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## The Green River Killer: Unmasking Gary Ridgway



In the quiet suburbs of Washington state, a chilling true crime story unfolded. It's a tale of terror, mystery, and justice that captivated the nation for decades. This is the story of the Green River Killer, Gary Ridgway.

### The Early Years

Gary Leon Ridgway was born on February 18, 1949, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Growing up, he appeared to be an average boy, but beneath the surface, something sinister was brewing. Ridgway's troubled childhood and difficult relationship with his mother would later be cited as factors contributing to his crimes.

### The Killing Spree Begins

In the 1980s, a series of gruesome murders rocked King County, Washington. Most of the victims were young women, many involved in sex work. The killer was known to dump their bodies along the Green River, earning him the chilling moniker, the Green River Killer. Ridgway's first known victim was Wendy Lee Coffield in 1982.

### A Prolific Predator

Ridgway's murderous rampage continued for years, leaving a trail of death and despair in its wake. He targeted vulnerable women, luring them with promises of money or rides, only to brutally strangle them. He often returned to the dumping grounds, leaving the bodies to decompose and further elude law enforcement.

### The Investigation

As the body count grew, law enforcement launched a massive investigation. However, the elusive killer managed to evade capture, even passing a polygraph test in 1984. Ridgway's cunning and knowledge of police procedures allowed him to stay one step ahead of the authorities.

### Breakthrough and Arrest

It wasn't until 2001 that a breakthrough occurred. Advances in DNA technology led to a match between Ridgway's DNA and evidence found on some of the victims. On November 30, 2001, Gary Ridgway was finally arrested and charged with the murders of four women.

### The Confession

Faced with overwhelming evidence, Ridgway eventually confessed to killing 71 women, though authorities believe the actual number could be much higher. He cooperated with law enforcement, providing details about his heinous crimes and helping locate some of the victims' remains.

### Life in Prison

In a plea deal, Ridgway agreed to plead guilty to the murders in exchange for a life sentence without the possibility of parole, sparing himself from the death penalty. He is currently serving his sentence in Washington State Penitentiary.

