinners is Frances' husband Dr. Hyde. He makes it a point to go up to the second floor suite and spend time with uncle Colonel Tom. Oh, that's a little weird. What do they have in common? Well, you know, they would both have been educated men. Nobody knows what they talked about, but it was probably the news of the day, business dealings, literature.

00:24:23 And also because you have Colonel Tom who was an elderly man with all of these physical issues, Dr. Hyde would have been a natural person to talk to about those because he's a doctor. Right. And it was said that Colonel Tom would tell anyone who listened about his aches and pains. Right. So, uh, I would say that it, it, it occurs to me that Dr. Hyde would become sort of a personal physician and friend and confidant to Colonel Tom. So he would spend a lot of time with him and maybe that's why he was so generous and bought them a house. You know what else he was probably talking about? What?

00:25:00 Because during this time, Colonel Tom was very vocal about wanting to change his will. Oh yes. Change his will. Explain. Okay. So, like, right now, and as well after he passes, Maggie's kids who aren't spending time with him (and they live in the same frigging house). Maggie's kids are going to be the ones to inherit his millions. So it's going to be split evenly amongst all Maggie's children? Exactly. Right. And so Colonel Tom, he's, he's not feeling that anymore. Oh, well, I don't blame him. Nobody's coming to visit him. It's true. So what does he want to do with his millions instead of giving it to his nieces? Well, he has been heard discussing how he wants to leave his money to the needy people of Kansas City. And the dilemma is, and why he keeps having conversations about it, is because he wants the money to go directly to the poor that need it and not to special interests or politicians. Oh. He's like problem solving with people.

00:25:58 He wants to cut out the middleman, cut out the red tape, and give it directly to the people. Right. Exactly. Right. I know he's an amazing man. Okay. Sure. Crotchety, depressed, foul mouthed. But hey. Well, the family is hearing him because he's loud and brash. The family's hearing him, like, talk about this again and again... with Moss, I'm assuming. He's, he's talking about it with Hyde. Well, yeah. Who else is visiting him? And so Moss, as the executor of his estate, would have been responsible for making these changes and making sure that the money is donated the way Colonel Tom wished, correct? That's exactly it. Okay.

00:26:35 So during September of 1909 Tom's assistant, Mr. Spangler, was coming to the house like two to three times a week. Okay. Hold on. You, we just, we just introduced a brand new character. Okay. So Mr. Spangler is Colonel Tom's personal assistant for business. Gotcha.

And instead of... because Colonel Tom is sick.... Yeah.... He doesn't go to the office anymore. Yeah. Or leaves his room anymore. He had, like, this fainting spell in the library and that was the last time he left his room. Okay. So he's really sick. So Mr. Spangler is coming to the house. Oh, that makes sense, to do his business. All right. So his assistant, Mr. Spangler, is at the house in September 1909. Exactly. What happens?

00:27:17 Well, someone, a visitor of the house (and the book doesn't report who) says that they had heard Uncle Tom, Colonel Uncle Tom, have a conversation with Mr. Spangler. Do you want me to read what he said? Oh please. This is the quote from the book, from Fowler's book *Deaths on Pleasant Street*. He said, "I'm rich. I've got more money than I know what to do with. And I would like to do something for the poor people of Kansas City. The rich can take care of themselves. I have no patience with them anyhow, but the poor people, the laboring people of Kansas City, I feel that I owe more to them than anybody else. I will draw a new will. I'd like to leave most of my estate to the poor of Kansas City." I love this man so much. It gives me goosebumps. It's super sweet.

00:28:01 Okay. So he's talking about this in September. Now, where do we go from there, Jill? Jennifer? Yes. Not too long after that, the angel of death would be visiting the Swope family mansion. No! October, 1909. Okay. So on this Friday evening, it's 5:30 and cousin Moss is alone in the dining room of the mansion. And he's having supper because he lives there. And as he eats, he sees Nurse Keller walk past the doorway. And so he invites her to come and sit and have dinner with him. Cousin Moss is so sweet because she's like the help. Exactly. And he is a Swope and he's like, Hey, come on and join me for dinner. Yeah. So as the two sit, eating together, Moss suddenly says, "Things look so queer. I'm feeling dizzy." And he grabs a glass of water off the table, but his hand is shaking so violently that the water is splashing out all over the place. Moss looks at nurse Keller and says, "What do you think is happening to me? Do you suppose I'm sick? I don't want to be sick." Geez. So nurse Keller rushes over to him because he does not look well. Maggie Junior from elsewhere in the house hears the commotion. And she runs to help the nurse. Right. And Nurse Keller takes control of the situation. She has him moved to the library sofa, Maggie Junior runs upstairs and she's like, oh my gosh, cousin Moss is sick! Right? Right. So Maggie immediately acts. She calls their family doctor Dr. Twyman, George Twyman, he's the family doctor. She calls him and says, you need to come quickly. Moss is in trouble. But she also calls her son-in-law as support because he's a doctor, Dr. Hyde, Frances' husband. Exactly.

00:29:48 And Maggie doesn't fool around, like, things are going down. She's all at 11. She goes right for it. She's, like, all hands on deck, cousin Moss needs us. We are in crisis. Right. So Dr. Twyman, the family physician, arrives on the scene with his son, Elmer, who's also a physician. So the two of them are doctors. Moss had been vomiting. And, uh, Dr. Twyman said that the condition was apoplexy, which I had to look up. Tell me about it. Apoplexy. According to dictionary.com is unconsciousness or incapacity resulting from a cerebral hemorrhage or stroke. Now, during these times, uh, when someone was suffering from this, doctors would routinely bleed the patient to reduce pressure on the brain. Wow. Yeah. I mean, they didn't have really sophisticated methods of treatment at the time. You can imagine. 1909. All right. So soon Dr. Hyde also arrived. Three physicians there, right? I mean, you couldn't do better. You couldn't do better. But here's the thing. So remember Dr. Hyde is there as a support. He is not officially the doctor who's treating Moss. Dr. Twyman is a family doctor.

00:31:00 Right. At best, he would be assisting, you know, so being the support crew, but he does something very odd. Tell me what he does. He goes into Dr. Twyman's medical bag and he pulls out, on his own, a scalpel and he proceeds to cut and bleed Moss. Timeout. So this man has been called to a family emergency. To assist. Doesn't bring his own bag. Doesn't appear that he did. Yeah. I don't know where he thought he was going. Yeah. Okay. Went into somebody else's bag. Right. The doctor's. Yes. Right. Here's the line. And there, he went right over it. And so, he just, he started bleeding him. Um, oh my God. Now again, this was not uncommon. This was a treatment for this apoplexy. Not his job. Right. Okay. So there's apparently panic now in the house, which you could imagine. Sure. Colonel Tom is in his suite yelling. Because he knows something's going on and he's just yelling.

00:31:50 I love that so much. And again, not helpful and kind of crazy and eccentric but fun. I mean like, I love him. Relax, relax. Moss is being bled in the library and he's grunting and he's in pain and it's just a terrible sight. Well, the noises that he's making... his grunting is annoying Dr. Hyde. Oh my God. So he tells Nurse Keller to hold his mouth shut. Oh my God. He yelled at her to hold it closed. He's like, hold his mouth shut. I can't deal with this. I can't deal with the noises he's making. And she physically can't because of the state that he's in. And then... so he, Hyde, gets really upset and starts yelling at Nurse Keller. Like, are you kidding? I'm giving you one job. And then Frances overhears it. And she's like, oh dear, let me see if I can help... to, to like diffuse the situation.

00:32:45 So now these two women are holding, holding his jaw shut is the way it's described. Okay. So after a pint of blood has been taken from Moss, Dr. Twyman, the family physician, the one in charge, believed that it was enough to reduce the pressure. And he said, all right, stop bleeding him now. But Dr. Hyde continued to drain Moss' blood. Um, that's insane. What was the reaction from other people in the room? People were pleading with Dr. Hyde to stop bleeding Moss. Oh my God. Finally, when he stopped the bleeding Nurse Keller measured six cups of blood, which is three pints, which is three times the amount suggested in treatment.

00:33:37 Soon after, poor sweet Moss passed away. And the last thing he said was, "I'd rather be dead than to be sick and a burden to all of you." Oh, I love him so much. Poor Moss. Poor Moss. So, so I imagine the entire household is in shock. Now I'm in shock. This is heartbreaking. Nurse Keller has a lot to do. Right? She's a nurse at the house. She's preparing the body to go to the mortuary. She's cleaning it off. She was just having dinner with him!

00:34:15 As it happens, Dr. Hyde walks up to Nurse Keller. Okay. And he's like, oh, oh, that Moss. He was a sweet old man. So sorry about what happened. Hey, can you do me a favor? Let me refer to the book. So Hyde steps in and he starts off on a note of commiseration. He says, "Isn't this awful." He offered a few words about Moss and his many fine qualities, smiled and got to the point. "I want you to do something for me tomorrow." He says to nurse Keller, "No, I'm not a businessman, but I know I can be. Now that this man Moss has gone, he was the one to administer Colonel Swope's will. I want you, because you have influence with the old man, I want you to suggest me in his stead." What did Nurse Keller say to that? She said, "Dr. Hyde, I came for the care of Colonel Swope in a purely professional way. And the moment I begin to interfere with his private affairs, I'm overstepping my bounds." Ooh girl. She said that to a doctor, a rich doctor.

00:35:28 Wow. Okay. So poor Moss. Poor Moss is gone. He's deceased. And that was on Friday, October 1st, 1909. So let's take us to the very next day. The next day. We already know

that Dr. Hyde has suggested to Nurse Keller that he should be the one to be the executor of Colonel Tom's estate... and this is late in the day, like, this is late, 20 minutes after poor Moss's horrific death. Right. But it's late at night at this point, like after Moss dies, so Hyde and his wife spend the night at the mansion. Hmm, good point. Good point. So it's Saturday, Saturday morning, next day. So Nurse Keller told Colonel Tom what had happened. He was beside himself. Would he be comforted by anybody? He refused all visitors. Um, but one person weaseled his way in, well... Dr. Hyde walked up to Nurse Keller again and he's like, I'm family. I don't care. I'm going to pay him a visit

00:36:27 Right. And Nurse Keller is like, he doesn't want to see anybody. Right. She's like, oh, sorry, Boo. And then he's like, really? Colonel Tom, I'm here! I'm Hyde! I want to see you! and Colonel Tom lets him in. Man. So they talk for about 30 minutes. The only other person that Colonel Tom would speak with that day was his assistant. Remember Mr. Spangler? Later Spangler would testify that Colonel Tom told him that he would be in the office on Monday and Tuesday. He planned to go in on Monday and spend the night and stay there on Tuesday all day to get his affairs in order. He hadn't been in the office for seven years. Right. This is a big deal. It's huge. It's like Grandpa Joe getting out of bed in Willy Wonka. Seriously, it's a big deal. It's a huge deal.

00:37:10 He plans on going on Monday and Tuesday to get his affairs in order. So he tells Spangler, and this is what Spangler would later testify to. He said, "Spangler, I want you to put your affairs in such a shape so that you can be with me all the time" (like on Monday and Tuesday). "You see, I am very weak, man. And I can't get around. I'll need you with me all the time, because I have lots of things to go over." Now, Spangler believed that Colonel Tom was planning on changing his will to eliminate all the Swope children from his will.

00:37:39 Because that's what he's been talking about for a long time. Yes. And now his trusted friend, sweet Moss, has just passed away. The executor of his estate is gone. Right? So he knows that Moss faithfully would have done what he wanted. But now that Moss is gone, he has to put that shit in writing. Right.

00:37:57 So he's sad. He is on it. So what happened, did he get it done, Jill? He would never make it to the office on Monday. What happened? Sunday, October 3rd, 1909, nurse Keller awakes before dawn. As always, she cleans and prepares herself for her day's work assisting Colonel Tom. Sure. She gave him his morning bath. She served him his breakfast. And as he was settled and enjoying his breakfast, she went to the dining room to have her breakfast with members of the family. Now, remember the Hydres are there? Yes. They had stayed. Yes. And so Dr. Hyde approaches nurse Keller. Jesus.

00:38:34 And you imagine like, I can just see her rolling her eyes, like, this fuck. You know what I mean? So he says, "Nurse Keller has Colonel Tom already had his breakfast?" and she says, "Why, he's eating it now." Yes. And he says, "Oh, come with me. I have a digestive medicine that I promised him."

00:38:53 As they're walking away from the table, Maggie would later testify as well as nurse Keller that Dr. Hyde says, "Hey, did you talk to him about what I asked you to talk to him about?" No way! Swear. And she's like, "Yeah, no. I told you I wouldn't. And so, no I didn't." So that conversation's happening as they're walking, the quote unquote "digestive medicine" to Colonel Tom. 8:00: Dr. Hyde gives nurse Keller a capsule of a white powder to administer to Colonel Tom, reportedly to help with his digestion. 8:30: (30 minutes later) Colonel Tom takes the pill and

settles into bed reading the newspaper. 20 minutes later, 8:50, horrible sounds now are coming from the Colonel's room and he begins convulsing. 8:55: Dr. Hyde determines that the Colonel is suffering from apoplexy, the same thing that cousin Moss just passed from. That's what he said. And this sounds very different. 9:00: The convulsions end but the Colonel's pulse is beating so rapidly and he's dry heaving and semi-conscious. 9:05: Colonel Tom comes to and he says, "Oh my God, I wish I were dead. I wish I had not taken that medicine." 9:15: Dr. Hyde orders nurse Keller to inject strychnine into Colonel Tom as a stimulant to help his heart. 9:40: nurse Keller is forced to give Colonel Thomas a second shot of strychnine. 10:00: nurse Keller is forced to give a third injection and refuses to administer anymore, because at this point she's like, this is not right. His pulse is racing. You have me keep giving him this medicine to quicken his pulse. At 2:00-2:30: Colonel Tom is completely unconscious. Now his legs are turning blue. Nurse Keller checks his eyes for any signs of life and she finds none. Colonel Tom remains in a coma for the rest of the day. And then at nightfall near 7:15 or so, Colonel Tom passes away. Sad. So what happened with nurse Keller at that point?

00:40:47 Well, now that Colonel Tom's gone, that was her charge. She has nothing to do there. So she says goodbye and she leaves the family. Oh my gosh. Let me back up a bit. I have to tell you this. So you know how Hyde comes over to help Moss? Right? Because Maggie calls him frantically, it's an emergency. You need to come. So when he arrives, either before or after he goes inside Dr. Twyman's bag to steal the scalpel to bleed Moss, he's like, "Oh, Hey Guys, I have this jug of water with me and typhoid, it's like a thing around here. So I need you guys to all drink from this water." And every time he came to the house for Sunday dinners, after that, or any kind of occasion, he would either bring his own water or leave distilled water behind for him to drink out of. Okay. So I know it seems pretty random for him to do that, but, um, in his defense, there was a typhoid outbreak in the area. In fact, 600 people in the Kansas City, Missouri area were stricken with the sickness. Now, is that a lot? Yeah, it is a lot. Comparatively speaking, Kansas city, Kansas only had 25 infections. Whereas you said Kansas City, Missouri had 600. So that's a lot.

00:41:56 Typhoid or typhoid fever is a bacterial infection that can lead to a high fever, diarrhea, vomiting. Sounds pleasant. Well, here's the thing: they [the symptoms] vary from mild to really, really severe. Like COVID-19. It would appear. They begin six to 30 days after exposure. So it's not the kind of thing where you're going to be sick overnight after being exposed to typhoid. It's not like food poisoning. Right. Exactly. And the risk of death is about 20% without treatment. 20% sounds kind of low. But if you think about it, it's like a fifth of people who get it, and aren't treated, are going to die. And they said that in armies, who are out at war, more of them died from typhoid than from combat. So the infection is often passed on through contaminated food or contaminated water. Hence the jug of water that Dr. Hyde is bringing into the house. Right. If you have, if you live in, a sanitized hygienic, sort of situation...

00:42:56 Which Maggie does... state of the art. She has indoor plumbing. Right, right, right. See, it often spreads in environments where human feces come into contact with food or drinking water. Right. That is not the mansion. Like you said, they have state-of-the-art facilities. Hyde comes into the mansion with his jug of water. And he's like, "Y'all need to start drinking out of my jug of water because you guys could be potentially drinking contaminated water." And what does Maggie say to that? She is pissed. First of all, it's insulting. Like, "Hey, this is my house. Look around. Like, you are in my mansion and you've been drinking my water. You

commented about how good my water tastes. And now you're coming in with your stupid jug of distilled nasty water." So she was annoyed and confused by it. And again, it's not something that goes away. He keeps using this jug and asks that the servants only give him water from the jug. It's crazy. So let's move to the following month. Now let's fast forward to November. Past Thanksgiving. So it's the holidays.

00:43:56 It is. It's November 29th, 1909. And there are signs of illness (Surprise, Surprise) within the entire family and the entire mansion. Tell me. What are the first signs? Maggie Jr., one of the daughters, uh, has to cancel a shopping trip to Kansas City because she is reportedly feeling unwell with fever and aches. And you know, that has to be bad if you're canceling your shopping trip. No kidding. And so Dr. Twyman, the family doctor, is called, but also Chrisman, the oldest brother.... He starts unwell too. Um, but he still goes to church on Sunday. So he's, like, unwell, but not definitely ill. Right. And he seemed to have been doing better, but by Wednesday he was bedridden. So he got worse. Yeah. Within a few days, Dr. Twyman confirms that members of the family and the household have contracted typhoid. Maybe Dr. Hyde was psychic. Stop it. Where was Maggie? Okay.

00:44:58 So Maggie... that Sunday, she goes to Chicago and Chrisman, again, he's not feeling a hundred percent and Maggie doesn't want to go. So Chrisman is taking Maggie to the train station in the buggy and he's like, "Mom, I'm fine. Go have fun. Don't worry about me. I'm going to church and everything. It's going to be fine. Don't worry." Because Chrisman was like, no, go and have fun. You worry too much about us. She went to Chicago.

00:45:23 Well, it's a week later. She's frantically called back and she's told you need to come back home. Your family is sick. Oh my gosh. So December 5th, she returns. Her cousin Stewart Fleming picks her up from the train station because everyone else in the house is sick. Yeah. As they come back to the house, he kind of fills her in on what's happening. She arrives and her mansion is now a hospital. Oh my God. Literally. The family has employed five extra nurses. Oh my God. And they're tending to all of the sick in this mansion. Who's tending to them? The nurses, Dr. Twyman and Dr. Hyde are both treating patients. Now, Dr. Twyman, remember, he is a physician in charge. It's his job, literally, to take care of this family. Dr. Hyde, however, was in charge of the nursing staff, scheduling, giving them orders, telling them what medications to administer. At 3:00 PM, the day of Maggie's return, that's when things start to fall completely apart. How does it get worse? Well, Chrisman... his temperature spikes. Frances his sister, Mrs. Hyde, asks nurse Anna to give Chrisman a cool bath. Before Frances leaves the room, Dr. Hyde tells nurse Anna, not to forget to give Chrisman his "capsule". Wow. 20 minutes later, Stewart Fleming, the cousin who picked up Maggie from the train station, arrives in Chrisman's room, just as nurse Anna was finishing up and Chrisman begins convulsing. Oh my God. His body becomes stiff and his extremities are flailing about. So basically he's having a seizure.

00:47:09 For 20 minutes. This grand mall style seizure is lasting 20 minutes. Now Dr. Hyde is called into the room and he announces that it's meningitis brought on by the typhoid. How does that even make sense? Oh, Stewart questioned Dr. Hyde as to meningitis, like even the people, the nonmedical people, were like, "What? Meningitis?" And nurse Ana... when nurse Anna was taking care of Chrisman, she noticed Dr. Hyde preparing nitroglycerin with dirty water. He was preparing a nitroglycerin shot for Chrisman with dirty water left over from his morning bath, when there was sterile water on the dresser nearby. That is so aggravating and sadistic. Like what a sick fuck. Oh, sorry.

00:48:01 Poor Chrisman has fits of delirium. He's shouting. He's hitting himself. He's going rigid. They have to tie him up. Oh God, this is horrific. Do they finally call Dr. Twyman? My God. Yeah. They call Dr. Twyman and he walks in the room and he's like, "Whoa!" Oh my God. He takes charge of the situation. And then Chrisman starts to rally. And Anna was so excited. So he's getting better. Okay, he's stabilized. He's doing better. His pulse is right on. And she tells Dr. Hyde because she's excited. She's like, "You know how bad he was. Now, he's getting better!"

00:48:35 Right. Right. And at the time, Dr. Twyman is like, "This isn't meningitis." God. No. So then what happens? Apparently Twyman takes issue with Dr. Hyde's choice of medication. And he tells Dr. Hyde to stop using strychnine and stay away from my patient. But it's not enough. It's not enough. Poor Chrisman passes away. On Monday night at 9:50 PM. It would be later testified by one of the nurses that they saw Dr. Hyde in Chrisman's room before he took, uh, his sharp decline.

00:49:08 Alright. So nurse Keller, we need her back. So, see, the thing is, is that these people, like I said before, they are high society. They are the Kardashians of their day. And so news of the typhoid in the Swope household is all over the newspapers. So nurse Keller's reading this and she's like, they need me. And she loves the family. So she arrives back at the mansion to work. To work. To help. To help, right, with all of the people, all of the family members and the staff who are in the house. And are all sick with typhoid, right. But nurse Keller gets there and she knows what's going on. So she organizes all of the nurses and says, "Look, we all know that Dr. Hyde is behind this. And no one of us can come out and be believable. We all have to stand together and say, we will not stand for Dr. Hyde treating this family anymore. And if you, Dr. Twyman continue to allow him to treat the family. We're all walking. We're all walking out and that's going to be in the papers."

00:50:13 Because she believes from Hyde's suspicious behavior and how the people are getting sick around him, that he is a hundred percent responsible. So Dr. Twyman, what does he do? Well, first he's like, "You girls just need to calm down. You're hysterical." Yeah. Literally, he's like, "Y'all, let's bring it down a notch. Let's bring it down a notch." And she's like, "No!" Like, "We're all walking." Yeah, for sure. So you deal with that. So Dr. Twyman is like, I don't want to fucking deal with this. And he goes home for the night and he makes a nighttime phone call to Maggie. He's like, "Mrs. Swope, we have a situation I would like to talk to you about." And Maggie's like, "Okay, come over now." Because Maggie's not playing. She doesn't play. She's not playing. She's like, "You got something to say, come on over." They walk into the library. Maggie turns on the lights. She sits down. And in my mind, for me, in the book, it really reminds me of a scene from, like, The Crown where like the queen's sitting down and someone's standing in front of her, addressing her and Twyman tells her what the nurses had told him. And that they believe a hundred percent that Hyde is the reason why her family is getting sick and dying. What does Maggie say? Maggie says, "Do what you have to do to prove it."

00:51:23 Wow. So Dr. Twyman actually starts to investigate the family's deaths with Maggie's blessing. He recruits the attorney Paxton. Oh. And what they do is they find a notable surgeon in the Chicagoland area, who we will have more about in the next episode, to autopsy the bodies. But there's something else. There's another person outside of the Swope family who is also suspicious of Dr. Hyde. You are absolutely right. Who is that, Jill? That is Dr. Edward Stewart. Who is he? Well, Dr. Edward Stewart... Remember how we were talking about that

Hyde had a laboratory in his office so he can be on the cutting edge, studying vaccines? Well, Dr. Stewart is a bacteriologist. Yes. So he was actually the one to give vials of different types of bacterias to Dr. Hyde to start his lab. Oh, so a friend of his. Friend. Colleague. And he, too, was reading in the papers about the strange sickness at the Swope place. And again, you wouldn't imagine that typhoid would break out in a mansion. Right. This is a poor person's disease. Exactly. Interesting. So he cannot help but be suspicious. Oh my God. He cannot shake the feeling. He's, like, waking up in the morning. He's like, I just can't. He's like, I got to check on what's going on with this. What does he do? So, just by chance, Hyde leaves town. So he goes to Dr. Hyde's office and he talks to the secretary. He's like, "Hey, um, I forgot something in there. And I'm wondering if I can just go in and look at some of the germs that I had given Dr. Hyde, because my germs aren't doing well." The receptionist is like, "Yeah, go ahead. Don't worry about it, Dr. Stewart."

00:53:07 So he goes in and he checks all the vials and, sure enough, only one, he notices, has been tampered with. Which one? The typhoid germ. Wow. And actually he would later testify that enough of the typhoid germ was skimmed off to have vaccinated the entire population of Kansas City. So in other words, much, much more of the bacteria was taken out than would have been necessary for what Hyde told Dr. Stewart and others he was doing with the germ. Absolutely.

00:53:48 So now we have two parties, independent of each other, suspicious and investigating. And investigating. And we'll get into how they investigated in part two. And what ultimately happens to Dr. Hyde and the Swope family. I have so many questions right now. I need to know what happened to the Swopes. What happens to Hyde? Like, does he get his? I hope he gets locked up. You have to wait for episode two. Okay. All right. That's a bummer. But until then, check out our website, Common Mystics at commonmystics.net, check out our Facebook page and Insta account. You can listen to us on Amazon, Google Podcasts, Stitcher, Tuned In, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, where you can leave us a positive review so other people can find us. Yay. Thank you so much for listening, guys. Bye.