

RANSOM SEASON 1 EPISODE 3:Uncle Hilty

Art Rascon: On the last episode of Ransom, the FBI realized that one of Carl and Paulette's friends, Hilton Crawford or uncle Hilty as McKay called him, had been conspicuously absent since McKay was kidnapped. Hilton was supposed to bring a new recruit to Carl's Amway meeting. In fact, he'd called Paulette to confirm it on the day McKay disappeared.

Paulette: He called and wanted to know, if we were going to the meeting or not. It was short. It was not much more than Are y'all gonna be at the meeting? Yes. We are. And that was it.

Art Rascon: But Hilton hadn't come to the Amway meeting. The next morning, when Carl was waiting for a call from the ransomers. Hilton Crawford had phoned the Everetts and told them he'd be right over.

Hilton Crawford Phonecall: I'm coming to your house, I'm coming straight there.

Carl Everett on Phonecall: Alright, see you later.

Art Rascon: But again, Hilton never showed up.

Art Rascon: On September 13th, the day after McKay disappeared, Hilton Crawford arrived back home in Conroe at around 9:00 am. The following comes from a recorded interview, later made by the FBI and the Montgomery County, Sheriff's department. This is the first time this audio has ever been made public. The tape is grainy and hard to understand, so I'll restate the important points from the interview.

FBI agent: And so you got back into your home about what time?

Hilton Crawford FBI interview: About 9.

Art Rascon: Hilton told investigators he'd arrived back home in Conroe around 9am.

Hilton Crawford FBI interview: And then people next door called me to see if I had heard anything.

Art Rascon: He briefly talked with his neighbors the Schaffers, and then two FBI agents showed up at his door.

Hilton Crawford FBI interview: Two ladies at my door, and they were both from the FBI.

Art Rascon: The agents were there to interview Hilton because he was on a list of people who had RSVPed to the Amway meeting, but hadn't shown up.

Hilton Crawford FBI interview: He invited me to several meetings and I'd always tell him I was going to be there but I never did go.

Art Rascon: Hilton said that Carl claimed he was making good money through Amway. And Carl had tried to cajole him into joining Amway for a while. But Hilton never went to the meetings, so when Carl had called the week before to invite him to one, Hilton said he saw an opportunity to get Carl off his back.

Hilton Crawford FBI interview: he said Hilton we're going to have an Amway meeting, can you bring some people? and I said well I'll see what I can do.

Art Rascon: Hilton said Carl asked him to bring some potential recruits to the meeting. Hilton thought, maybe if he brought along one of his employees, Keith McCurley that would be good enough for Carl, and Carl wouldn't notice that he wasn't there.

FBI agent: What was the purpose in calling Keith, to placate Carl?

Hilton Crawford FBI interview: Well, yeah, cuz I promised Carl either I'd be there or somebody would be there.

Art Rascon: Hilton told the FBI agents that at 6 pm the day before, or around 2 and a half hours before McKay disappeared, he'd had an early dinner with his wife at his sister-in-law's house.

Hilton said that the man he was planning on bringing to the Amway meeting, Keith McCurley, couldn't make it that night, so Hilton changed his plans.

He had a work meeting for his security guard business, early the next morning in Silsbee, Texas an hour-and-a-half to the East, so he decided to knock out some work near Silsbee and then crash in a hotel in that area.

Hilton said that he left at 8pm and stopped by a couple of his security sites, before checking in to a Best Western motel near Silsbee at around 1am. Hilton told them that that morning, he'd called his wife, Connie, at 6am and found out about McKay's disappearance.

Hilty: She started crying and said Hilton, you won't believe what happened. She said McKay's missing.

Art Rascon: Hilton told them that his wife had asked him to call the Everett's neighbor Nancy Kahn to see if there was any way they could help.

FBI agent: Why'd you call Nancy?

Hilton Crawford FBI interview: Just cause you know to see what was going on really.

Art Rascon: Nancy Kahn told him that the sheriff's department and FBI were over at the Everett's house. She also mentioned that her husband Bill had seen a gold Chevy drive away from the Everetts' home around the time that McKay had disappeared and that he'd seen a crown emblem on the back left bumper of the car. The FBI agents asked him if he knew anyone that drove a car that matched that description.

Hilty: And I said no

Art Rascon: Hilton was just one of many names on the FBI's list of people to interview. He'd been cooperative, helpful even, and nothing he said raised any immediate red flags.

Art Rascon: It must have seemed unthinkable that Hilton Crawford was involved in McKay's abduction. Hilton was ex-law enforcement a little league baseball coach married to an elementary school teacher. And he was a close family friend. He was Uncle Hilty.

After the FBI agents finished interviewing Hilton Crawford and left his home, he walked into his garage and stared at the golden 1994 Chrysler LHS parked inside. And then he bent down by the back left bumper and began to peel off the crown dealership sticker.

Art Rascon: From KSL Podcasts, I'm Art Rascon. This is Ransom: Position of Trust.

[Music]

Art Rascon: Episode 3, Uncle Hilty

Art Rascon: After the FBI agents finished interviewing Hilton Crawford and left his home, he scrambled to cover his tracks.

He hadn't expected the FBI to get involved so quickly, or for anyone to have seen him driving away from the Everett's home. Having worked for years as a police officer and a sheriff's deputy, he knew that investigators would soon be double-checking the story that he had told them and he knew what he needed to do to stay ahead of the investigation.

Hilton called the security offices that he'd used as his alibi to the FBI. He lied to his employees, saying that he'd swung by the night before and saw them working hard, so he hadn't interrupted. He said that someone had hired a private investigator to try to get him in trouble. And that the PI might lie and say they were from the FBI.

Then Hilton called a nearby auto dealer and asked them how to remove a dealership sticker from the vehicle. He had managed to tear off most of the sticker but it had left behind a residue on the bumper. The worker at the dealership said that a solvent called acrysol would work, Hilton thanked him and hung up. He went to a couple of auto shops but neither had acrysol.

So, he tried another solvent, which worked alright now, the gunk from the sticker was at least less obvious, but it was still visible if you looked closely so Hilton decided to take the car to the carwash.

As the FBI tried to verify Hilton Crawford's story, they started finding discrepancies. An agent went to the Best Western to see if Hilton had checked in the night of the 13th. He had but not at 1:30 am like he'd told agents but rather at 4:30 am.

Bob Lee: He had been kind of vague. So I wanted to go back and get a lot more detail from him.

Art Rascon: Bob Lee was one of the FBI agents who worked the case. He went to Crawford's office the next morning, on Thursday, September 14th, 36 hours after McKay's disappearance.

Bob Lee: So we sat down, Hylton initially was nervous, his hands were shaking. He later calmed down a little bit as we continued talking to him.

Art Rascon: Agent Lee asked him if anyone could verify his story about visiting various security offices, and he said yes for example.

Bob Lee 20:46: He talked to his guard named Karen, and ask him, you know, what did you talk about? What time did you get there?

Art Rascon: Again, Hilton answered the questions but he was vague about some details. Lee continued asking about the other stops Hilton claimed to have made that night.

Bob Lee: How'd you get there? What time? going into great detail. What did you talk about? Then, where did you go from there? He drove to Beaumont and went to eat.

Art Rascon: Beaumont is a small city an hour-and-a-half east of Conroe.

Bob Lee: I think he said it was a waffle house. So I asked him to describe his waitress, tell me what he ordered, tell me what time he got there, tell me what time he left. Then he told me he went to the hotel, told me he got there about 1:30 or two o'clock. He also showed me his motel receipt, to show me that he had actually checked in.

Art Rascon: But Agent Lee didn't ask Hilton about the time discrepancy they'd found with the hotel check in. It seemed Hilton had stayed ahead of investigators.

But Lee followed up on the places Hilton had been vague. He asked Hilton for more information about Karen, the guard he said he'd seen the night before.

Bob Lee: And at this point, I went back, and asked him what is Karen's last name? He told me he didn't know. But he could find it for me. It was probably in the personnel files.

Bob Lee: But then he couldn't get the personnel file because his clerk was not there. The files were locked up in the cabinet. He didn't have the key to it.

Art Rascon: Hilton had an answer for everything.

Bob Lee: So asked him the next guard he talked to. And then we got to the hotel. Like I said, he told me he checked in about 130 or two. But I had already received information that he didn't really check in until about four 4:30.

Art Rascon: Now, Agent Lee asked about the discrepancy, why had Hilton said he checked in at 1:30 in the morning, when the hotel's records said he hadn't checked in until 4:30.

Bob Lee: And when I asked him about it, he explained that the desk clerk was printing up all the receipts for the next day to slip under the tenants door. So they could check out. So he left his credit card with the desk clerk and she would check him in and run his credit card. When the computers were free and he would pick them up the next morning when he checked out.

Art Rascon: Agent Lee acted as if that was a reasonable explanation But Lee says he didn't buy Hilton's story.

Bob Lee: Not a bit. I can't think of anyone who would leave his credit card with the desk clerk at a motel and then go to sleep. I have never had anyone tell me anything like that.

Art Rascon: And there were other things about Hilton's story that seemed off.

Bob Lee: The thing that stood out the most was when I kept pressing him for Karen's last name and her contact information. He just kept making one excuse after another. Basically, I think Hilton Thought he was smarter than I was. And he could tell me a story and get by with it.

Art Rascon: But Agent Lee didn't yet confront Hilton with his suspicions.

Bob Lee: If I had, you know, challenged him. It might encourage him not to talk to me anymore. That's the reason I asked for so so many details, because you can disprove lies, but you can't disprove silence.

Art Rascon: Agent Lee asked Hilton to come in for a polygraph, but Hilton said he needed to deliver some checks for the security business.

Bob Lee: This was on a Thursday, I believe. And he said he couldn't possibly go until Monday. But he'd be happy to do it on Monday.

Art Rascon: So for the time being Agent Lee, left it at that. Around the same time that this second interview with Hilton was wrapping up, the FBI supervisor on scene Beth Martin got another tip about Hilton. Martin was just finishing up a long shift.

Beth Martin: I was like the last person to leave.

Art Rascon: She was walking back to her car, when one of the Everett's friends ran up to her.

Beth Martin: He was looking for somebody and he ran up to me. I think he just put two and two together. I mean he was just thinking to himself, now wait a minute. What about Hilton Crawford? Why isn't he here? We had trouble getting ahold of him. He should be here. He's a family friend. Kept going on and on about that.

Art Rascon: Beth Martin can't remember the name of the man who ran up to her but the man said Hilton Crawford drove a car eerily-close to the one Bill Kahn had seen.

Beth Martin: He knew that description of the car and he said Hilton has a car just like that and he has a sticker on the car just like that. And um, I think when you start talking to me about that, I was like man this is sounding like we really need to talk to Hilton Crawford. And I call back to the command post, which at that time was in Conroe. And I said to them, has anybody talked to Hilton Crawford?

Art Rascon: Beth Martin learned that agents had just finished a follow-up interview with Hilton. They hadn't yet been debriefed on how that interview had gone, but regardless, Martin wanted to see if this tip about the sticker on Hilton's car was real. So she told the agent in charge of the command post, Lloyd Dias, to talk to Hilton.

Beth Martin: Now Lloyd was one of these guys who could talk to people. So I said hey Lloyd, can you call Hilton Crawford and ask him to come up to the office? Cause we just need to ask him a few more things. So Lloyd says ok.

Lloyd Dias: And Beth goes, you go ahead and call him and I says, "By golly, I will."

Art Rascon: Lloyd Dias had been working for the FBI for almost 10 years. He was gruff but persuasive.

Lloyd Dias: I got in a room by myself, closed the door and got him on the phone and said, I don't think you have anything to do with it but we're trying to eliminate you as a suspect. You know I know you're close to the family, I know, you want to do anything to help, you know, I just poured it on. And I said, you know, Is there any way you can come in today, sir. You'd really be helping the family and I know how close you are. I know, you'd want to do anything you could do to help. And he said, Okay, I'll be there in an hour and a half. So I was like, on pins and needles. Like I was looking at my watch.

He shows up, kind of frumpy but I mean, he wasn't anything odd about him, I mean, just a normal big fella. I sat him down, say, Yes, sir thank you so much for coming in. It's gonna be a big help.

I grabbed a person not in front of him obviously, I said, Go downstairs and look at the back of this guy's car and see if that dealership thing is on the trunk or not. You know, and then we're now we start talking to him a little bit. And now whomever the agent was came knocking on the door, and he just told me nope, it ain't there.

Art Rascon: The dealership tag was gone But the agent told Dias that on closer inspection, they had noticed something about the car. There was a bit of residue on the back left bumper and it was sticky to the touch a sign that something there had very recently been removed

Art Rascon: So the FBI brought out Bill Kahn, the neighbor who saw the car speeding off from the Everett's home. They wanted to ask Bill, if Hilton's car was the one he'd seen the night of the kidnapping. Here's Bill's wife Nancy.

Nancy Kahn: My husband, you know, pointed out, yeah, this was a car I saw. And there was an emblem right here. And you can tell it's been removed.

Art Rascon: Nancy says, that even as her husband Bill verified that Hilton's car was the one he had seen. Bill held out hope that this was all some big mistake and that Hilton Crawford wasn't really involved.

Nancy Kahn: I mean, he was really just devastated and disgusted at the same time, and just hoping that it really wasn't Hilton that did that, that, you know, kidnapped him. I mean, it's just so unbelievable to think that a friend could have done that, you know, taken their son. You know, the uncle Hilty part of it? That was just so disgusting.

Art Rascon: But FBI agent Lloyd Dias was increasingly convinced that Hilton Crawford had kidnapped McKay.

Lloyd Dias: So now, we sit down, start talking to him And, you know, we're going along and he doesn't appear you know really nervous or anything like that. And I said, Hey, You know, I know you want to help do everything you can. And I didn't tell him this, um, he wasn't leaving in that car. But I said, Would you mind signing a consent to search, and you know, just look over the car and make sure everything's cool, and I got him to sign a release, which, if he didn't sign, I would have just would have got a search warrant, and bla bla bla bla bla, but that would have taken more time.

Art Rascon: And now almost two days from when McKay had disappeared there was no time to waste. Since the FBI had taken his car, Bob Lee, the agent who had interviewed Hilton earlier that day, gave Hilton a ride.

Bob Lee: Someone asked me if we would take him to the school so he could pick up his wife's car. And we drove him over to the school. And as we were driving, He told us that the mats in the trunk were missing because they had gotten wet.

Lloyd Dias: He goes, Oh, you know, actually, the other day some guy came to my office and said Hey, your trunks open. And it was pouring down raining. I guess I hit my trunk release, getting out of the car. So in order to get it, all the water out of it had to have all the carpeting in the trunk removed.

Bob Lee: It's something that he knew we would discover, or we had already discovered. So it's, it's like a preemptive strike that I'll give them an explanation that I don't have anything to hide before they ask me a question.

Maybe LD: Well, when he said he removed all the carpeting out of his trunk, boom, he had them in his trunk. Either the victim bled in the trunk, or minimally left hairs in the trunk, right? So it'll prove that the victim was in the trunk. So in order for him to eliminate that possibility, he removed all the interior lining of the trunk to go to pure metal. At that point, I said, Okay, this is our man. I mean, again, I wasn't 100%. But I was pretty close to it.

Art Rascon: Agent Dias believed Hilton Crawford was somehow involved in the kidnapping but he didn't think they had enough evidence to arrest him.

Lloyd Dias: Me knowing and proving it that's two different things.

Art Rascon: It was hard to know what to do in that situation. If they arrested Hilton, he might lawyer up and stop talking. And the FBI still had no idea where McKay Everett was, or what the ransomers might do if Hilton got arrested. But at the same time, every hour that they waited, something terrible might happen to McKay.

What investigators did know, was that Hilton hadn't acted alone. There was at least one more person involved in McKay's disappearance. The woman with the raspy voice who'd called and demanded half a million dollars.

[Silence]

Art Rascon: It was the night of Thursday, September 14th around 48 hours from when McKay was reported missing. Agents were still working around the clock, knowing a child's life hung in the balance. They'd just confirmed that Hilton Crawford drove a car like the one Bill Kahn had seen leaving the Everett's house, making Hilton the prime suspect. Although the FBI wasn't ready to arrest Hilton. They now had enough evidence to obtain a search warrant for Hilton's phone records.

Lloyd Dias: At this point, we've got two things going on, right? We need to get the records to see this guy's talking to on his cell phone. And I'm over there with these guys, we're looking at the car.

Art Rascon: Investigators noted that the car was immaculately clean. In the back seat of the car, they found a pair of handcuffs. It was strange, but Hilton did work in the security business. There was also a plastic cup that said "Sam Houston race park."

Lloyd Dias: We're going through the trunk and they got the dealership to bring over same model same everything, because I had no idea how much carpet there was in the back of his trunk, and I want to see what it looked like, you know, unmolested. So they bought it over and the back of the trunk was wall to wall of that Carpeting. This guy pulled out every stitch of it. And so we took pictures to show the difference.

Art Rascon: To the naked eye, the trunk looked pristine just clean, shiny metal. But the investigators suspected Crawford had ripped out the carpeting to hide something, so they decided to test the trunk with luminol. Luminol is a chemical that glows blue in the presence of blood. When they sprayed luminol into the trunk, a thin blue trail illuminated. The trail appeared to flow down into the tire well.

Lloyd Dias: I looked up at the top of the trunk, I said look at this, you can see the marks of like a, like a tire iron. Like the trunk was closed and pry marks at the top where somebody was trying to pry it open. So anyway we took a picture of all of that. So wrapped that all up. now I'm waiting on the phone records. Right?

We got the records and it was like, nine o'clock at night, or something like that right? It was late. You know, we're just trying to find out if he was contacting anybody at the time of the the victim went missing. So some of them we could, you know, okay, this is his wife's number, what's his home number? this that and the other? Well, we had a couple one in particular was in Houston and and it was called right around the time of when he went missing.

Art Rascon: In fact, on the night of the kidnapping, Hilton had called the number six times. He placed 3 calls right around the time of the kidnapping at 7:55, 8:11, and 8:37, and then called three more times later that night at 11:10, 11:13, and 11:30 pm.

Lloyd Dias: Okay. So okay, this is an unknown number to somebody that's not connected him that we can see. And so let's, let's go talk to him.

Art Rascon: The number was listed as belonging to a woman named Irene Flores. Because it was a hispanic last name, Dias asked his Spanish-speaking partner, Donnie Miller to come out with him to the woman's address Here's Donnie.

Donnie Miller: So here we are. One o'clock in the morning, whatever it was, it's very late. And I'm brand new. My partner is, he is a really good investigator. But he doesn't really believe in the concept of rapport, of establishing some comfort.

Lloyd Dias: Our personalities are different. Donnie is much more mellow than I am. He's more soft spoken. That'd be the way to put it. Yeah. We're a good team because he would, he would be the soft spoken and, you know, whatever. And I'd be the one like, okay, you know enough of this. You know, I'd be the kind of be the bad guy. He'd be the good guy.

So we head down to the address. It was in a decent neighborhood in Houston. Your typical, lower middle income type area. And we get there.

Donnie Miller: She opened the door if I remember right she's in a nightgown. And she never made eye contact.

Art Rascon: Irene Flores was a 52-year-old woman with short dark hair.

Donnie Miller: We met like a little empty room and she led us into the living room. My partner, He's a bulldog. Began immediately to tell her what we could do to her. We could ruin her life, blah, blah, blah, on and on and on and on hammer hammer hammer.

Art Rascon: Flores acted confused. She said she didn't know a Hilton Crawford.

LD: And then when she'd say her BS, you know, at that point, I'd be the one like, okay, look, let's just take her and let's go, let's go. We're outta here now.

Donnie Miller: At some point. He is fired up. She's making no eye contact. And he leaves the room he starts dialing his phone and I scoot my chair over to hers. Again, I'm brand new. But I began to study the science of How do we, I don't want to use the word manipulate, but how do we, How do we engage those areas of the brain, so we elicit the truth.

Lloyd Dias: Donnie is a smart guy. Everybody contributes in their own way,

Donnie Miller: I Bootsy Collins said, free their minds and their asses will follow. I want to free her mind so her lips will follow.

Lloyd Dias: different personalities make it work.

Donnie Miller: The Dahli Lama says, "Only when we listen do we learn so I want to throw verbal point guard. I want to throw the ball verbally to a place so comfortable that she will talk about those things that I direct her to and then I want to STFU you shut the ef up. Ok?"

Lloyd Dias: Yeah, so you have all different types, period. And hopefully you get the right guys together and make a great team. Which, that night Donnie and I were a really good team.

Donnie Miller: I use the last page of Harry Potter where Dumbledore says words are our most inexhaustible source of magic. And here's the world's most inexhaustible source of magic. I begin to speak in her language. She's a Spanish speaker and we begin to talk literally and figuratively in her language.

When I scoot my chair over, I noticed that she scoots hers over. I'm not yelling anymore. we're talking in sibilant, susurrant, sotto voce. Her quiet voice and my quiet voice. But in Spanish. I put my hand on her knee proxemics and haptics, she places her hand on mine now. Now, it's now that things are warming up, things are, things are rolling.

Art Rascon: With Lloyd Dias barking into the phone in the other room, Flores admitted to Donnie Miller that actually she did know Hilton Crawford that in the past she'd worked for him as a security guard.

Donnie Miller: And I asked her Do you know what my partner's doing? This is not good cop, bad cop. This is my partner doing his damn thing h, he is angry. And he is dialing the phone fiercely. And I said, Do you know what he's trying to do? And she said, Yes. And she's just shaking. She says, he's trying to put me in prison. And I said, No, I think we already have that. He's trying to make sure that you spend the rest of your life there. A good Popo will tell you that we study the walls. We studied what they're wearing. We studied their tone of voice, we study everything.

Archimedes was one of the greats who said if you find the right fulcrum point you can move the world. And that's what I'm looking for my fulcrum point. And on her walls, were pictures of young children and looked to be her grandchildren. So to be subtle and discreet rather than go directly to the grandchildren card. I used a technique we called bringing them into our family. I mentioned that she held her hands, the way my grandmother holds hers.

Commonality is you like pasta, I like pasta, let's go eat some damn pasta. The archimedean fulcrum is depth and profundity. I told her how I worship my grandmother, and how the two held their hands in similar fashion right in their laps. She's crying a little. She's shaking a little. But she begins to not just look at the floor but look at me at times.

When my partner returns I ask, how may we help you? And she says, my, my daughter is an unfit mother. I have to be here to raise my grandchildren. And I could say, I think I can help you with that. But think is not certain. I could say, I believe, belief shows conviction, but not certainty. So I say, I think, I believe, I know, Miss Flores, use her name, I know I can help you. Be here, raise your grandchildren, if you can help us save the little boy's life and I used his name. And I painted a picture of him and she she began to talk.

Art Rascon: Irene Flores told the FBI agents that the kidnapping was not what it seemed.

Lloyd Dias: She really confessed. She said that knew a person that wanted to get a breakup from her husband.

Art Rascon: Flores said Crawford wasn't the one really behind the kidnapping. Instead it was McKay's mother Paulette who was trying to make a clean break from Carl.

Lloyd Dias: She wanted Crawford to stage a kidnapping, and to get the ransom money for her to start a new life. And that he needed her to make the phone call for the ransom.

Art Rascon: We interviewed Irene Flores Here's how she remembers Crawford describing the scheme.

Irene Flores: he said I mean I'll give you \$25,000 You know all you have to do is make this phone call and he told me the mother sh wants to get away from her husband and she needs you know some finance. He told me, you know, just just say this, you know that it when you make the phone call? Just say that, we that got the boy and if you want to ever see him again don't call the law enforcement. And that was it. And they're gonna reunite and whatever. And she's gonna leave and there was going to be a happy ending. I trusted everything that he told me. I mean, he's never lied to me. He gave me a job and helped me get other people jobs. So, you know, I trusted him.

Art Rascon: Irene Flores told the FBI agents that after making the ransom call, she'd barely spoken to Hilton.

Irene Flores: Hilton had called me at work. And told me that, that the boy was safe, that he was on his way to Mississippi.

Art Rascon: Hilton had told Flores to lie if she was contacted by law enforcement. He wanted her to tell them that she'd borrowed his cell phone and gone on a trip to Louisiana with it.

Irene Flores: And that was the last time I talked to him.

Art Rascon: In the early hours of Friday, September 15th just over two days from when McKay disappeared, Irene Flores confessed to making the ransom call She admitted her and Hilton's involvement in McKay's kidnapping. But her confession had added an unexpected curveball to the case. According to Flores, Paulette was the one behind the ransom.

Irene Flores: He told me, you know the wife, the mother she's uh, involved. She wants to separate from her husband. But I really didn't give it much thought. I just believed him. I believed him and I believed what he told me about the lady. He knew these people I didn't.

Art Rascon: Agent Lloyd Dias believed Flores.

Lloyd Dias: She was telling the truth. I firmly believe that. I didn't think she was a liar at all. No, she was telling the truth.

Art Rascon: But he wasn't sure that he believed the story that Hilton had told her.

Lloyd Dias: No, cause if that was true, for one thing once the FBI gets involved, he'd be like, Look, I did this foot a mom you know, at that point that I'm, I'm handing it all up.

Art Rascon: Dias thought that if Paulette was really behind the kidnapping, Hilton would've confessed once the FBI had circled in on him but that hadn't happened. Instead Hilton had doubled-down on his story. But investigators still had no idea what would motivate Hilton to kidnap his friend's child.

The agents thanked Flores for her cooperation, and left. It was 4:00 Am. On the dark drive back to Conroe, they called in what they'd found out.

Lloyd Dias: I call up and say, Okay, this is what we got guys. I'm giving information and this and that and the other you know to put in his arrest warrant. So now we got to get the warrant, get it signed, which that takes a little while, put it all together.

Art Rascon: Agent Dias wanted to be there for Hilton's arrest

Lloyd Dias: I don't care about putting the cuffs on him. I just want to be there. Ok? You know, when you're putting a lot of energy and emotion and everything else trying to solve this kidnapping, you've got a 12 year old boy missing. I mean you want to be there when the culmination occurs. I mean, the guy's being arrested.

Art Rascon: But the FBI wasn't sure that Hilton would go down easy.

Lloyd Dias: This one was obviously high stakes because it is a kidnapping. I mean, he was, a former law enforcement officer and, you know, he had a security company. We assumed he had guns.

Art Rascon: As the FBI waited on the judge for a warrant. They began running through possible scenarios

Lloyd Dias: You have a perimeter you have cover you, get him to come out. You know, you see on TV them hitting, you know, knocking down doors. I mean, even even the worst guys we ever arrested. We didn't do that. I mean, where's the guy gonna go? You can't flush yourself down a toilet. I mean, he's not going to get away. And then if he refuses to come out and says, you know, come and get me then we'll do what we got to do at that point.

Art Rascon: Law enforcement still had no idea just how bad of a spot Hilton had gotten himself into. They had to prepare for anything.

Lloyd Dias: You don't know what somebody with his back against the wall like that is going to do.

Art Rascon: Because this wasn't just about making the arrest, this was about returning McKay home safe.

Lloyd Dias: Of course, we still got the boy missing. I mean, don't forget that.

Art Rascon: That was the question that loomed large. Where was McKay? And would Hilton lead investigators to him?

Art Rascon: Next time on Ransom:

Carl Everett: In my heart I know you would never harm my son. You loved him like your son. You gave him his ball.

[Music fades]