



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Metro

Bulger's 'biggest fear' was being found, agent says

By **Matt Rocheleau** | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT NOVEMBER 25, 2013

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The “biggest fear” of notorious gangster James “Whitey” Bulger was being found dead in the apartment where he spent years eluding a worldwide manhunt, a retired federal agent told “60 Minutes” in an interview that aired Sunday on CBS.

Phil Torsney, who was part of a task force assigned to track down Bulger, said the octogenarian told him what he planned to do had he ever felt death was near.

“He’d go down to Arizona, crawl down into the bottom of one of these mines and die and decompose. And hope, hope that we would never find him and still be lookin’ — lookin’ for him forever,” said Torsney, a retired FBI agent.

Bulger, 84, was arrested on June 22, 2011, in Santa Monica, Calif. Torsney and several other law enforcement officials who helped capture Bulger were featured in the segment aired by the popular television news magazine. Few new details were revealed about the man who rampaged through Boston's underworld for decades before fleeing in 1994.

The segment focused on accounts, many previously reported, from neighbors about how Bulger and his girlfriend, Catherine Greig, hid in plain sight, living for a decade and a half in a rent-controlled apartment in Santa Monica.

Bulger was the South Boston crime boss, until he cleared out of the city after receiving a tip from a former FBI agent that he was about to be indicted.

The FBI had been heavily criticized — and embarrassed — after it was disclosed that corrupt agents in Boston had taken bribes from Bulger and protected him for years. For 16 years, the former crime boss from South Boston eluded capture. The man who remained a longtime fixture on the FBI's 10 Most Wanted list, and whose notoriety was legendary throughout New England, was virtually unknown by agents tasked with staking out his California apartment building.

FBI special agent Scott Garriola, who was in charge of hunting fugitives in Los Angeles, said he notified his backup team with the Los Angeles Police Department after a tip about Bulger's whereabouts.

"And invariably the texts return, 'Who's Whitey Bulger,'" Garriola told 60 Minutes reporter Steve Kroft.

"Really?" Kroft replied.

"Yeah, a few of 'em. I had to remind 'em, gently remind 'em who Whitey Bulger was," Garriola recalled. "Big East Coast figure, but, on the West Coast, not so much."

After arresting Bulger, investigators found money and weapons in the couples' apartment. Also found were "a collection of 64-ounce bottles with white socks stretched over the top," Kroft reported.

Garriola said he asked Bulger what the socks and bottles were all about. "He said, 'I buy tube socks from the 99 cents store and they're too tight on my calves and that's the way I stretch 'em out,'" Garriola told Kroft. "I said, 'Why you shoppin' at the 99 cents store? You have half a million dollars under your bed.'"

"He goes, 'I had to make the money last,'" Garriola said.

Earlier this month, Bulger was sentenced to two life-in-prison terms.

His attorneys are appealing his racketeering conviction.

After Bulger was captured, Garriola said, he asked him, “ ‘Aren’t you relieved that you don’t have to look over your shoulder anymore . . . you know, it’s come to an end?’ ”

And Bulger said, “ ‘Are you [expletive] nuts?’ ”

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