

1 **TRANSCRIPT OF TAPED INTERVIEW OF DEBBIE BENNETT**

2 **CONDUCTED BY DETECTIVE YURI MELICH**

3 **CASE NUMBER 08-74777**

4 **November 24th, 2008**

5
6 **Alright the date right now is November 24th, 2008, time right now is 1510 hours.**

7 **I'm Detective Melich with Orange County Sheriff's Office reference Orange County**

8 **Case number 08-074777. I'm located at Gentiva at 1375 South Semoran**

9 **Boulevard. I'm also here with Detective Bill Yamber with the Orange County**

10 **Sheriff's Office. And ah, is it Debbie or Deborah Bennett**

11 **A Debbie's fine.**

12 **Q Debbie's fine. Okay, Debbie Bennett would you please state your name and**
13 **birthday for the record.**

14 **A Debbie Bennett, 6/25/1961.**

15 **Q Okay. And you're aware this is being recorded?**

16 **A Yes sir.**

17 **Q Any complaints?**

18 **A No sir.**

19 **Q Or.. okay. Ah, just for the record we've talked to Gentiva Attorney Kevin**
20 **(Inaudible)... , who gave us authorization said there was no problem. That**
21 **Gentiva would fully cooperate.**

22 **A Okay.**

23 **Q So, I just want to make sure it's on the record that the attorney for Gentiva said**
24 **no problem.**

25 **A Fine.**

1 Q We're here investigating the criminal case against Casey Anthony. And it's also
2 the case of the missing Caylee Anthony. And one of the things we sat here and
3 we talked about a little bit. And you've been working for Gentiva, through take
4 overs and everything else I think since 1982 ...

5 A Yes sir.

6 Q ...is that correct? And you've known Cindy Anthony for roughly the past six years
7 since...

8 A Yes sir.

9 Q ...she's employed here? And one of the first things that we mentioned about ah,
10 about Cindy was. In respect to her relationship with Casey. We're gonna kind
11 of focus on you know May, June of this year, July of this year.

12 A Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

13 Q The one thing you mentioned earlier on is that something happened back in 2005
14 around June or July of 2005, when I guess Casey came in and.. and ...

15 A Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

16 Q ...ah, I guess she was pregnant but Cindy didn't know it.

17 A Right.

18 Q Tell me that story again if you would.

19 A Okay. I was not here when it happened, but I was told that she came in um,
20 passed right by everyone to go sit at her mother's cubicle. She had a big coat
21 pulled over her stomach and she went and sat and waited for her mom to get out
22 of a meeting and didn't speak with anyone. When her mom came out of the
23 meeting I was told she um, went out to her, the car with her mom. I guess it was
24 time for her mom to go home. And apparently from what I heard that was when
25 her daughter told her that she was pregnant um, at that time. And then about

1 two days later Cindy announced that she was gonna be a grandmother. So, she
2 verified that yes the daughter was pregnant.

3 Q And how long before the child was actually born that, that happened. Do you
4 recall?

5 A I want to say she was probably... um, seven months. It was either six to eight
6 weeks before the child was born. There was wasn't much time that she had.

7 Q I mentioned a wedding that she sent to Rick's wedding, which is Cindy's brother.
8 You said you believe...

9 A I know her daughter went.

10 Qit was after that?

11 A Yeah I just don't remember um, I don't remember if that happened before or after
12 the wed... I want to say that it happened after the wedding. 'Cause the wedding
13 apparently went smooth. Her and her daughter and the husband went and
14 everything was good. They had a good time. So, I don't remember any um,
15 turmoil or any problems at that wedding.

16 Q Okay.

17 A From what she said.

18 Q You mentioned just prior to that, that Cindy was saying that her daughter was
19 having female problems?

20 A Yes. I had um, she had said that her daughter was having female problems and
21 I guess she was going to the doctor for that. So, I didn't think anything about it
22 she was a young girl.

23 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

24 A And I just thought that maybe, again I didn't see the daughter to... if I had seen
25 the daughter I would've said, ah, she's pregnant that's the female problems. But

1 I didn't see her. So, just like maybe a month um, or so before the daughter came
2 in she was saying that the lady, that she was having female problems.

3 Q Okay. When um, we talked a little bit about Cindy ah, who does she think the
4 father was?

5 A Um...

6 Q The child's father.

7 A Jesse. That her daughter told her it was Jesse and apparently him and his
8 family were there at the birth of the child. 'Cause there's been pictures in the
9 office.

10 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

11 A Um, of the three of them.

12 Q Did the... she ever change that and say that whether or not Jesse was indeed
13 the father?

14 A Um, no and Jesse had proposed to her months later and they were apparently
15 gonna get married.

16 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

17 A And then after that um, all of a sudden they weren't getting married and I was
18 told that he wasn't the father and that was it. She never did say though who the
19 father was.

20 Q Okay. You mentioned that um, Cindy was.. seemed to you a little bit um, she
21 was getting tired of having to Caylee at night. I guess something about Casey
22 should have more responsibility watching the child. She would drop the child off
23 here on the way to work.

1 A Right um, a couple of times um, she had said she was going home and um, she
2 didn't have Caylee there because Caylee was being um, taking over a friends'
3 house. ...

4 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

5 A ...to be watched. And that it was it was night.. you know it was a break for her
6 because she was she was baby sitting the child quite a bit. So, um, I think she
7 was enjoying... I think she enjoyed when she had the child, but then when she
8 had a little break.. 'cause working fulltime all day and then going home to a child
9 is hard. Yes the daughter did bring the child in, usually on Wednesday when I
10 worked late. And ah, she would bring her in around 5 and the daughter would
11 have her badge on. Again didn't read the badge so, but she looked like she was
12 going to work. She was dressed usually in a hurry to say, mom I got to go, drop
13 the child off about 5.

14 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

15 A And the daughter would, she would stay here with us till about 5:30.

16 Q You mentioned something about Sports Authority.

17 A Um, the daughter was apparently working at Sports Authority for a short time
18 there. Apparently the one over at Waterford Lakes and the apparently was
19 pulled to one I think on OBT or Orange Avenue or something.

20 Q And this is according to?

21 A Cindy.

22 Q Okay.

23 A Yeah. Yeah. Well the daughter came in one time and was going to work to
24 Sports Authority or so she said.

25 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

1 A I mean I, you know again I don't know so, when she stopped working for
2 Universal then she was working for Sports Authority for a time. But um, it didn't..
3 I don't think it lasted very long you know 'cause then she wasn't working for
4 Sports Authority and then supposedly went back to Universal.

5 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative) Now did she actually, did you actually hear her say that
6 when she came in and dropped the child off at any given point, "hey I'm going to
7 work" or..

8 A Um, no Cindy saying, oh she's working..

9 Q Okay.

10 A ...at Universal they want her to be like an assistant manager. So, she's been
11 helping out at the other store. You know just chit-chat ..

12 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

13 A ...about supposedly the store.

14 Q Okay, but you never actually heard Casey say anything about where she was
15 going to work or..

16 A Ah, no, no, she would just come in and, and I just assumed from what her mother
17 said that she was going to work.

18 Q Okay. But you saw a badge.. like a ...

19 A Ah, yeah...

20 Q ...name tag or something ...

21 A Yeah.

22 Q ..around her neck?

23 A Yeah.

24 Q You don't know...

25

1 A Right I didn't read close enough to say, oh is that where you work or whatever
2 so.

3 Q Um, May, June of '08 something about daughter saying that she needed space?

4 A Yes.

5 Q Tell me about that.

6 A Cindy came in and um, told me that she hadn't seen her granddaughter in um,
7 two or.. two weeks or so and I said, oh how come? And then she said, well you
8 know Casey needed sometime and space she was gonna take a little vacation.
9 She had some business at Universal Studios, was gonna, was going to Tampa
10 um, on business with um, supposedly Zany and someone else. I think there
11 were three girls. And they were gonna stay there for work during the week and
12 then that Sunday was their last day they were gonna pay for hotel on their own,
13 do the parks and then come home.

14 So, she was excited just for them to come because I guess she hadn't seen them
15 in a while. Um, so um, that Monday when they were supposed to come home
16 Cindy said she thought she had a hunch that something was wrong. And then all
17 of a sudden that afternoon her daughter called and said that there was a car
18 accident and that um, her friend got in a car accident and was hospitalized. And
19 that she was gonna stay until the girls' mother got there. And that they were fine
20 they were in the hotel and the other friend was watching her daughter plus the
21 other friends' daughter. There was apparently three girls and two little girls.

22 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

23 A Yeah. And always referred to Zany as um, the baby sitter, just Zany.

24 Q Did she say anything or did Cindy say anything about Caylee... or Casey coming
25 back for a day saying she had to pick up something or..

1 A She um, she was upset because apparently her daughter had come back um, I
2 want to say that Tuesday. And come back into the Orlando area because she
3 had to pick up the girls um, um, insurance card. And she'd come back into the
4 area and she said to her daughter, why didn't you bring Caylee with you? And
5 she said, no I just left her in Tampa she's having a good time at the hotel, I left
6 her there. So, she came supposedly came to Orlando and went back to Orlando
7 for supposedly this insurance card.

8 Q Came to Orlando going back to Tampa?

9 A Tampa, excuse me.

10 Q Okay.

11 A Yes, yes sir.

12 Q She said.. you, you mentioned um, Jeffery Hopkins before saying that I guess...

13 A Yeah...

14 Qthrough Cindy?

15 A Talking of the summer before about how she was dating this guy name Jeff
16 Hopkins. I didn't know the last name I just always knew him as Jeff. And that
17 um, she would one weekend say that um, ah, they were gonna come over for a
18 cookout 'cause she wanted to meet Jeff 'cause she heard so much about him.
19 She'd buy all the food and everything and then all of a sudden Jeff didn't come,
20 his child was sick, Zack. And then the following weekend or two weeks later they
21 were gonna set up to have dessert or whatever and then all of a sudden didn't
22 show up again. He had to go into work. So, it was I want to say at least three to
23 four cancellations of never meeting supposedly Jeff. And then Jeff kind of got
24 out of the picture apparently moved to Carolinas with his mother or whatever the
25

1 case may be. But apparently the Zany person apparently was babysitting Zack
2 and Caylee.

3 Q She say anything about um, going back to visit Jeff in Jacksonville? You
4 mentioned something earlier about that?

5 A Um, per Cindy that Jeff was... had a home in Jacksonville as well. And that her
6 and Jeff were gonna get back together and she was ... from the Tampa episode
7 she wound up going up to Jacksonville. To go stay with Jeff and see if they were
8 gonna be able to make it or not. And she was there supposedly about a week.
9 And then that Friday when she was supposed to come home apparently her car
10 had issues and she said Jeff didn't want her to drive the car. So, the car was in
11 the shop I think for a day or two, maybe it was Thursday and Friday. So, then
12 she was supposed to come home that weekend and then she called and said
13 that Jeff's mother, who apparently was a divorced or widow. Was getting married
14 and wanted them to stay for Sunday 'cause they were have.. going out to brunch
15 or whatever for this supposedly wedding that came up.

16 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

17 A So, um, she was suppose to come home I guess that Monday. And then I guess
18 never came home again. So, it was disappointment after disappointment for
19 Cindy, who was upset missing, missing the child. Um, said she hadn't talked to
20 Caylee in a long time because every time she tried to talk to Caylee, Casey said
21 that um, she um, it would upset Caylee. Or.. or..

22 Q She say why?

23 A She... no she didn't say.. well I guess because if she heard from the grandmother
24 then she would be upset maybe that she missed her. That Caylee missed her
25 grandma. 'Cause she was close to the grandma 'cause...

1 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

2 A ..the grandmother was the major care giver of the little girl. You know she'd be
3 home in the evening and bath her and tell.. take care of her. If Casey had to
4 work on the weekends you know a lot of times Cindy was there to baby sit.

5 Q Tell me about the um, getting the car from the junk yard and all that.

6 A Um, she had um, her.. she told me that Monday that she got a um, letter in the
7 mail a certified letter and her husband had to go pick it up. It was his first day of
8 work and she was gonna go pick it up. I guess he never picked it up that
9 Monday. That Tuesday apparently he picked it up and she got the phone call
10 from he husband that the car had um, abandoned and left and was in the
11 impound lot. So, you know her and her husband were back and forth on the
12 phone. I guess she had to leave go meet him, go to the bank to get the money
13 'cause you owe all those days.. like I think like six or seven hundred dollars or
14 something to get it out.

15 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

16 Q So, she was leaving to go take care of the car. So, she left and then I guess it
17 was about I don't know maybe 2 o'clock 1:30, 2 o'clock she walked back in. And
18 I was up making copies and I was surprised to see her back. And she walked in
19 and said, oh I got the car said the car was mess, but the baby's car seat, the
20 baby clothes and the baby doll was in the car. And I.. I said to her, Cindy I said
21 there's something wrong you need to call the police. I said because that doesn't
22 sound right. And by that.. and then after that I kind of left the hallway. 'Cause
23 this was all like right here in the hallway.

24 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

25

1 A It wasn't even like at her desk area. So, she said, no I'm gonna give Casey a
2 chance to explain herself. So, I guess she proceeded to con... try to contact
3 Casey through ah, texting or a phone call.

4 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

5 A Um, and then that's when I told Nilsa I said, you know she... I wonder if she really
6 showed up for work at Universal. Has she been working? Could they hold her
7 job this long? And then Nilsa said, why don't you try calling her work and see if
8 um, talk to the manager and see if she is working. And she said, yeah she said
9 I've got.. I'll have to call her manager at Universal. But I'm gonna do it when I get
10 home tonight. So, she kind of didn't do it at work here. And then like I said after
11 that I left around 3, 3:15, 3:30. So, I wasn't here for the rest of the afternoon.
12 But I heard that she did stay and work and I heard that Nilsa told her you know
13 you need to you know go home get your personal issues straight. You know
14 before you come back to work.

15 Q And Nilsa is Nilsa Ramos the...

16 A Yes.

17 Q ...area director right?

18 A Director yeah.

19 Q Okay. Um, when was the... and obviously the next day you said you.. you...

20 A It was all over the news.

21 Qeverything kind...

22 A Yeah.

23 Q ..blew up? And you said you next saw the family, you next saw Cindy...

24 A Um, that weekend.

25 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

1 A We went um, Nilsa, Charles, Deborah Polisano and myself went over to the
2 house to pick up fliers.

3 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

4 A Because we were gonna pass out fliers, which I did go to Tony.

5 Q Sure.

6 A Ah, Tony's apartment complex and handed out fliers.

7 Q Did she say anything about Caylee or anything about Casey? Did she talk to you
8 anything about..

9 A No it was very brief, we went there had some water she gave out the fliers. They
10 seem to be very busy with phones ringing, her son on computer, running off CD's
11 of copies of the posters that need to be handed out.

12 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

13 A Gave us that. Um, no she didn't really talk a lot about the case at that time.

14 Q Did um, did Cindy confide in you or talk to you or maybe you overheard or you
15 were part of the conversation in the office about Casey taking money from her or
16 stealing money, stealing checks?

17 A No.

18 Q Tell me about that.

19 A No, I.. I never heard, I knew her husband had issues with gambling 'cause like
20 they were...

21 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

22 Athey had issues with that. Um, but no I never heard about the daughter taking
23 money no.

24 Q Did she ever tell you that she went to seek counseling or she talked to a
25 counselor about what was going on June, July?

1 A Huh-uh. (Negative)

2 Q Never...

3 A No.

4 Q ...reached out for help or asked hey you know ah, I really need to talk to
5 someone about this?

6 A Huh-uh. (Negative) No. No. Kind of like I found out like at the tail end right
7 when the daughter had already been gone like a week or so.

8 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

9 A And then she was missing the daughter and then from that point on. And then
10 the gas can situation, where she had thought someone swimming in her pool.

11 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

12 A I think that was around Father's Day I want to say, yeah. Ah...

13 Q The gas can incident was... I'll tell you that, that was the 23rd of June.

14 A Oh okay.

15 Q So, that was right at the end of June.

16 A Okay.

17 Q You mentioned something about the pool and so I want to touch on that.

18 A Yeah. Yeah.

19 Q You said she, she told you...

20 A She came into work that day and said that she thought someone was swimming
21 in her pool. And I looked at her and said, that's what people do is swim in the
22 pool. And she goes no you don't understand someone's been in the pool but I
23 haven't been home. And I said what makes you think that? And she said she
24 came home one day and I guess the side gate was open 'cause she lets her
25 dogs out.

1 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

2 A And I guess the dogs started to go out and she was worried she was gonna lose
3 her dogs. And then um, the ladder was off the pool and it's an above ground
4 pool. And she said she always takes the ladder off and puts it away from the
5 pool so that the child doesn't get in the pool.

6 Q When did this conversation take place in relationship to the gas can incident?
7 Was it before or after do you remember?

8 A Before because then I found out I want to say that was one day and then a
9 couple of days later then she came back and said someone's been in my yard
10 again. Someone 's been in our shed George is calling the police..

11 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

12 A ...'cause we're making a formal report. Someone stole the gas cans. And I said,
13 that's weird I'm like why would someone take gas cans? And she goes I know
14 she goes we have expensive lawn equipment in the, in the shed. So, she says.. I
15 said, well that's kind of weird I said I know gas prices are high but I can't imagine
16 someone just taking the gas cans.

17 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

18 A And she said well that's what they took was the gas cans. And she says, but
19 we're making a report because someone's been in the yard.

20 Q How did Cindy describe her relationship with George over the past couple of
21 months?

22 A Well...

23 Q Over the past couple of months I mean in May, April.. April, May, June, July this
24 year?

25 A Um...

1 Q Before this whole thing started.

2 A ...prior to that she said when her daughter was gone I guess it was giving her and
3 her husband more time together because she wasn't there in the home. So, I
4 think they were you know going out, going out more like maybe going.. catching
5 a movie or a weekend. So, I guess maybe a more normal life that a husband
6 and wife should lead that have a 22 year old you know. Um, except that I heard
7 that he was starting a new job and that was a little you know I guess hard 'cause
8 you're leaving one job going to the other. But that point at that time there was no
9 issues with her and her husband.

10 Q What about issues between Casey and George?

11 A Um, they did not have issues at that time. I think they had issues when her
12 husband was away um, because they were separated for a short time. And then
13 when they got back together again I think there may have been some issues
14 because then dad's back in the house and then the rules change. So, I think
15 then there may have been some issues. But as far as I know I think the daughter
16 and the father had a pretty decent relationship. I never really heard her um, say
17 that the father and her argued or anything.

18 Q Did you ever hear anything about an argument that maybe could have been the
19 catalyst for this whole thing? Did Cindy ever tell you anything about an
20 argument?

21 A No, I heard it on television. But no I.. I did not hear that and no she never did
22 portray to me...

23 Q Okay.

24 A ...um...

25

1 Q Cindy ever tell you anything about ah, Casey taking money from her
2 grandmother, Cindy's mother?
3 A No.
4 Q Never heard that?
5 A No, but I know that the grand.. the father does live in a nursing home and the
6 mom lives out I know that. But no that was the first I heard was on television.
7 Q Okay.
8 A About the stealing of the money.
9 Q Bill?
10 **(DETECTIVE YAMBER)**
11 Q A couple questions. You mentioned earlier that ah, I think there were issues
12 come up, but she had first of all there was crash with a car.
13 A I'm sorry?
14 Q You said that Casey.. Casey had crashed her car at one point?
15 A Crashed her car?
16 Q Did I understand you correctly? I thought you said the car is wrecked.
17 A No the.. the girl got in a car accident the person..
18 Q Isn't..
19 A ... she was with in Tampa. Not her car.
20 Q Okay.
21 A The girls' car, yes.
22 Q Okay. Now you also said the car had issues, being her car. Right?
23 A No not...
24 **(DETECTIVE MELICH)**
25 Q Up in Jacksonville when the ...

1 A Oh, oh that her car was having um, I don't know what was wrong the car, but she
2 was telling her mom that her car was.. was um, having car issues. I don't know if
3 the tires..

4 **(DETECTIVE YAMBER)**

5 Q It, but...

6 A ...engine.

7 Q ...you don't what the issues were it was just car issues?

8 A Car issues. It was in the garage.

9 Q Okay.

10 A Yeah it was in the garage.

11 Q Alright that's all..

12 A Yeah.

13 Q ...you know?

14 A That's what she told her mom.

15 Q Is ...

16 A That's.. I guess the reason to deter she couldn't come home.

17 Q I was concerned about the car that was crashed, not hers?

18 A No, right yeah...

19 Q Thank you.

20 A ... it was her friend supposedly that had the car accident.

21 Q Um, that's it.

22 **(DETECTIVE MELICH)**

23 Q That's it, okay. Do you know we mentioned this before you said, Cindy had
24 never met Jeff Hopkins at all, right?

25 A To my knowledge no.

1 Q And do you know if Cindy ever said she had know Zany or met Zany?
2 A You know I can't believe that she didn't know Zany 'cause the way she always
3 said Zany's name. I always assumed that it was a friend of Casey's and that
4 they all knew each other. I'm shocked to hear that they didn't.
5 Q Uh-huh. (Affirmative)
6 A Okay.
7 A 'Cause I heard the name for two years and always thought that you know she'd
8 always say, oh yeah she's with Zany or she's... So, I honestly thought that they,
9 they knew her. No idea that they didn't know her.
10 Q Did um, did Zany ever come up to work here drop off the child...
11 A No.
12 Q ..pick up the child?
13 A No.
14 Q You, you personally never seen Zany never..
15 A I only heard Zany's name out of Cindy's lips. That Zany, you know that she's
16 with Zany, she's with Zany. Who's watching her, she's with Zany. Never heard
17 Zenaida ever always Zany.
18 Q Okay. And you said that Emily I guess your ah, receptionist?
19 A Uh-huh. (Affirmative)
20 Q She was part of the conversation the day that Cindy came back with the car?
21 A I'm assuming cause since she sits up she probably...
22 Q Right.
23 A ...heard. 'Cause it was right at the copier when Cindy walked in.
24 Q Okay.
25

1 A When you asked me who was up there and I said I'm assuming Emily was up
2 there. She could've been on the phone I mean I don't know. But I can't recall
3 who was up there when she came back in.

4 Q Okay. And you also made a comment that really struck me when you said that
5 Cindy came back to work. The car was a mess.

6 A Uh-huh. (Affirmative)

7 Q The baby stuff was still in the car. The baby seat was in the car. You said you
8 felt that wasn't right.

9 A Uh-huh. (Affirmative) And I told her that she should call the police and she said
10 no that she was gonna try to get a hold of Casey and have her explain what
11 happened.

12 Q You said she was angry more so then upset?

13 A Um, I.. I think 'cause you know you had to go and give a bunch of money for this
14 car that's your car. So, I think you know like any parent would be you're like
15 upset that your child is being irresponsible. That was the impression I got. That
16 she was angry when she came back in because her child's been irresponsible.
17 She had to go get the car pay the money and where is she and why did she
18 abandoned her mom's car?

19 Q You think she may have been angry because she was suppose to be in
20 Jacksonville with Zack and the car was suppose to be in the garage or ... Cause
21 that's the last place that she said she...

22 A See I don't know I guess because Cindy knew all that history and I, I didn't. So,
23 my first concern was the car seat and the baby clothes I got alarmed to think oh
24 my God what happened to the child? Because no matter where you would go
25 you would take the doll, the baby doll. I mean you, if you were a mother you

1 would take that. So, that was concerning to me. But again I don't think I knew
2 the whole history of Cindy and her daughter to know the dynamics for that.

3 Q Okay. Anything else? Alright would you raise your right hand for me? Do you
4 swear and affirm everything you just told me is the truth?

5 A Yes sir.

6 Q Okay. Thank you.

7 A Okay.

8
9
10 **THIS TRANSCRIPT HAS BEEN REVIEWED FOR ACCURACY**

11
12 **Signed this 30th day of December 2008.**

13
14 

15
16

DETECTIVE MELICH, OCSO DEPUTY SHERIFF