

Larry King Live

John and Patsy Ramsey Tell Their Side of the Story

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LARRY KING, HOST: Tonight, they've lived with grief and suspicion since the murder of their daughter JonBenet, and now John and Patsy Ramsey join us: their first live TV interview ever. And they'll take your calls next on LARRY KING LIVE.

Good evening. It's a great pleasure to welcome the Ramseys to this edition of LARRY KING LIVE. It is a live appearance. Their book is "The Death of Innocence," just published. They are the co-authors. They will also be with us tomorrow night. There's the cover of the book.

This will be a two-night appearance, both evenings live. We'll be including your phone calls both nights, and Greta Van Susteren of CNN's "BURDEN OF PROOF" will join us as well tomorrow night. We're going to get the whole story, as much as we can cover in two nights of programming. We hope to cover as much of it as we can.

First on, something directly current, and then we'll get into a little history. You had said recently in an interview that you were willing to take a lie detector test, and apparently the Boulder police are now saying let's set it up.

Will you do it?

JOHN RAMSEY, FATHER OF JONBENET RAMSEY: We have -- we were asked, "Had we been asked to take a lie detector test?" We said no. We were asked, "Would we?" We said certainly we would. We would expect it to be fair, and we would expect the results to be public.

KING: And then you would take -- well, by fair, what's the determination of that, Patsy?

PATSY RAMSEY, MOTHER OF JONBENET RAMSEY: Well, I think it has to be someone of...

KING: National repute.

P. RAMSEY: National repute.

KING: FBI man.

P. RAMSEY: Independent, you know, a professional polygrapher.

J. RAMSEY: Yes, we've been told that -- that this is a dangerous thing to take a lie detector test, because they're a subjective science. They're not allowed in court as evidence.

KING: Unless both sides agree.

J. RAMSEY: In Colorado, even if both sides agree, they're not allowed in court.

KING: In the right hands, though...

J. RAMSEY: But in the right -- we have nothing to hide. And if they work and if it will advance the cause of finding the killer of our daughter, we'll do it. Simple.

KING: Before we get into the story, to be a suspect and live with the death of a child as a suspect as well, you -- how do you get through that?

P. RAMSEY: Well, first of all, we have never been deemed suspects.

KING: Yes, but the public regards you as suspects.

P. RAMSEY: We've been said to be under the umbrella of suspicion, whatever that means.

KING: What's that like?

P. RAMSEY: Well, it's -- it's kind of -- no-man's-land, you know?

KING: Is it no-win?

J. RAMSEY: Well, we lost our daughter. That's the worst possible thing that could have happened to us. Anything that has happened in the aftermath pales by comparison.

KING: Let's go back to that night. It's December 26th, the day after Christmas, right? That's when this occurred.

J. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: You spent part of Christmas day at your friend's house. Give us a little history. You were in what business in Boulder?

J. RAMSEY: We were in the computer distribution business. We sold computer products to resellers who then sold them to users.

KING: Very successful, right?

J. RAMSEY: It was reasonably successful.

KING: Two children.

P. RAMSEY: Two children.

KING: You had lost a daughter previously in a previous marriage, right? J. RAMSEY: My oldest daughter, Beth, was killed in an automobile accident in Chicago in 1992.

KING: You have lost two daughters.

J. RAMSEY: I have lost two daughter, my oldest and my youngest.

KING: What happened that day?

J. RAMSEY: December 26th?

KING: Sixth.

J. RAMSEY: We were planning to leave for Charlevoix (ph), which is -- we have a summer cottage up there, we did have. We were going to rendezvous with our older kids for a first-ever family Christmas altogether in Michigan. We were to leave

early that morning, fly to Michigan.

KING: Morning after Christmas?

J. RAMSEY: Morning after.

KING: What happened that night? What's the first thing -- what's the first thing you remember, Patsy?

P. RAMSEY: The first thing I remember is waking up, getting dressed hurriedly, going downstairs, and putting a few things together to pack to take on the plane.

KING: This is about what time?

P. RAMSEY: It's early morning, before daylight.

KING: You're up?

J. RAMSEY: Yes.

P. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: Then what happens?

P. RAMSEY: Then I go down the spiral staircase, and there on one of the runs of the stair is the three-page ransom note.

KING: And no one has entered the house. The door isn't open. You read the note.

P. RAMSEY: I don't know that.

KING: What did you do?

P. RAMSEY: Well, I hurriedly read it, you know, and didn't take long to understand what was happening. And I ran back upstairs and pushed open her bedroom door, and she was gone.

KING: Did you think -- you knew it was her by the note, right?

P. RAMSEY: Well, it said "your daughter."

KING: You were not concerned about Burke? Did you check Burke?

P. RAMSEY: Yes.

J. RAMSEY: We checked him fairly quickly.

KING: You brought the note to John?

P. RAMSEY: I don't remember, I tell you. You just -- you know, that morning is so chaotic.

KING: You don't remember how you got the not? You don't?

P. RAMSEY: I don't remember exactly, but...

J. RAMSEY: Well, it was -- it was...

P. RAMSEY: I started screaming, "There's a note!" you know?

KING: And you look in JonBenet's room. She's not there. What's the first thing you do?

J. RAMSEY: Larry, we don't remember. This is three years ago. We've been through this a hundred times.

KING: You wrote a book about it, so, I mean, you must have said...

J. RAMSEY: We outlined it in the book.

KING: Basically.

J. RAMSEY: I felt like I had been kicked by a horse, the most horrible feeling. Have you ever had that pang of missing your child in a shopping center just for a moment?

KING: Yes.

J. RAMSEY: That pain hit me squarely between the eyes, and it never left. It was a horrible feeling.

P. RAMSEY: You don't know what to do first. You don't know what to do. You're just panicky.

KING: Call police right away?

J. RAMSEY: We did.

P. RAMSEY: Called the police.

KING: 911 or...

J. RAMSEY: 911. KING: And what did they do?

J. RAMSEY: They -- a uniformed police officer arrived relatively quickly, and I said -- I handed him the note. I said, "My daughter's been taken." He said, "Gee, you don't think she just ran away?" And I said: "For heaven's sake, she's 6 years old. No, she didn't just run away."

KING: No sign of foul play at this point?

P. RAMSEY: We weren't looking. We were concerned...

KING: I mean, there was no foul play in her room.

J. RAMSEY: No.

KING: Because she wasn't in bed.

P. RAMSEY: We didn't go back into her -- right.

J. RAMSEY: Right.

P. RAMSEY: She was not in.

KING: So what did the officer do?

J. RAMSEY: Asked us to go into one room, put us in one room.

KING: And he searched the house.

J. RAMSEY: We don't -- I don't know what he did. Don't know what he did.

KING: Well, this is hard. When was the first time you saw your daughter? After all of this, you got the note, how long after this did you see JonBenet?

J. RAMSEY: You mean, when did they find her?

KING: Yes.

J. RAMSEY: Well, they found her later that morning.

KING: Hours?

J. RAMSEY: Hours, hours.

KING: What were -- during that hours, you're thinking she's been kidnapped?

J. RAMSEY: Oh absolutely, we thought we were dealing with a kidnapping.

KING: Fearing the worst.

P. RAMSEY: Police arrived. J. RAMSEY: You don't know whether you're going to see your daughter in an hour, in a day, in a year, in 10 years or never. It's a horrible feeling.

KING: Police combed the house?

P. RAMSEY: They were everywhere.

J. RAMSEY: Apparently not well, but -- but they did.

KING: I mean, they looked down in the basement, looked everywhere there is you're supposed to look. Did they put that yellow thing they put around the house with a crime scene?

J. RAMSEY: No, no.

KING: Never did. What are you going through at this point?

P. RAMSEY: Agony.

J. RAMSEY: Pure agony.

P. RAMSEY: Shear horrified terror.

J. RAMSEY: Your daughter is in the hands of a monster. You don't know where. You don't know if she's cold, if she's -- you just don't know. It's a horrible feeling for...

KING: Did you ever fear kidnapping being a, you know, a fairly well-off person in that community?

J. RAMSEY: No, we -- it didn't occur to us.

KING: Didn't have bodyguards or...

J. RAMSEY: No, no, no. We thought we lived in a safe community. It was peaceful. We thought it was crime-free. We -- we -- our guard went down. We were complacent.

KING: We'll be right back with the Ramseys. The book is just out, "The Death of Innocence." We'll be taking your calls. This LARRY KING LIVE, and they're with us for two nights. Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: They have decided to tell their story. This is a live appearance for the Ramseys.

OK, police are there. Friends come over. What happened to Burke? Does he stay asleep, or do you wake him up and send him -- what happens to Burke?

J. RAMSEY: Burke was in bed. We got him up, don't remember what time, but we had him go to a friend's house. I told him his sister was missing.

KING: Told him the truth?

J. RAMSEY: Told him the truth. We didn't -- tried to make it as easy on him as we could, but he cried immediately, so he knew something seriously was wrong, and he went to a friend's house.

KING: Now, what are you doing, Patsy, you're waiting for a phone call from the kidnapper, is that what you...

P. RAMSEY: Right, yes. By that time, Linda Arndt had arrived, Detective Linda Arndt, and she was introduced to me by first Officer French (ph), who was there. He said, Mrs. Ramsey, if my child were missing, I would want Detective Arndt looking for her.

KING: So she came over.

P. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: Does the FBI get called in?

J. RAMSEY: We were told the FBI was called, we kept asking where are they, why aren't they here? We were told, well, they're on their way, it takes a couple of hours. And, of course, they never came.

KING: Now, the toughest part of all, John, how do you find your daughter?

J. RAMSEY: I found her after Linda Arndt asked us to go through the house, look for anything out of ordinary, out of place, and I found her in the basement. I...

KING: Where?

J. RAMSEY: She was in a room that probably originally was a coal cellar. It was a four-concrete wall room. I knew instantly when I opened the door that I'd found her.

KING: Did you know she was dead?

J. RAMSEY: No, I didn't. I had this rush of just, thank God, I found her. She -- her hands were tied. She had tape over her mouth. I removed the tape immediately. I could feel that her skin was cool, and I feared the worst, but I still held out hope that she would be OK.

KING: Now, with the police officer in the house at that time, why did you just -- you picked the child up, right?

J. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: Why didn't you call a police officer to come right over and take care of her? I mean, that's what...

J. RAMSEY: This is my daughter. This is my child. I loved her.

P. RAMSEY: Instinctive reaction.

KING: Where were you, Patsy, when...

P. RAMSEY: I was upstairs with friends.

KING: You told Patsy?

J. RAMSEY: I don't remember the sequence. I picked JonBenet up, I carried her upstairs.

KING: The police officer didn't complain about that?

J. RAMSEY: No.

KING: No? Because usually...

P. RAMSEY: It all happened so fast.

J. RAMSEY: Listen, I found my daughter. You know, I wasn't going to step back and say...

KING: I know. I am a father.

J. RAMSEY: ... oops, I am not going to touch this. This is a crime scene. I had found my precious daughter, and I was -- thank God, I found her.

KING: Did you try anything to revive her, CPR?

J. RAMSEY: I took the tape off her mouth, I tried to untie her arms. They were very tightly bound. I couldn't get the knot unbound and then I just -- I picked her up and I just screamed, the kind of scream you scream in a dream when you -- you're trying to speak, but you can't. It's just a scream.

KING: When you -- did you see her, too?

P. RAMSEY: I heard him scream.

KING: You never saw her?

P. RAMSEY: Yes, I did then see her. My friends were -- I was in the TV room and they were -- I said what is it? What is it? And they kept, you know, holding me, wait, I don't know what it is. One of our friends ran into the room and said, we need an ambulance, tried to dial 911, and I kept screaming, what is it? What is it? And, you know, then in just a couple of minutes, then I walked into the living room.

KING: What did the police say? Did they say anything? Did they...

J. RAMSEY: Well, Linda Arndt was the only police person that was there that I recall.

KING: They all had left? The others had left?

J. RAMSEY: Well, I don't know. There were a lot of people there at 3:00 in the morning.

KING: It was a blur to you?

P. RAMSEY: Yes, it was just a blur.

J. RAMSEY: It was a blur. We had victims' advocates there. We had uniformed police, we had detectives. People were in the kitchen making sandwiches. I mean, it was -- there was -- it was chaos.

P. RAMSEY: And people fingerprinting. There was fingerprint dust everywhere.

J. RAMSEY: ... crew was there.

KING: A little zoo-like?

P. RAMSEY: Nightmare.

J. RAMSEY: It was a little zoo-like. And when I brought JonBenet up, Linda Arndt knelt over and I guess felt for a pulse and looked at me and said, she's dead.

KING: Did you ever think -- of course, what can you think at a time like this -- why would someone send a ransom note to kidnap someone and then kill them and leave them in the same house if the purpose is to get money?

J. RAMSEY: Well, Larry, this person is a madman, is a monster, they don't think logically.

KING: Pedophile?

J. RAMSEY: We think it was a pedophile, we think it was a male. There are several key pieces of evidence that we think will lead us to the killer, male, pedophile.

We think a stun gun was involved, so this person either had a stun gun or had access to one. The number 118 has significance to this person, \$118,000 was the amount in the ransom note. That was picked for a purpose, we don't know what the purpose is.

SBTC meant something to this killer. That was how the ransom note was signed. And this person was in Boulder, Colorado on December 25th. We're not looking for a needle in the haystack.

KING: If it was a pedophile, was your daughter sexually abused?

P. RAMSEY: I don't believe there is conclusive evidence of that.

J. RAMSEY: We don't know.

KING: Have you talked to them about -- do they send you the autopsy reports?

J. RAMSEY: No, no.

P. RAMSEY: No.

J. RAMSEY: We've -- the police have not talked to us at all. We don't know what's been done.

KING: Well, they have questioned you, right?

J. RAMSEY: They have questioned us extensively.

KING: But they haven't told you anything about -- you have not seen the death certificate?

J. RAMSEY: No.

P. RAMSEY: No.

KING: You don't know how your daughter died?

P. RAMSEY: Well, we do.

J. RAMSEY: We do.

P. RAMSEY: From what we...

J. RAMSEY: She was strangled.

KING: That's the cause of death, strangulation?

J. RAMSEY: That's the cause of death.

KING: But you don't know if any sexual activity took place?

J. RAMSEY: It's not clear to me that there was. We don't know. It's one of those questions you don't want to know the answer to, frankly.

KING: In a minute, we'll talk about why it turns on them. The book is "The Death Of Innocence." Our guests are the Ramseys. Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We're back with the Ramseys.

You almost immediately became suspects. Do you know why? Or the public perception of suspects.

J. RAMSEY: Well...

KING: Was it because of the baby -- because of the issues and...

J. RAMSEY: No, I think...

KING: ... pageants?

P. RAMSEY: I think it was way before that. J. RAMSEY: The tragedy of this investigation was it ended on December 26th. Linda Arndt, the lead detective who was there, went on national television a few months ago and said, I knew the father did it, because I saw it in his eyes on the 26th.

KING: You were too calm.

J. RAMSEY: I was -- I didn't act right. I was too calm, cordial.

KING: How did you react when she said that?

J. RAMSEY: It was a bit incredulous, but it also illustrated the bias we were dealing with from the very beginning.

KING: All right, but do you think that had something to do with the fact that your daughter entered pageants? That the public reaction...

P. RAMSEY: I think the decision was made at that time...

KING: ... know that famous picture.

P. RAMSEY: At that time, Detective Arndt didn't know JonBenet. She didn't know...

KING: When did the public first see pictures of JonBenet in her outfits?

P. RAMSEY: I think that wasn't until after the first of the year.

J. RAMSEY: I don't know.

KING: A few days -- a week later, right?

P. RAMSEY: I really don't know exactly.

J. RAMSEY: Probably.

KING: But don't you think, John, that, that caused a stir in people? Most people say, I wouldn't have my child do that, even though many do.

J. RAMSEY: I think that -- well, many do. And it was a wonderful thing that Patsy and JonBenet enjoyed doing together. It was certainly misinterpreted, I think. And it's one of those things that the eyes of the beholder...

KING: But it led to those stories, jealousy...

P. RAMSEY: But that was -- that was several days afterwards. I mean, we know Linda Arndt...

KING: Oh. All right. During those days...

P. RAMSEY: ... made up her mind and the rest of the Boulder Police Department, we believe, made up their minds...

KING: That you were...

P. RAMSEY: ... the 26th of December...

KING: That it was someone.

J. RAMSEY: Oh, that it was us.

P. RAMSEY: ... you know, that it was the parents.

KING: Is that because they found no entrance into the house?

P. RAMSEY: We don't know why.

J. RAMSEY: Well, we know, Larry, that a window was open. Under that window was a suitcase as a step, for a step to get

up through it. We learned later that they found a door open, which I didn't know about until almost a year later.

That house is not...

P. RAMSEY: There is a lot of evidence.

J. RAMSEY: ... difficult to get into.

P. RAMSEY: The police that were there the morning of the 26th taking evidence have a lot of tangible evidence. They did a good job at collecting evidence. We have fibers. We have DNA. We have a lot of evidence. The problem was that then they did not take the evidence to where it would lead.

KING: Why did they think it was you?

J. RAMSEY: Because the police always go after the parents. And we understood that after...

KING: The death of a child?

J. RAMSEY: Absolutely, 100 percent of the time.

KING: With a ransom note? Really?

J. RAMSEY: Absolutely.

P. RAMSEY: Well, I think, you know, in every case, parents are always suspected initially, and at first, we were aghast at that but then we understood that we needed to be investigated, but they stopped there. They didn't go on.

KING: The police say -- the police say that you were only -- you accept -- you put guidelines up to the interviews. You'd only be interviewed together. Why?

J. RAMSEY: I don't remember.

P. RAMSEY: I don't remember any guidelines.

KING: Is that not true?

J. RAMSEY: I don't remember.

KING: You didn't give them any guidelines?

J. RAMSEY: The only guideline I remember, the only request that we made -- and this was after a huge gap of mistrust developed -- the police withheld JonBenet's body for burial to try to force us to submit to their terms.

KING: Which were?

J. RAMSEY: We were -- that the three of us be interrogated in the police station before we buried our daughter, and we were horribly offended at that. And this huge gap of distrust developed.

KING: Let me tell you what develops as a father and what other people say, and the reason that I think that you're under this cloud. Most people would say, if I didn't do it and my daughter was killed -- I'm talking as a father, and I don't like to bring myself into it. One, I'll answer any question, I'll take any test, I'll meet with you. I'll be there first thing in the morning. Catch the killer. I'd go nuts. I'd cooperate in every way. I would go out with the cops. I'd give them my fingers. I'd give them my...

P. RAMSEY: If you thought...

J. RAMSEY: We did do that, Larry.

P. RAMSEY: We did do that.

KING: You cooperated fully in every way?

J. RAMSEY: We met with them on the 26th, we met with them on the 27th. We gave hair, blood, fiber samples on the 28th. We left...

(CROSSTALK)

KING: Then why did they say...

J. RAMSEY: ... to bury our daughter.

P. RAMSEY: We stayed in Boulder, Colorado. We stayed there for testing for, you know, until...

KING: Why did they say you were uncooperative? Or some of them?

J. RAMSEY: I don't know. It's -- it's a -- what we need to do is get down to the objective here. The objective is to find the killer. I can say a lot of things about what the police did and didn't do. They can say a lot of things about what we didn't do. But let's put that aside. Let's put politics aside. Let's put egos aside.

There is a dangerous killer loose, we believe. This killer, if he's still alive, will kill again. It's time to get on with that.

KING: You're worried for your other boy?

P. RAMSEY: Yes, I am worried.

KING: Worried for neighbors?

P. RAMSEY: I'm worried for the entire country. There is a killer walking around out there someplace. Lou Smit tells us that we can...

KING: That's a detective, right?

P. RAMSEY: Detective Lou Smit.

J. RAMSEY: Lou Smit is the only homicide investigator that's ever looked at this case.

P. RAMSEY: And he says definitively that there is enough evidence to find this man, but the public needs to know it. It's been -- it's been...

KING: Why would the police not want to solve that?

P. RAMSEY: Why wouldn't they!

J. RAMSEY: Oh, I think the police are passionate.

KING: That it's you?

J. RAMSEY: They're passionate that it was one of us.

P. RAMSEY: That's right.

KING: We'll be right back with more of the Ramseys. We'll go to your phone calls in a little while as well. This is your program too. Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We're back. By the way, Alex Hunter, the DA in question, said this morning on the "Today Show" that he had a four-minute conversation with you. When was that?

P. RAMSEY: I believe that was his first press conference.

KING: You were there or he spoke to you before it?

P. RAMSEY: I was not at the press conference. I was in a conference room listening to the press conference and was so moved by his determination to find the killer of my daughter I asked my lawyer, who was -- was there with me, I said, "Can we get him on the telephone?" And he looked at me, and he said, "What do you want to say to him?" And I said: "I want to speak with that man. Please get him on the telephone."

KING: And what did you tell him?

P. RAMSEY: And I said: "Thank you, thank you. As a mother of a murdered child, thank you for your willingness."

I mean, he looked at that camera and said, we will find you, we will find you.

KING: You like him?

P. RAMSEY: I like the fact that he's determined to find out who did this and he wasn't going to rubber stamp the police decision, you know, that it was John and it was me.

KING: That's another thing that hurt you, John, I mean, presswise: lawyers, PR people. Why? Why did you need a lawyer?

J. RAMSEY: Well, we didn't bring in lawyers. A good friend of mine who was at our home where we were staying, delivering food, sensed that something was wrong and needed to be done. He took me aside and said, "John, would you trust me to do some things here that I think are necessary?" And I said, "Yes, I would." He requested that we have counsel. And at the time, we said, "What do we need lawyers for?" He said, well, "I think it's prudent."

"So what do we need two lawyers for, for heaven's sakes?" He said, "Well, that's the way the system works, is each person has to be represented by their own attorney."

And what Mike saw became painfully and publicly clear when Linda Arndt told us on national TV...

KING: That they were out to get you.

J. RAMSEY: ... they're out to get us.

KING: But there are some who might have said, I don't need any lawyers, I didn't do it.

J. RAMSEY: I didn't do it.

KING: I just didn't do it.

P. RAMSEY: That's what we said.

KING: I don't need lawyers, I don't need PR. I don't need nothing. I didn't do it.

J. RAMSEY: Let me clarify one other...

P. RAMSEY: We didn't have PR people.

J. RAMSEY: We didn't have a PR firm...

KING: You never did? That was a...

P. RAMSEY: No. That was a myth. J. RAMSEY: That's -- our attorneys hired a media information person. They were getting 300 phone calls a day into their office. They couldn't cope with it. They hired someone that could be a focal point for all these calls from the media. That got translated by the media as a public relations spin doctor.

KING: You did that one interview with CNN and then stopped doing them. Was that a mistake? Should you have done more, or was it a mistake to do the CNN one?

P. RAMSEY: You know, hindsight is 20/20.

KING: What is your hindsight?

P. RAMSEY: You know, my hindsight is we never should have moved to Boulder, Colorado, I mean, if you want to go back, you know. But you can't do that. You have to start with what we have now. We have to move ahead. We have to try to find this killer and get him off the street.

KING: How did you react, John, when people said, you weren't mad enough, you didn't appear angry, hurt, really wacked? I mean, you had lost this beautiful little girl. You lost a daughter before in your life. I mean, we all look at it from our own perspective. You're a different personality. I would be berserk.

J. RAMSEY: Larry, inside I was berserk. I was crushed. I didn't want to live. I couldn't breathe. I was -- I couldn't think. It's the most horrible feeling.

I have lost two daughters. And for people to tell me he didn't act right I take great offense to. I think I could write the book on how you should act.

With my first daughter, it was an accident. They were on their way to a museum at noon on Friday and they got hit by a truck. Both her and her special friend were killed.

JonBenet was taken intentionally by another human being. That is far worse to deal with.

KING: Does your gut tell you it's someone who knew her?

P. RAMSEY: I don't really think they...

KING: Do you have a gut on something like this? Why you? Why her?

J. RAMSEY: We -- we told the police when this -- when they first asked us who -- do you have any ideas? We said, look, we don't know anybody this evil. This was an evil, evil person who did this. Did we know them? I can't imagine that we did.

KING: Back with with more of the Ramseys. We'll include your phone calls. They're with us again tomorrow night too. This is LARRY KING LIVE, and the book is "The Death of Innocence." Don't go away. (COMMERCIAL BREAK)

J. RAMSEY: ... we don't know anybody this evil. This was an evil, evil person who did this. Did we know them? I can't imagine that we did.

KING: Back with more of the Ramseys. We'll include your phone calls. They're with us again tomorrow night, too. This is LARRY KING LIVE, and the book is "The Death Of Innocence." Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Here's some of the things the police are saying that was supposed to have happened that didn't: you insisted the interviews be done together, you insisted that they be done in your lawyer's office, that Patsy Ramsey's doctor be present, that the Ramsey attorneys specifies which officer conducts the interview; that you seem to get special treatment; you were given a copy of the ransom note; transcripts of your initial talk with police officers; you were given initial police reports; you were given a list of questions you were going to be asked.

P. RAMSEY: Excuse me.

KING: OK, is any of this true?

P. RAMSEY: The ransom note was in my home.

KING: They meant as evidence.

P. RAMSEY: We turned the ransom note over to them. We didn't demand a copy of the ransom note.

KING: This appears like -- in other words, are these statements true?

J. RAMSEY: Well, look, I don't remember totally what is true and isn't true, but this is pettiness.

KING: No, if you say, I will only be interviewed together, we'll only be interviewed with our lawyer, they will only interviewed in our office with our doctor, you're setting conditions that the average suspect can't set.

J. RAMSEY: Look, we didn't set any conditions.

KING: No? OK.

J. RAMSEY: Our attorneys represented us. They were highly suspicious of the police and for good reason. The police were out to get us. We threw ourselves to the lions anyway. A good defense attorney will tell you that if they think the police are after their client, they shut up. They don't talk. They tell the police, go ahead and prove it.

We insisted that we talk to the police. We came back to Boulder after we buried JonBenet for the only reason to work with the police. We had no interest in going back to Boulder. Atlanta was our home. That's where we lived for 25 years before we moved to Colorado.

P. RAMSEY: I was afraid to go back to Boulder.

J. RAMSEY: We were afraid. We went back to work with the police to find the killer of our daughter. Our attorney sat us down and said, look, you need to understand something. First of all, your child's body was ransomed twice last week, once by the killer and once by the police. You need to understand who you're working with here. These people are not objectively looking for the killer. They are intent on convicting you of her death.

P. RAMSEY: So what are you going to do?

J. RAMSEY: We had to listen to them.

P. RAMSEY: You have to take the advice of your attorneys when they tell that something like that...

KING: You were between a rock and a hard place, right?

P. RAMSEY: Exactly.

KING: But you had others, Lou Smit is saying you didn't do it.

P. RAMSEY: We didn't know Lou Smit at that time.

J. RAMSEY: Lou Smit is the only seasoned homicide investigator that's ever looked at this case. Lou's got an incredible background.

KING: Is it also true that a friend of yours, Fleet White is no longer a friend, that he believes something was wrong and he suspects you? Is that true?

J. RAMSEY: I don't know.

KING: That story has been printed.

J. RAMSEY: Yes, there is been a lot of stories that have been printed. Fleet White was a friend and I still consider him a friend. This was a very traumatic experience for him. We know for a fact that the police went to our friends selectively and said, the Ramseys think you had something to do with the death of their daughter. Would you like to talk with us? That's the...

KING: They said that to other people?

P. RAMSEY: Yes, they did.

J. RAMSEY: Absolutely. And that's the only thing that I can think perhaps they said to Fleet and that upset him.

KING: Did you ever give the police a list of people in the neighborhood you thought were suspects?

J. RAMSEY: No.

P. RAMSEY: They asked us for a list of everyone that had been in our home for the past five years.

KING: Do you think that they fed information to the tabloids?

P. RAMSEY: The police?

KING: That began to have a feel -- well, who would give tabloids stuff? They were printing or they...

P. RAMSEY: We know they did. I mean, you can...

KING: The police gave it to the "Enquirer"?

P. RAMSEY: ... read -- I found -- I mean, it's in tabloids. It's been, you know, line by line of interviews that we have had with the police.

J. RAMSEY: Virtually everything we told the police...

P. RAMSEY: Showed up...

J. RAMSEY: ... ended up in the media.

P. RAMSEY: ... in the media.

J. RAMSEY: And I have no other reason to know why.

KING: You sued "The Star" and settled, right?

J. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: That means they paid you. I mean, you don't have to tell us the amount, right? I guess there's a confidentiality thing.

J. RAMSEY: Correct.

KING: But is it safe -- you could tell us this -- they paid you, right?

J. RAMSEY: Correct.

KING: You didn't settle in their favor?

J. RAMSEY: No, no, no.

P. RAMSEY: That's not what settling means.

KING: I know. Are you suing...

J. RAMSEY: It was settled to our satisfaction.

KING: In your favor, yes. Are you suing other tabloids?

P. RAMSEY: Yes, we are. J. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: You called this show once?

P. RAMSEY: Yes, I did.

KING: When you were leaving with your son that day. You left the grocery store, and he had a look at a headline about you. All right, what was that like week in, week out?

P. RAMSEY: It was...

KING: You're in this week.

P. RAMSEY: That's right. I mean, it is a horrible thing when you're standing there with your then-10-year-old child, and he looks up at eye level and sees, you know, "JonBenet killed in parents' bed," that was the title that particular -- you know, it's horrifying. And I'd look -- I'd put my arm around him, and I said, "honey, they're just lies. They just lie, lie."

KING: How did you react when there were even hints that he may have done it?

J. RAMSEY: That was probably the most reprehensible thing that I saw in this whole spectacle was to -- you know, we let the tabloids attack our movies stars and our celebrities. We can't let them attack our children and that's what was done here.

KING: Did one of them say that he did?

P. RAMSEY: Absolutely.

J. RAMSEY: Absolutely. Several of them did.

P. RAMSEY: Yes.

J. RAMSEY: Headlines.

KING: You're never going to have peace?

P. RAMSEY: Not until the killer is found.

KING: If the killer is never found, you're never going to have peace, right? I mean, let's be logical.

J. RAMSEY: Life is never going to be the same for us, regardless. We've lost our daughter.

KING: We'll take a break and we'll come right back with the Ramseys. The book is "The Death Of Innocence." We'll take your phone calls right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We're back. We're going to go to your phone calls. Stuart, Virginia for the Ramseys, hello.

CALLER: Yes, I was wondering do you think that someone may read your book and come forward with valuable information, and has anyone already contacted you that has read your book?

J. RAMSEY: That is precisely our hope. We believe that if the public -- this case is going to be solved through the help of the public. That was one of the primary reasons we wrote the book and, yes, we have received probably about 30 e-mails and letters a day. Many of those are just expressing concern and sympathy, but a few of them have been interesting leads and that's how this case is going to be solved.

KING: And you must get some anger, too, right?

P. RAMSEY: Yes, we do.

KING: I mean, you must get...

J. RAMSEY: About one out of 10 is a hate message, yes.

KING: That's all?

Nashville, hello.

CALLER: Yes.

KING: Go ahead.

CALLER: Am I on?

KING: Yes.

CALLER: OK. John and Patsy, I would like to know what your feeling is about the position that the governor of Colorado took as a public statement in positioning you of being guilty, and why did you hide behind your attorneys? And why did you

hire a public relations firm to represent you?

KING: Well, we asked the last two already, and they said the attorneys hired the PR firm to handle the calls, right?

J. RAMSEY: Well, yes. Now, the governor certainly has accused us of continuing to hide behind our attorneys and our PR firm, and I wish that he would tell me who this PR firm is because I've not gotten a bill and it must be getting huge by now.

KING: What did you make of him when did that? He was on this program the night after the press conference. What did you make of it when you saw it?

P. RAMSEY: I couldn't believe it.

KING: Couldn't believe it? P. RAMSEY: I could not believe someone in a position of authority, as he is, would say such a thing as that after a grand jury in his state spent 13 months of time and effort and hard work, and then he disregarded it.

KING: Well, he said you were not cooperative.

J. RAMSEY: Well, I don't know how you can say that. I wrote a letter over two years ago to Alex Hunter, and I said: You need to understand, Mr. Hunter, we have no confidence or trust in the Boulder police, but we will meet with your investigators anywhere, any time, any place for as long as you would like.

I wrote that as a personal letter to Alex Hunter over two years ago, and that was our position. We -- no one wants to find this killer more than I do.

KING: So what do you -- do you think the governor was political here?

J. RAMSEY: I think the governor was purely political. It's a -- it's a terrible thing that he has chosen to advance his political career on our family tragedy. I have no other explanation for it.

KING: All right. If he's doing that, he must think that most of the people in Colorado agree with him?

J. RAMSEY: Certainly more than voted for him in the election perhaps, I don't know.

P. RAMSEY: Because he's only heard one side of the story. It's my understanding that one of the local TV personalities has asked him, you know, why won't you listen to the other side of the story.

KING: I'm trying to think -- why don't you call him and say, governor, I would like to sit down with you?

P. RAMSEY: We have done that.

J. RAMSEY: We offered to meet with him twice.

P. RAMSEY: Why doesn't he call us?

J. RAMSEY: And he's ignored us both times.

KING: You've offered twice to meet with him?

J. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: Because he was even critical of Barbara Walters last week. I'm sure you saw that.

J. RAMSEY: I didn't see his remarks, no, but I heard that.

KING: Well, living with this, Patsy, you know the truth. But you don't know who did it. P. RAMSEY: I don't know.

KING: But you know you didn't.

P. RAMSEY: I did not.

KING: And you know you didn't.

J. RAMSEY: That's the one thing we know with absolute certainty that's a fact in this case is that we did not kill our daughter.

P. RAMSEY: And there was someone in our home that night who did kill our daughter, and we're going to find that person.

KING: What are you doing to find them?

J. RAMSEY: We...

KING: You had a ransom for a while, right? I mean, you had an offer?

J. RAMSEY: And we still do have a reward for information. That's still standing: \$100,000. We have active investigation that's been going on.

KING: Your own?

J. RAMSEY: Our own.

KING: Are you still in business?

J. RAMSEY: No.

KING: Retired or...

J. RAMSEY: Yes, not intentionally or not by choice, but it's both been difficult to work and we have got a terrible cloud hanging over us.

KING: How about funds?

P. RAMSEY: Getting low, very low. This has taken virtual all of our savings and legal expenses and expenses involved with the investigation.

KING: How has your boy done? How's he doing at school? Do kids kid him?

J. RAMSEY: Kids do not. He's got some wonderful friends. They kid him about things that boys kid each other about, but they don't kid about this. They protect him.

KING: We'll be right back with more phone calls for the Ramseys on this edition of LARRY KING LIVE. Don't go away. They're with us again tomorrow night too. Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We're back with the Ramseys. This is a picture of their daughter that you carry, right?

J. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: This was pre-kindergarten, age five. You carry it with you all the time?

J. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: Look at here a lot?

J. RAMSEY: I do.

KING: You carry one?

A couple of things before we take another call. Some people ask why you didn't search the house right away, run through the whole house right away.

J. RAMSEY: We thought we were dealing with a kidnapping. We really did.

KING: So there's no sense in looking?

J. RAMSEY: It didn't -- yes. I mean, I wish I had, but we didn't.

KING: In the book, you write about the suitcase and the open basement window, but the police say you never told them about it.

J. RAMSEY: That's false.

P. RAMSEY: False.

J. RAMSEY: I told Linda Arndt that I found the window open and I found a suitcase under the window. They have photos of this in their crime scene photos.

KING: Crystal Lake, Illinois, hello.

CALLER: Hello.

KING: Hi.

Go ahead.

CALLER: Oh. My question was, why didn't you check the whole house immediately instead of waiting until later when you were asked to check the house?

KING: They just answered that. They thought there was a kidnapping, right?

P. RAMSEY: Right. J. RAMSEY: Well, we thought we were dealing with a kidnapping. We had a ransom note. Her bed was empty. We -- we just assumed that's what happened.

P. RAMSEY: The police right away were getting the lines ready to be -- you know, tapped so that when the call came that we would be ready. And Linda Arndt was going over with John, you know, the procedure for all of that and what would happen next. So you know...

KING: The note said not to call 911, right? But you did anyway.

J. RAMSEY: You had no choice. We couldn't have sat there. The note also said, "I will call you tomorrow." We didn't know if tomorrow was that day or the next day. We couldn't avoid -- we'd have gone mad.

KING: Police also say digital enhancement indicates that Burke was awake and asking questions when you called 911.

J. RAMSEY: Well, some police claim they think they hear that. We would challenge the police to release that tape.

P. RAMSEY: Make it all public.

J. RAMSEY: Let's make it public. We'd like to hear that tape. We've never heard it. That is not our recollection of what happened that morning.

KING: And as you said earlier, you would make your lie detector public.

J. RAMSEY: We would insist that it be made public. If we're going to do it, let's make it public.

P. RAMSEY: Make everything public. You know, I said, you want to see an interview? Publish the interview that I had with Tom Haney. Let's talk about...

KING: Who's he?

P. RAMSEY: He's the detective, homicide detective from Denver that interrogated me for three days. The governor, I believe, said that Barbara Walters was too soft on us. And I said, well, why don't you take a look at Tom Haney and see how soft an interviewer he was?

KING: Was he accusatory throughout the interview?

P. RAMSEY: Oh, absolutely. He was, I mean -- and you know, rightfully so. He was trying to, you know...

KING: But the police don't have a vested interest here, do they, John? I mean, they sincerely believe you did it. You don't think it's a concoction?

J. RAMSEY: Oh, no, no. I don't think there's a conspiracy. I think it's based on inexperience, gross inexperience. These people have no homicide experience. Their leadership had no experience in this. They concluded very quickly that it must have been the parents because the parents always do it, and that became their theory. And they spent three years investigating us to try to prove that theory.

That conclusion was reached before any of the evidence was even looked at. We know that for a fact.

P. RAMSEY: But we're saying that's OK. That is OK. You know, let bygones be bygones. But let's finish the investigation. We need experienced homicide investigators to start again. You know, we will be totally cooperative. Everyone will. Start again. Start with canvassing of the neighborhood. Look at all the tests again. Go back and do more DNA testing. Start again. We've got to find this person.

KING: Are you religious?

J. RAMSEY: Yes, very much so.

P. RAMSEY: Absolutely. If we didn't have our faith in God and the Lord, knowing what the big picture is, we wouldn't be able to be here standing...

KING: A think like this doesn't cause you to doubt that?

J. RAMSEY: When my daughter, Beth, was killed it caused me to doubt it. The first words out of my mouth was: "There can't be any god. How could he let this beautiful 22-year-old child who had so much to give die?" And I did a lot of thinking, and I was better prepared, I think, spiritually when JonBenet was killed.

KING: Really?

J. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: Because of that growth in faith?

J. RAMSEY: Yes.

P. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: Because one would have thought that someone that age that brutally, the question would have been asked doubly.

P. RAMSEY: We have to know and believe in our faith that we will see JonBenet again. She is in Heaven with our heavenly father and one of these days, John and me -- we will be there. We will be there with her, and we live for that day. That's what keeps us going.

J. RAMSEY: What it causes you to do, Larry, is to think what in the world is the purpose of life? Life's tough.

KING: Have the answer?

P. RAMSEY: It's real tough.

J. RAMSEY: I think the purpose in life is to prepare us for eternity.

KING: We'll be back with our remaining moments with the Ramseys for tonight. They'll be back tomorrow night for a full hour with more phone calls, and Greta Van Susteren will be with us as well. This is LARRY KING LIVE. Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: I wanted to show you this picture again, which John carries with him. This was about a year and two months before she was murdered, JonBenet at age 5 in pre-K, pre-kindergarten, right? Why did she do the pageants?

P. RAMSEY: She loved it.

KING: She liked it herself?

P. RAMSEY: She had a great time. She loved it.

J. RAMSEY: JonBenet was an entertainer.

P. RAMSEY: She was an entertainer. I think you said that once.

J. RAMSEY: She was a performer.

KING: She wanted to...

J. RAMSEY: She loved to entertain.

KING: And you encouraged it?

P. RAMSEY: Absolutely.

KING: Were you a stage mother, honestly?

P. RAMSEY: Probably. What's wrong with that?

KING: In other words, you -- I mean, you went with her to all the pageants and...

P. RAMSEY: Yes, we had a ball, had a great time.

KING: Did you go too?

J. RAMSEY: I used to go to the talent piece. Each one of these little pageants had a talent competition, and I used to tell JonBenet that's the most important thing is your talent. And she used to tell me, Dad, I really worked hard on my talent this time, and she always won. She was a very talented little girl, so I always went to see her talent performance.

KING: Do you often carry the sight in your mind of her the last time you saw her?

J. RAMSEY: I do and it's -- it for a long time has burned in my mind. It was a horrible memory, and I try to replace it with how I knew JonBenet when she was alive, and that's why I carry her picture. That's why -- but -- and it slowly is fading, but it's still there.

KING: You are an internalizer, right, so that we don't see you weep on camera, and you don't...

J. RAMSEY: Grief is a private thing. I weep. I have wept a lot for both of my child -- children that have died. I still do from time to time, but it's private.

KING: You're more emotional?

P. RAMSEY: I'm emotional -- at 2:00 in the morning I wake up and I think of JonBenet and I think that someone was in my home in the middle of the night. Why didn't I hear something? Who did this? How could this have happened in my home? That's the hard times.

KING: Have there been any other murders in Colorado of children, any other...

J. RAMSEY: There was a murder almost a year to the day later in Boulder of a young 22-year-old coed, Colorado coed.

KING: Sexual involved in that?

J. RAMSEY: I don't know.

KING: Don't know.

P. RAMSEY: Bludgeoned in the head, petite blond.

J. RAMSEY: Is it connected? I don't know. Highly questionable.

KING: Do you look at people funny? I mean, do you...

P. RAMSEY: I look at every person.

KING: You got to be a little suspicious of...

P. RAMSEY: I look at every person...

KING: Do you?

P. RAMSEY: ... and wonder "if," particularly when I am in Colorado. When we went back to Colorado, Burke finished up

his fourth grade year, I would just, you know, walk down the sidewalk or be driving along and look at every single person and wonder.

KING: Do you worry about Burke at all going to school? He went back to school, right? Did you worry about him?

P. RAMSEY: Yes. But we had safety -- I would not let him go back to school in Colorado without safety precautions.

KING: So you had people watching...

P. RAMSEY: We had a 911 system put in the school. We had professional security on staff -- on the premises and we had the parents who were watching around the clock.

KING: By the way, you say you never saw the FBI that day. Did they eventually get involved? Were they eventually...

J. RAMSEY: No.

KING: Never got there?

J. RAMSEY: I don't think they ever were allowed to be involved, which was horribly frustrating.

KING: It's a kidnapping, aren't they the first ones that should call?

J. RAMSEY: I would have -- I wish I would have called them first.

KING: Now, look at the experts involved, they have been on this show, Dr. Henry lee, Barry Scheck, the FBI child abduction serial killers unit, labs of the FBI, CBI, Cellmark Diagnostics. You would think we'd come to something already, wouldn't you?

P. RAMSEY: You would.

KING: That's frustrating to all the people.

J. RAMSEY: Absolutely.

P. RAMSEY: Frustrating to everybody.

J. RAMSEY: It's frustrating to the police, it's frustrating to us, frustrating to the public. The public needs an answer to this. They can not bear to think that there is this kind of a monster that's still loose. I think that's one of the reasons there's a rush to judgment. They want an answer to this. This is a horrible thing.

KING: But "Law & Order" starts and there's a verdict in an hour.

P. RAMSEY: Right, exactly.

J. RAMSEY: That's right, it's 6:00 news.

KING: Yes, we want that.

P. RAMSEY: We want that desperately.

J. RAMSEY: Yes.

KING: See you tomorrow night.

P. RAMSEY: Absolutely.

KING: This is a first.

J. RAMSEY: Thank you, Larry.

P. RAMSEY: We'll be here.

KING: The Ramseys will be back tomorrow night. Their book is "The Death Of Innocence." Greta Van Susteren, who is a lawyer as well as a program host on "BURDEN OF PROOF," will sit by me, and we'll both pop questions and, of course, we'll take a lot of your phone calls. And we'll show you some interesting graphic shots that we've taken as well. The Ramseys will be back tomorrow night.

CNN "NEWSSTAND" is next.

And Monday -- Friday night, by the way, Walter Cronkite, Catherine Graham will be with us, as we look at veteran journalists talking about the world of news and how it's gathered, talking about a story like the Ramseys.

Thanks very much for joining us. We'll be back with our guests again tomorrow night. From CNN in Washington, I am Larry King, good night.