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SHOW: NANCY GRACE 8:00 PM EST

2-Year-Old Disappears in Tennessee; New Witness Emerges in **Grinstead** Disappearance

BYLINE: Nancy Grace, Clark Goldband

GUESTS: Mealand Ragland-Hudgins, Eva Guerra, Mike Beach, Ed Miller, Nancy McBride, Pat Brown, Anne Bremner, Richard Herman, Patricia Saunders, Anita Gattis, Richard Preston

SECTION: NEWS; Domestic

GRACE: This beauty queen-turned-high schoolteacher has been missing for months now. Finally, is there a break in the **Tara Grinstead** mystery?

Straight out to Robert Preston with the "Douglas Daily News." Tell me about the vehicle, now allegedly spotted parked up in her yard the night she went missing.

ROBERT PRESTON, REPORTER, "DOUGLAS DAILY NEWS": Nancy, as you know, Dr. Maurice Godwin, a forensic psychologist has been in Ocilla trying to track down any leads, any other leads that may have been overlooked in this case. Dr. Godwin identified three people who saw a black Chevrolet pickup, a late-'90s model pickup here in **Tara's** yard, approximately where we're standing right now.

Two of the people did not see anyone who may have been driving that vehicle. One of those people did. One of the person -- one the people saw the person believed to be driving this Chevrolet pickup, and actually spoke to this person, had verbal contact with him.

So now investigators are trying to track down this pickup, trying to track down whoever this person who may have been driving is.

GRACE: Robert, are they sure it was a Chevy? Are they absolutely positive it was a Chevy pickup?

PRESTON: It has been positively identified as a Chevy pickup. Initially, there was some confusion whether it may have been a Chevy, may have been a Ford. But for those of you that know pickups know that a Chevy and a Ford are two distinct vehicles. So...

(CROSSTALK)

GRACE: Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute. Robert, Robert, what time of the night was this?

PRESTON: The truck was seen several times during the weekend. The most recent time or the latest time it was seen was about 6:00 in the morning on October 24th when **Tara** was reported missing.

GRACE: To **Tara Grinstead's** sister, Anita Gattis, I'm happy we've got tip, I'm happy we've got the break, Anita. But why are we just learning this?

ANITA GATTIS, MISSING **TARA GRINSTEAD'S** SISTER: Well, Nancy, we had heard early on about neighbors of **Tara's** who saw a dark vehicle in her yard early Monday morning when they went to the convenient store. This person was interviewed by GBI police. I don't know what they chalked that experience up to, you know, not really sure why they didn't pursue that any further.

We've also found out that a teenager who saw the car had verbal contact and some profanity was exchanged. So I can understand why he's been a little hesitant, plus he was here visiting with a neighbor who had moved a few weeks after **Tara** disappeared. So we had some issues in tracking him down.

While we were tracking that kid down, we found a 23-year-old man who saw the vehicle here at another point. Now, I want to make it clear: The vehicle was not here all weekend; it evidently was coming and going and came without being noticed and drawing a lot of attention, so we're wondering if it was a vehicle that had been here before, someone that knew **Tara**.

GRACE: OK, let me get this straight. The vehicle was parked -- and, everyone, this is video. We went down and took ourselves to the inside of **Tara Grinstead's** home. It's exactly the way it was, the way when police came in looking for **Tara**.

And the point is: It's totally in order. It is untouched. There was no struggle, nothing. Now, there was a broken lamp beside her bed, as I recall. Her necklace was found on the carpeted floor, and her radio clock was thrown off the side table beside her bed. Other than that, everything as you are seeing it right now inside **Tara's** home.

Back to her sister, Anita Gattis. Now, why would someone exchange profanity with -- I assume it was a male -- the guy driving this black Chevy parked up on her yard?

GATTIS: Well, you know, that's a big question to us, too. This kid was playing in the side street that's next to **Tara's** house. The guy was outside the truck. He looked over at him, said some profanity to the kid, so the kid, you know, takes off back inside. That's what we don't know: Why this was person angry just because he was recognized?

GRACE: Well, to Richard Herman, whoever is driving a black Chevy pickup -- and maybe you're better at it than I am -- but in the middle of the night, I don't know if I could tell a Chevy from a Ford parked up in somebody's yard, but apparently not one, not two, but three people have observed this vehicle.

Now, Richard, you know, I don't want to prejudge the case. I would never do a thing like that.

HERMAN: No, not you, Nancy.

GRACE: But here's the thing: If this person isn't connected to her disappearance, why haven't they come forward to say, "Oh, I'm part of the time line. I can tell you she was here, there, this, that, at this time the weekend"? So why are they shrinking back?

HERMAN: You know, Nancy, this is six months after this alleged truck was in and out of that area all over that weekend. I mean, if this guy's casing the house out in a black truck, a lot of people are going to see him.

I am sure the police have investigated this case up, down and around. And I am a little suspect about of the information about this black truck. They've got to investigate it. They've got to take every lead possible.

GRACE: Why you are suspect? Three people saw it.

HERMAN: They saw it at different times outside the house there. And, again, you asked the right question: Why would there be profanity exchange? What time did this profanity take place? And why haven't the police interviewed this kid?

GRACE: You know what? Let's go to the source. Anita Gattis, what time was the profanity?

GATTIS: It was late in the night.

GRACE: Like, are you talking 1:00 a.m., 11:30 p.m., what?

GATTIS: No, it was before midnight.

GRACE: You know, back to Robert Preston with the "Douglas Daily News," is the search for **Tara Grinstead** going cold? Is it true a pond has been drained and searched?

PRESTON: Yes, it is true. A pond here in Irwin County has been searched. It's one that is located behind the house that burned on November 7th. Now, this house burned about two weeks after **Tara** was reported missing.

And cadaver dogs have been in the area, and the dogs alerted on this pond twice. So, given that, the landowner gave permission, and the pond has been drained. And if I understand it correctly -- go ahead.

GRACE: Question: Didn't the pond have some type of ammonia in it?

GATTIS: Wrong pond.

PRESTON: No, that was another pond.

GRACE: Ah, I heard you Anita, wrong pond.

PRESTON: Yes, that was a different pond, but this pond did have something in it, have an object in it that investigators believe may be connected to this case. Now, they haven't said what it is on the record.

GRACE: An object.

PRESTON: We don't know exactly -- yes, but it is an object.

GRACE: You say you don't know exactly, but what do you think it is?

PRESTON: I really don't know; I would hate to speculate at this time.

GRACE: Anita, do you know what it is?

GATTIS: Yes, I do. I was there when the searchers found it. It was bagged up. It's been given to GBI. It's an object that you would not expect to find at a pond.

GRACE: Was it connected to **Tara**?

(CROSSTALK)

GATTIS: That we don't know. It's not an object that you would say would be connected to any person, just because of what it is, but we have reason to believe there is some forensic evidence on it, and GBI has possession of it now.

GRACE: To Anne Bremner, Seattle defense attorney, the same guy who managed to dig up these three separate witnesses, criminologist Maurice Godwin, actually got a death threat in the middle of all this.

BREMNER: Right.

GRACE: You know, you don't get death threats every day, and this is the case he is working on.

BREMNER: You know, and it's either one of two things, Nancy: It's that he's getting too close to the true perpetrator, in terms of uncovering evidence in the case, or there are sometimes threats from those that are just deranged and, for some reason, have a strange interest in the case and make threats. But it's very interesting, a very interesting development, indeed.

GRACE: And to Dr. Patricia Saunders, we see ebbs and flows in missing people cases. Remember in Laci Peterson, people kept saying they had spotted her as away as Seattle at a coffee shop? Why ebbs and flows?

SAUNDERS: Well, I think each case has its own rhythm, it's own pattern that the police will exhaust one particular source, and there may be a lull in connections. Witnesses...

(CROSSTALK)

GRACE: And this case has been that way, as well, until tonight.

Quick break. I want to remind you at Court TV, 3:00 to 5:00 Eastern every day, we're covering live a priest on trial for the murder of a nun.

Let's stop for a moment and remember Army Private First Class Amy A. Duerksen, just 19, of Maryland. She died of injuries sustained in Iraq. Always quick with a smile, a gentle spirit, says her father. Amy Duerksen, an American hero.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Because they have found no evidence of her being dead anywhere and all of the searches they've done, I just feel like she is still alive. I believe she is alive. It's just a mother's instinct, just a mother's feeling. I'm going to have to be shown that she's dead before I will believe it.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GRACE: What has become of a beauty queen-turned-high school teacher, **Tara Grinstead**? Her family still grieving, no questions answered.

Let's go to the lines. Will this black pickup, Ford, Chevy, I don't know, but three people have seen it in her front yard parked up on the grass.

Let's go to Lisa in Louisiana. Lisa, hi, dear.

CALLER: Hi, how are you? My question is: Why is this witness just coming forward?

GRACE: Oh, that's a good one.

CALLER: And is anyone that **Tara** was acquainted with, do they drive a vehicle like this, anyone she knew?

GRACE: Anita, why are we just learning about three separate witnesses that say the same thing? And who drives the black truck?

GATTIS: Well, one the witnesses we've known about from the beginning, the one that saw the truck on Monday morning. Who drives that truck, we do not know. We've had several tips called in since a local paper did a story about it.

GRACE: Got you.

GATTIS: They were not from Ocilla; they were from the Tifton area.

GRACE: Let's go to Sharon in Arizona. Hi, Sharon.

CALLER: Hi, Nancy. How are you?

GRACE: Good, dear.

CALLER: Listen, my question is, the two that saw the driver of the black vehicle, are they going to get him to do a sketch of the person?

GRACE: Good idea.

Anita, have they? Have they given a description or done a sketch?

GATTIS: We are having trouble getting his parents, because he is a minor, to allow him to cooperate. And I can understand that. I have a 13-year-old son, and I absolutely do not want to put this child in any danger. That is what -- I ultimately hope he will be able to meet with a GBI forensic sketch artist, and maybe we can get a drawing out of this person.

GRACE: Yes, no, was it a white male, Anita?

GATTIS: White male, late-20s, early-30s.

GRACE: Anita Gattis with us tonight, **Tara's** sister, along with Robert Preston from the "Douglas Daily News."

Thank you to both of you, but I want to thank all of my guests. Our biggest thank you here on this show is to you for inviting us and our legal stories into your homes.

Coming up, headlines from all around the world. I'm Nancy Grace signing off again for tonight. I hope to see you right here tomorrow night, 8:00 sharp Eastern. And until then, good night, friend.

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