

Malevolent Maine

Episode 4: The Night Jean Massacre

Malevolent Maine is a horror podcast, and may contain material not suitable for all audiences. Listener discretion is advised.

An endless desert of sand and bone with some dark monolith on the horizon. The ghost of a girl lost on Maine's most popular river. And a tree said to house the spirit of a witch. These are some of the stories we're investigating for future episodes. If you're like us, you're ready to peer into the darkness and ask, "Who's there?". We appreciate that and all the support you've shown us by listening and downloading our show from your favorite podcast service. Because of you Malevolent Maine has reached an international audience. If you'd like to help us expand our research even further, visit us at patreon.com/malevolentmaine where you'll find exclusive content. We're working hard on our newest side project, The Black Tarot, and episode one should be out soon for all of our Patreons. Once again, that's patreon.com/malevolentmaine, for all of our exclusive content. If you've got a story that your friends and family don't believe, feel free to send it on to us. We believe you.

An odd commune on the outskirts of town. A bloody massacre. A mystery that seemingly has no answer. This is Malevolent Maine.

Guys, what was that?

I saw it with my own eyes

No, seriously, what was that?

It's just not scientifically possible.

I can't explain it.

Oh my God. Oh my God. Oh my God.

This stuff is wild, man. It's real wild.
But... what was that?

Heads up MMers, today's story is our darkest, most terrifying report yet. This one comes from Strong, ME, located in Franklin County. Strong is an old mill town on the banks of the Sandy River, and while only a few of the individuals involved are still alive to tell their story, the former sheriff of Strong was willing to share everything he remembers from the case. The incident, which came to be known as the Night Jean Massacre remains one of Maine's darkest moments.

It all started when the Happy Sun Folk moved to Strong in the spring of 1967. The Happy Sun Folk, or the HSF as they referred to themselves, were a communal living society. They lived on an old farm that their founder, Willem S. Fuller purchased. Their entire philosophy was living freely. They worked together to live off the land sharing whatever they grew or produced with one another. The HSF believed that everything physical was temporary and transient. It was the spirit or essence of a thing that was true. They were ostensibly a collective of artists, philosophers, and free thinkers, but what they really were was a cult.

Here's the former sheriff of Strong, Pat Sampson, talking about the HSF:

[Sampson] "The Happy Sun Folk worshiped Fuller. He was their father, their husband, their god. If he said jump, the HSF did. If he said fly, they'd do their damndest to do it."

They were tolerated by the people of Strong, but never really fit in. They mostly kept apart from the townsfolk, and in exchange they were allowed to live their hippie lifestyle up at their farm.

That all changed on the night of October 13, 1968. There were reports of screams coming from the HSF farm, which they had named Sunnyville. It wasn't that uncommon to hear screams though; the HSF was into primal scream therapy and other odd "rituals" that were seen from time to time by hunters and hikers who wandered a little too close to the farm by accident. These screams were different, however. They were more "painful" as the police reports indicated. They "sounded like someone was getting slaughtered," according to one witness.

Finally the police had enough of the complaints and drove up to Sunnyville just after 11 pm. Three police officers, Pat Sampson, then a deputy, and his two fellow officers, Bill Dempsey and Jimmy Coloumbe, drove up the long, winding gravel driveway and got out. The night was quiet. The whole farm had gone still. The farm itself was dark, not a soul in sight, but Sheriff Sampson said there was a weird smell in the air. It was like the smell that lingers after a fire or the smell after a lightning strike. It was like the very air itself had been burned.

The officers knew the layout of the farm; they had been out to Sunnyville a few times over the past year for various complaints. The Happy Sun Folk had always been friendly with the local police, so despite their eccentricities they had a fairly good working relationship with them. Sampson and his team weren't expecting a lot of trouble as they made their way to the big building, but the smell had set them on edge.

The big building was an old barn the HSF had converted into their church or meeting hall. There had once been big barn doors, but those had been torn out and replaced. Now a single door led inside. That door was locked and chained from the

outside, which was odd. To Sampson's eyes that meant someone had locked something or someone in the Big Building.

[Sampson] "All those noise complaints. The neighbors said they heard screaming. Well, that got me thinking that maybe someone was trapped inside."

The officers knocked a few times on the door to the Big Building, but no one answered. They inspected the rest of the farm - the old farmhouse, the tool shed, mess hall, and a dozen or some lean-to cabins that had been hastily erected. No one answered anywhere on the farm. In the end Sampson ordered Officer Dempsey to get the bolt cutters out of the back of the cruiser. They clipped the change, then the two of them kicked the door in.

On the inside, the Big Building looked like a typical church. There were rows of benches and a stage area at the back of the room. The benches had been pushed back to the walls from the center of the room. The smoldering remains of a bonfire lay in the center of the room. It had been quite large at one point, but it had all but gone out by the time the officers entered the Big Building. Wisps of smoke still hung in the air. The guttering fire threw off a ruddy red light, causing shadows to dance around the big room.

What the officers found was the most gruesome scene Sheriff Sampson had ever seen. We'll let him describe it. We have to warn you this is quite graphic, so our more sensitive readers may want to skip ahead to the next section.

[Sampson] "When we got up there, the farm was all quiet. It was just three of us, me, Bill Dempsey, and Jimmy Coloumbe. Jimmy was a rookie, just his first year on the force, and after what we saw...well, he didn't make it maybe another month before he up and moved to Florida. Said he got a better job opportunity, but we all knew the truth, after what we saw up at the farm, he just couldn't do it anymore. As for Bill, well... I guess I'll get to that in a bit.

"What I saw stays with me to this day. I'm 89 years old and I'll be the first to admit my memory ain't what it was, but this is something that's still just as clear as the day I saw it. The Happy Sun Folk were all in the meeting hall, all of them - we later confirmed that. Every single one of those hippies was locked in their own hall. Maybe that weird fire light made it worse, maybe that made it better, but I tell you, before we even saw the HSFers, I was already scared to the dickens."

The members of the Happy Sun Folk were scattered around the room like they had been tossed there by a strong wind. They had been torn apart. Sampson described it like a mean eating chicken wings, ripping the bones apart. The members of the commune had been torn limb from limb. Some one, or something, had torn the HSFers to shreds.

There was blood everywhere, up and down the walls, the floor was sticky with it. Flies had already started to settle down to feast on the grisly remains. And the smell. It was that same burnt ozone smell from outside, but mixed with blood. There was something swampy about it, that rotting smell of decaying organic matter. It smelled wrong; it smelled evil. And on the far wall someone had written in two words. They didn't make sense to Pat Sampson then, nor do they now.

Someone had written, 'Night Jean' in their own blood.

As the officers looked around at the carnage they suddenly heard a gasp from the corner. Deputy Coulombe nearly fired his gun, before Deputy Sampson stopped him. One of the HSFers, a young woman named Sandra Carmichael was still alive despite some pretty serious injuries. There was a tear in her abdomen, as if something had punched a hole through her stomach. As Officer Bill Dempsey approached her, Sandra coughed, nearly choking on her own blood. While the other two officers secured the building, Sandra reached out to Officer Dempsey and clutched his leg.

She only said a few words before she died in Bill Dempsey's arms.

"There's something beyond" she said. "We called to it and it came. Eyes like lost stars. Hair - oh God, I think it was hair, let it be hair, black and gray and hanging over its face. It moved. It moved in impossible ways. The Night Jean. We didn't know. We didn't know. Forgive us."

Police found no foreign fingerprints on the bodies, anywhere on the big building, or anywhere on the farm that the police could identify. Police found no footprints, tire marks, weapons, nor blood anywhere outside of the big building. There was no evidence of anyone being at Sunnyville that night aside from the members of HSF. The state police were called in and they offered their best guess at the time - that one of the members of the commune had gone insane and attacked the others before killing himself - but that couldn't explain the savagery, the torn limbs and severed heads. Nor could it explain who locked and chained the outside of the door to the Big Building.

In the end there was no explanation that made any sense, so the most brutal and horrific homicide in Maine history had to be labeled an unsolved mystery.

With nothing to be done, after a few months of investigation and some pretty sensational headlines, everyone did their best to move on.

[Sampson] "Poor Bill."

That's Sheriff Sampson talking about Bill Dempsey, one of the officers with him that night. He spoke to us over the phone from

his home in Florida. After thirty-one years of service, Sampson retired and soon after moved south for warmer climates.

[Sampson] "That girl dying in his arms, hearing her last words. It got to him. He was never the same after that. Two years later he put his service pistol in his mouth and pulled the trigger."

Deputy Bill Dempsey's death was officially ruled a suicide, but as Sheriff Sampson told us, he blames whatever the Happy Sun Folk were up to that night at Sunnyville for his death.

[Sampson] "As far as I'm concerned, Bill was just the final victim of the Night Jean."

The case of the Night Jean Massacre was never officially solved and remains a cold case to this day, but Sheriff Sampson has a theory, one that's grown in his mind in the five and a half decades since that awful night.

[Sampson] "I think they were doing something up there, something they shouldn't have. Maybe there are things we're not supposed to understand, creatures that exist beyond our universe. Maybe that crazy cult opened a portal or whatever and let something in, something that didn't like our world, that hated its very existence. They called themselves the Happy Sun Folk, but they let in the night, and I think it killed them."

What Sampson is insinuating is that the Happy Sun Folk were involved in occult practices. There was little evidence to corroborate this, but police did find a book on occult practices in one of the lean-tos, and a necklace that some identified as having an occult pendant. Sheriff Sampson doesn't recall the name of the specific book or what happened to it, but we did some research of our own.

The Seven Keys of Gyges is a supposed grimoire of occult magic. It's author is Thomas Cadmun, a writer and practitioner of occult arts who identifies as a "mage." He did not want to be recorded for our show, but he did agree to communicate with us through email.

We asked him about summoning entities, a practice he informed us was called evocation. He said that there are several rituals or spells that can summon a being from a different plane of existence - what we might call an angel or a demon. He said that while he had never personally attempted to summon something powerful enough to do what Sheriff Sampson believes happened to the HSFers, he claims there are several spells that can do that.

He assured us that the following passage is safe to read aloud, but our more sensitive listeners may wish to skip over the next minute or so. It's a portion of an occult ritual meant to summon a being. I've asked my fellow investigator, Tom Wilson, to read it:

Here and now. I evoke you. I call on the force uniting us to the unseen. I evoke you. I call on the force that connects all things, above and below, living and beyond. The thread running through my blood, back through time, back through space. Beyond the world seen. I call on the visions that have guided me and the voice that beckons back. I evoke you. The veil is torn asunder. The world made one again. Bring forth your form and shape. I evoke you.

And here the summoner would say the secret name of the being they wish to bring forth. Several were listed in *The Seven Keys of Gyges*, but we will not speak their names here.

One final note on Thomas Cadmun. When asked if he had ever heard of a being called "Night Jean," Cadmun said no. Several days later he sent us an email with a link to an article about a demon from antiquity known as Ni'yi Jabin, whose name roughly

translates to "Shadow from Beyond." Cadmun pointed out that in many occult practices the B sound would be so soft as to become nearly undetectable. Ni'yi Ja-en.

Night Jean.

Were the Happy Sun Folk a secret occult coven? It's nearly impossible to say. Not much else is known about the HSF, including its founder Willem Fuller. There were no survivors of the massacre that took place back in 1968, nor could we find any records of anyone leaving the collective before that horrible night. There are none left, except an aging former Sheriff who even remembers the tragic events.

Was the massacre, as the state police concluded, a psychotic member murdering his entire community? Or did the Happy Sun Folk summon an ancient demon and did the evocation go horribly wrong?

Pat Sampson has come to believe so. As we ended our conversation he left us with one sobering, disturbing thought.

[Sampson] "If they did summon some devil or monster and it did kill them... then who locked them in? Who... or what escaped that farm? And is it still out there?"

Stay safe out there, Maine.

Malevolent Maine is Lucas Knight, Tom Wilson, and myself, Chris Estes.

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Thank you for listening to Malevolent Maine.
And as always, stay safe out there, Maine.