

The Story of Orphaned Brothers

Afterlight

Afterlight - noun

The light visible in the sky after sunset; afterglow.
A view of past events; retrospect.

Written by Sean Crossland

Two brothers, Charles and Eric, at ages 3 and 4, were found in a hotel room in Toluca, Mexico covered in dried blood and with 3rd degree malnutrition after being abandoned by their biological parents. Twenty-five years later, the two brothers share their stories and struggles of living in an orphanage, getting adopted twice, suffering through cruel neglect, and now taking care of themselves and their own children. Charles is a blind Paralympic runner and Eric is a manager of a Primo Hoagies providing for his four children. Both brothers grew up in the same living situations, but because of Charles' blindness, they had vastly different experiences and affects from the adoption system.

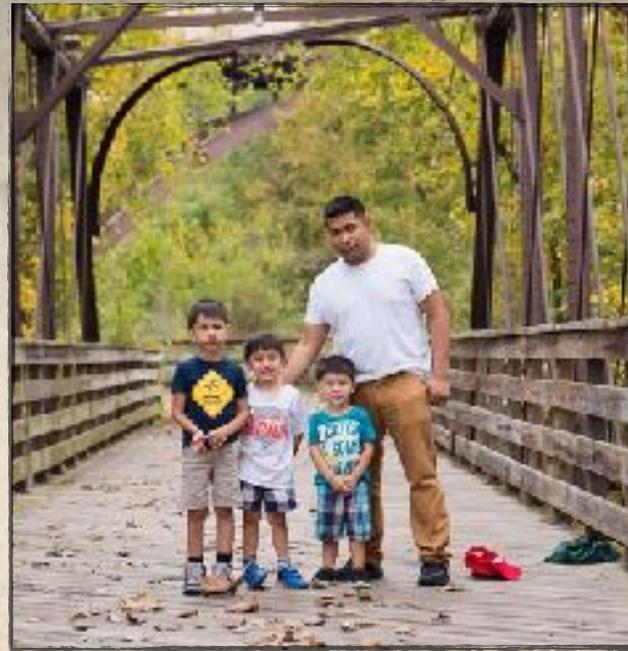
Many questions about their pasts have been left unanswered. Why were they put up for adoption twice? Why were they treated cruelly? Why were they abandoned by their biological parents? We will revisit their adoptive families and hire a private investigator to track down their biological parents and arrange a meeting. The brothers will finally get closure and a glimpse at what their lives could have been like.



Toluca, Mexico

Eric McCormick: Phoenixville, PA

- 27 years old
- Father of four boys



Charles (Carlos) McCormick: Tulsa, OK

- 26 years old
- Visually impaired since birth



MCCORMICK Carlos
United States of America

Birth Date: 19 Jul 1992 | Gender: Men | Age: 21

Event: Men's 400m T12

Start Time	Location	Event	Status
10:44	Suhaim Bin Hamad Stadium	Men's 400m T12 Round 1 Heat 03	MCCORMICK Car. (T12) 01:40

1995 - Eric and Charles were found in a hotel room in Toluca, Mexico covered in dried blood and with 3rd degree malnutrition after being abandoned by their biological parents. They were taken to a hospital and stayed there until they were well enough to go to an orphanage.

1995 - They were placed in a homeless shelter for children in Toluca, Mexico. Presumed to be three and four years old, but they don't exactly know when their birthdays were. They were assigned birthdays by the shelter.

1998 - The brothers were adopted by Stephen and Carolanne Dougherty from Ardmore, Pennsylvania. They lived with the Doughertys and their four daughters for two years before being mysteriously put up for adoption again.

2000 - They moved in with and were later adopted by Henry and Diane McCormick from Berkeley Springs, West Virginia. They lived on a small farm there for six years and suffered cruel neglect and punishment before finally being removed from the home by the West Virginia DHHR. The judge that signed their adoption papers, would be the same judge to rule to remove them from the home.

2006 - They were removed from the McCormick home and placed in a series of temporary foster homes. Charles started attending school for the first time in five years when he enrolled at the West Virginia School for the Blind in Romney. Eric started high school in Baker, West Virginia.

2008 - Charles attended the Paralympic Games in Beijing as a spectator, where his love of running and his passion for competition led him to set his sights on becoming a Paralympian himself.

2009 - Eric elected out of foster care and moved back to Pennsylvania to stay with the Doughertys.

2010 - Charles moved into the home of Donna and Larry See of Romney and began splitting his education between Hampshire High School and WWSB. He was named a US Paralympics Track and Field High School All-American in the 200m and 400m.

2012 - Charles graduated from Hampshire High School, achieving a perfect 4.0 grade point average his senior year. He then enrolled at Tennessee State University and began training under the watchful eye of assistant track coach Franz Holmes. Eric was arrested for six counts of theft and spent three months in jail.

2015 - Charles became the track & field team manager at Georgia Southern University. He qualified for and competed in the 400 meter sprint at the 2015 IPC Athletics World Championships in Doha, Qatar. After trouble with the law and seeking mental health care, Eric gets clean and focuses on raising his three children.

2016 - Charles attended the Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista, California as a resident athlete.

2019 - Charles lives in Tulsa, OK and works for the Department of Rehabilitation division of visual services. He is still running and training for upcoming competitions, but his ultimate goal is running in the Los Angeles 2028 Paralympic Games. Eric lives in Phoenixville, PA and works as a manager of a Primo Hoagies. Now a father of four, he is trying to give his kids the childhood he never had.

Eric's perspective:

“Upon entering the orphanage, my brother and I were separated due to the fact that the orphanage is devised into sections according to age. We still saw each other and would sit on the line that divided the age groups, but we weren't allowed to cross. Where I stayed, I had to share a bed with another kid. I didn't like it at all and would push the kid off. Another time, some kid made fun of my brother and I punched him in the eyes.

At age 5, my brother and I were put into school. I went to a school outside the orphanage, but Charles' school for special needs was attached. Also, around this time, we moved in together into another part of the orphanage where we lived in small houses with 5 other kids. It was supposed to simulate living in a family, however the girls in the house were very abusive. I was sexually abused by a girl named Madeline for about a year. I started playing and fell in love with soccer because it was the only thing to do.

At age 6, the Dougherty family from the U.S. came to visit and bought us new clothes. I remember being fascinated by getting a belt. They visited a few more times and finally I found myself before a judge saying I was going to be adopted. With our new dad, we went to the airport, hopped on a plane to Philadelphia, and were met by our sisters and mom. I ate my first American cheeseburger and fries there at the airport.”



Albergue Temporal Infantil campus

Eric's perspective:

"We arrived at the Doughertys house in Ardmore, PA. It was a five bedroom house with soo much space. I'm sure it felt bigger to my eyes because I was so small. We had our own rooms, new clothes, and some Fannie packs, as they were cool back then.

It was pretty awesome but things started to change because I was being defiant. I had numerous counselors come to the house to talk with me. I was diagnosed with opposition defiance disorder (odd). My parents put me into soccer with the idea that it would allow me to get out my energy. I started going to public school and made some friends. I've always had a pretty easy time meeting people. I got along somewhat with my new sisters, but I knew there was competition for my mom's attention.

One day, my mom sat us down and said she was going have a baby. We were excited, but as her due date got closer, she was told the baby wouldn't live for very long. When he was born he had to stay in the hospital. I was one of the last people to hold the baby before he passed away. After this, things were never the same.

My brother and I were given the opportunity to stay for two weeks with another family in West Virginia. The McCormicks had 11 acres, a farm, creek, and animals. I really liked it there. When we came back to Ardmore, I was miserable and just wanted to go back to the farm. It was decided that my brother and I would live full time in West Virginia with the McCormicks and they would take over our custodial rights. Every week we would still talk to the Doughertys on the phone, but this stopped when we were officially adopted by the McCormicks."



Eric and Charles with the Dougherty sisters

Eric's perspective:

"Once the adoption paperwork was finalized, the McCormicks turned into a whole new regime. There was no more pampering."

Excerpts from Abuse & Neglect Case No. 06-JA-3:

Magdalena, Gerard, Eric, and Christopher have tried to run away before so that they could get water. They had to do this because sometimes they do not get to eat or drink for a couple of days.

Punishment sometimes involves being dunked into a bucket of water while being held upside down by their feet.

They are all locked in their rooms at times, mostly at night because they are accused of stealing food. They have sensors by their beds that alert the parents when they are out of their beds at all times.

Their father takes them out every morning for their exercise. They are made to run one mile in 15 minutes. If they are unable to finish this in the allotted time, they are dunked in the bucket or put in the bathtub, clothed and soaked with cold water, then made to run the mile again.

They have spelling tests and if they miss even one word that they get put in the bucket or are made to dig trenches.



The McCormick's residence

2008 - Charles attends the 2008 Beijing Paralympics as an ambassador.

2011 - He was named a US Paralympics Track and Field High School All-American in the 200m and 400m.

2015 - He competed in the 400 meter sprint at the 2015 IPC Athletics World Championships in Doha, Qatar, where he finished 9th.

Spring 2016 - Charles ran in the US qualifying trials for the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games. He did not make the team, but was close. He decided to start running longer distances.

Fall 2016 - Charles was invited to become a resident athlete at the California Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista. He was trained by Joaquim Cruz, who was the 800-meter champion from the Los Angeles 1984 Olympic Games.

Spring 2017 - After six months of training at Chula Vista, Charles was making progress running middle distances. His goal was to run in the 2017 London World Para Athletics Championships. Because he was still getting used to running middle distances, his qualifying time was not good enough to make Team USA. He began to evaluate long term training and success.

2019 - He is training to qualify for the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games.



Charles:

He enjoys working at the Department of Rehabilitation and hanging out with his friends in Tulsa. He is a big history buff and hopes to travel more. He continues to train and his ultimate goal is to run in the 2028 LA games, when he should be in peak condition.



Eric:

He is trying to gain full custody of his first three children. He is flourishing as a manager of a Primo Hoagies and can now be a sole provider. He hopes to become a business owner and open a Primo Hoagies in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia.



Three Identical Strangers meets *Lion*



Eric and Charles' rough pasts prove that their brotherhood bond can't be broken.



Our quest to reunite Eric and Charles with their biological family will bring about memories and emotions that will change the brothers' lives forever.



Doughertys: First adoptive family

224 West Hathaway Lane, Ardmore, PA

- Stephen: Father
- Carolanne: Mother
- Rosanne Jackson: Nanna
- Rosanne: Daughter
- Elizabeth: Daughter
- Jamie: Daughter
- Grace: Daughter
- John Michael: Son, deceased at birth

McCormicks: Second adoptive family

123 Thornwood Dr, Berkeley Springs, WV 25411

- Henry: Father
- Diane: Mother, visually impaired
- Andrew McCormick: Adopted, deceased 2010
- Andrew O'Connor: Adopted
- Magdalena: Adopted
- Christopher: Adopted
- Gerard: Adopted

Lora Alfred: WV Child Protective Services

Morgan County, WV

Gray Silver III: WV judge

Presided over case to remove Eric and Charles from the McCormicks

Morgan County, WV

Margaret Gordon, Esquire: Attorney

Represented Eric and Charles in case against the McCormicks

Morgan County, WV

Biological mother & father

Toluca, Mexico

Adriana Ramirez Ruiz: Director of children's shelter

Toluca, Mexico

Franz Holmes: Charles' Track coach

Nashville, TN

Thomas Sjostrom: Phoenixville Police Chief

Eric's criminal record and rehabilitation
Phoenixville, PA

Eric Jr, Michael, Gabe, Andrew: Eric's children

Phoenixville, PA

Katherine: Eric's current girlfriend

Mother to Andrew
Phoenixville, PA

Jessica Langevin: Eric's ex-girlfriend

Mother to Eric Jr, Michael, and Gabe
Phoenixville, PA

Doris Langevin: Jessica Langevin's mother

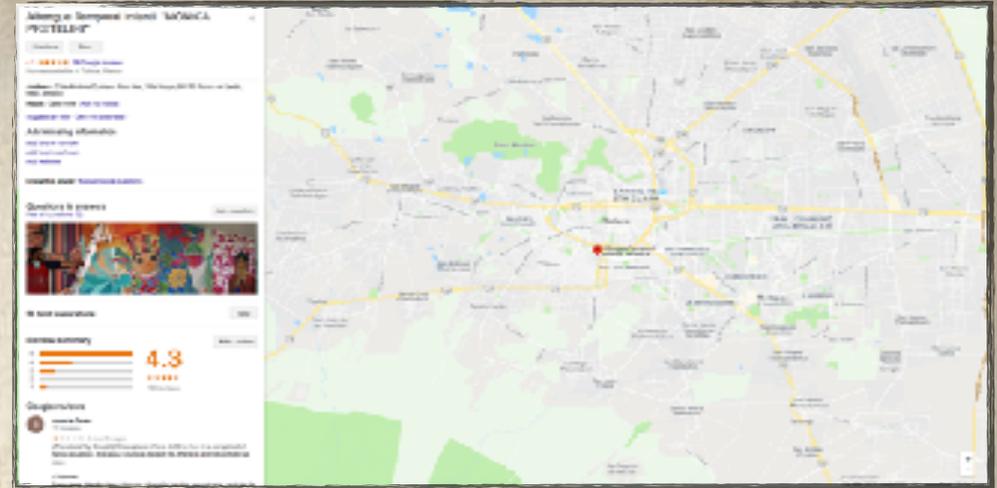
Current legal guardian of Eric Jr, Michael, and Gabe
Phoenixville, PA

Toluca, Mexico

Eric and Charles were abandoned by their biological parents in Toluca, Mexico. They were then placed in a children's homeless shelter in the Villa Hogar neighborhood.

DIF State of Mexico Children's Shelter:
Albergue Temporal Infantil "MÓNICA PRETELINI"
Calle Andrés Quintana Roo Nte., Villa Hogar, 50170
Toluca de Lerdo, Méx., Mexico

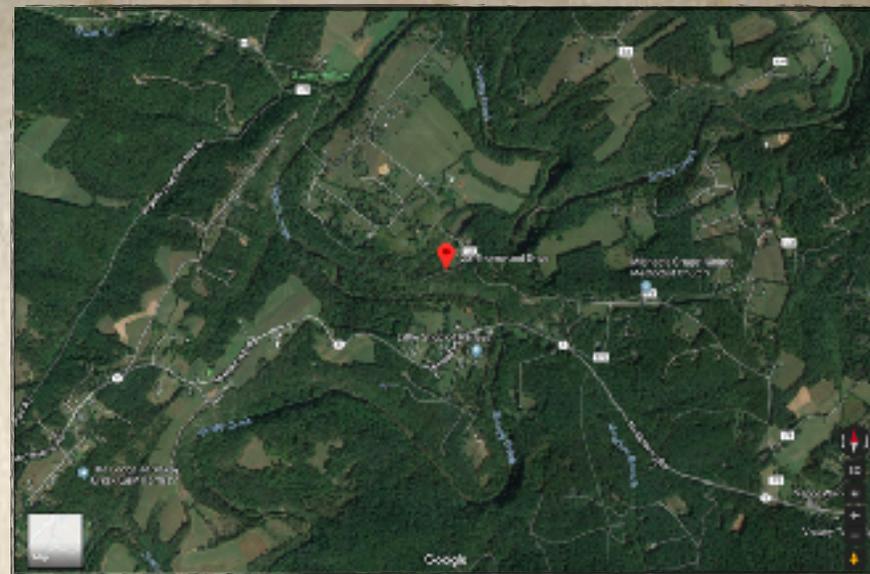
Shelter is provided to children who are in a situation of abuse, abandonment, loss or orphanage, giving them the essential basic elements that favor their good physical and social development for their integration into society.



Berkeley Springs, West Virginia

Henry and Diane McCormick's residence:
123 Thornwood Dr, Berkeley Springs, WV 25411
11 acre property with a farm and animals, surrounded by woods and a creek.

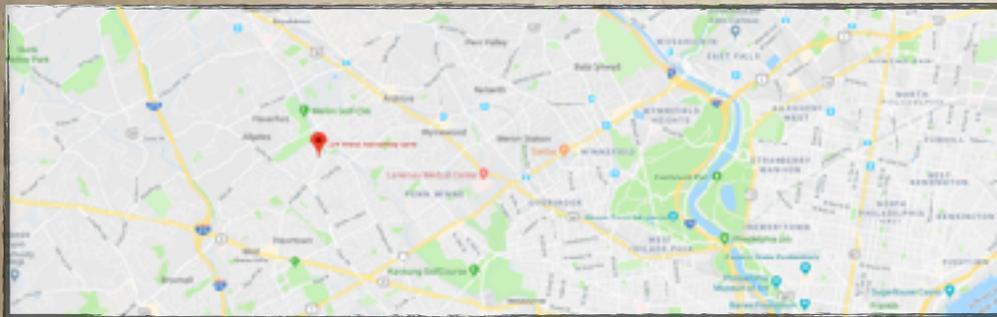
Eric and Charles lived in Berkeley Springs from 2000-2006, until they were removed from the McCormick's custody by the West Virginia DHHR.



Ardmore, Pennsylvania

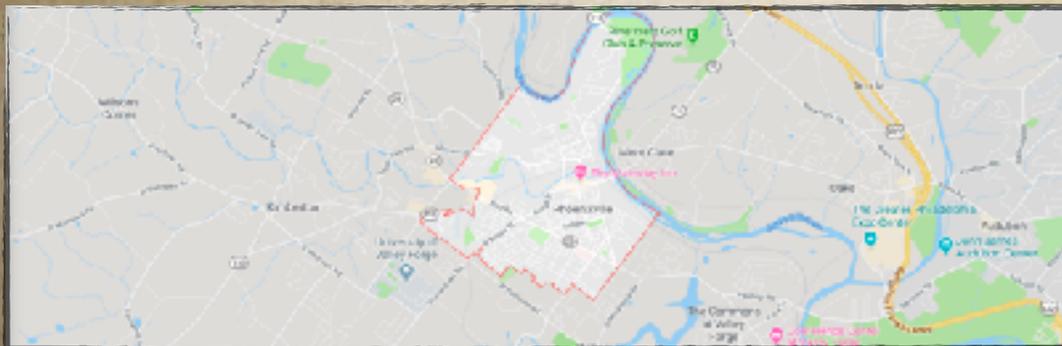
Stephen and Carolanne Dougherty's residence
224 West Hathaway Lane, Ardmore, PA

Eric and Charles lived in Ardmore from 1998-2000 before being mysteriously put up for adoption a second time.



Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

Eric currently lives in Phoenixville with his girlfriend, Katherine, and their child, Andrew. Phoenixville is also the home of Doris Langevin, who is the current legal guardian of Eric Jr, Michael, and Gabe.



Overall:

Both brothers grew up in the same living situations, but because of Charles' blindness, they had vastly different experiences. We will reveal the brothers' different personalities and connect how childhood events and the adoption system have affected them.

Supplemental:

- Find documents and research to confirm and reveal new details from their pasts
- Reunite the brothers with major figures from their pasts
- Find and meet their biological parents or relatives
- Bring closure between them and their adoptive families
- Revisit the locations where they grew up and relive childhood memories
- Show Eric's children where their father grew up

Answer questions:

- Who are their biological parents?
- What is their ethnicity and family history?
- Why were they abandoned in Mexico?
- Why did the Doughertys put them up for adoption a second time?
- Why did the McCormicks treat them cruelly?
- How do the McCormicks and Doughertys now feel about the past events?
- How Eric and Charles are different from each other?
- How Charles' blindness has affected both of them?
- How their lives are different by being in the United States?
- How Eric feels about fatherhood?
- What is their future outlook on life?

Family

- Finding their biological parents
- Discovering their heritage and family history
- Closure with their adoptive families
- Showing Eric's children where their father grew up

Immigration

- Making something of themselves in the US
- Taking advantage of the opportunities that they wouldn't have had in Mexico

Hope

- Coming to America after being abandoned
- Eric and Charles' future
- Eric's children

Adoption and Foster Care

- Different parenting styles
- The realities of being placed with good or bad families
- The affects of being raised by a guardian

Struggles

- Living in an orphanage
- Being adopted twice
- Eric's anger & drug use

Disabilities

- Charles' blindness
- Eric's opposition defiance disorder

Achievements

- Eric being a father
- Charles competing in the Paralympics

Nature vs Nurture

- Did their environments influence who they are?

Investigative Journalism

- Research to discover new details about their pasts



Afterlight's final format will be 90 minutes in length at 4K DCI Scope: 4096 x 1716 (2.39:1)

Interviews with Eric and Charles will be on a dark muslin background

Interviews with supporting characters will be in their natural environments



Interview look with each brother



Interview look with both brothers



Interview look with each supporting character



Look of b-roll, reenactments, revisiting locations, and interactions between characters

Make it feel like the audience is reliving memories with the brothers

- Use wide angle lenses
- Steadicam and shoulder rig
- Focus on faces showing reactions and emotions
- Diffusion and bounce for natural lighting
- Old photos and home videos will be converted for use
- Eric's children, Eric Jr and Michael, will be used to reenact past events
 - Closeup, abstract shots will convey emotions

Pre-Production Tasks Completed:

Reference interviews, treatment, key crew secured

Next Steps:

Acquire funding to continue development
Secure full cast & crew
Location and talent releases
Schedule production dates

Production Day 1: Phoenixville, PA

Interview with Eric part 1
Interview with Eric's kids
Interview with Eric's current girlfriend

Production Day 2: Phoenixville, PA

Interview with Eric part 2
Interview with Eric's ex-girlfriend
Interview with Doris Langevin
Interview with Phoenixville Police Chief

Production Day 3: Phoenixville, PA

Eric's daily life activities
Phoenixville b-roll
Begin private investigator's research

Production Day 4: Ardmore, PA

Interview with Doughertys
Ardmore b-roll

Production Day 5: Ardmore, PA

Charles comes to Ardmore
Interview with Charles part 1
Eric & Charles walk-through Ardmore house
Give brothers DNA test

Production Day 6: Ardmore, PA

Interview with Charles part 2
Charles' track and field training

Production Day 7: Berkeley Springs, WV

Travel
B-roll of Berkeley Springs

Production Day 8: Berkeley Springs, WV

Interview with McCormicks
Eric & Charles walk-through McCormick house
Reenactments at the McCormick house

Production Day 9: Berkeley Springs, WV

Interview with DHHR
Interview with Lora Alfred
Interview with Judge Gray Silver III

Production Day 10: Berkeley Springs, WV

Interview with Margaret Gordon, Esquire
Travel

Production Day 11: Phoenixville, PA

Private investigator's research and findings
DNA test results

Production Day 12: Toluca, Mexico

Travel
B-roll of Toluca

Production Day 13: Toluca, Mexico

Eric & Charles walk-through orphanage
Orphanage interviews

Production Day 14: Toluca, Mexico

Meet up with biological parents or relatives
Interviews with biological parents or relatives

Production Day 15: Toluca, Mexico

Say goodbyes to biological parents and relatives
Travel

Production Day 16: Phoenixville, PA

Final interview with Eric
Final interview with Charles
Final interview with Eric & Charles

Editing: 6 months, 2 editors

Graphics, Titles, VFX: 10 days

Audio Mixing and Music Composition: 1 month

Color Grading: 1 week

Final Delivery and Distribution

Sean Crossland - Director

Sean has directed and produced corporate, commercial, and animated videos for CDI Filmworks. His film experience and background in digital animation enables him to take on many roles throughout the filmmaking process.

B.U.M.S. Pilot Episode, cinematographer, camera operator (documentary)

Buried Words, production sound mixer (short film)

The Walk, DIT, BTS (short film)

Ryan Hammaker - Cinematographer

Most recently, Ryan wrote and directed a Civil War short film, currently in post-production (2019). He has experience in commercial, film, and television, with a series airing on the Syfy network.

Syfy: Real Fear 1 & 2, editor, production supervisor (tv movie)

The Walk, writer, director, editor (short film)

Buried Words, cinematographer (short film)

Adam Smith - Camera / Steadicam Operator

Adam has camera and Steadicam experience in independent feature films and television with series airing on Discovery, Syfy, "E" Network, and Velocity.

Mountain Dew - Joel Embiid, camera operator (commercial spot)

Road Trip Masters: Season 2, 6 Episodes, camera operator (tv series)

WPSU: The Vietnam War, camera operator (documentary)

The Walk, steadicam, a camera (short film)

Nicholas Orris - Camera Operator

From short films to commercials, Nick has extensive experience in all spheres of video production. His passion for storytelling and the energy he brings to each project proves his dedication to being a filmmaker.

Buried Words, writer, director, editor (short film)

Dark Deco, editor (short film)

Those Who Watch, cinematographer, editor (short film)

Afterlight Documentary Budget

Director: Sean Crossland Budget Date: 7/15/19	Total Run Time(s): 90 minutes Countries of Production: United States and Mexico	Shooting Format: 4K DCI Delivery Format: 4K DCI Scope: 4096 x 1716 (2.39:1)		
Description	Rate in \$US	Quantity	Duration	Total Cost
PRE-PRODUCTION				
Legal Support Talent & Location Releases	\$5,000	1		\$5,000
General Liability Insurance	\$850 per year	1	1 year	\$850
SUBTOTAL PRE-PRODUCTION:				\$5,850
PRODUCTION				
Director	\$600 per day	1	16 days	\$9,600
Director of Photography	\$600 per day	1	16 days	\$9,600
Camera Operator	\$600 per day	2	16 days	\$19,200
Grip	\$600 per day	1	16 days	\$9,600
Sound Mixer	\$600 per day	1	16 days	\$9,600
Private Investigator	\$1,000	1	Investigation + 2 interview shoots	\$1,000
Camera Package	\$175 per day	1	16 days	\$2,800
Lighting & Equipment	\$250 per day	1	16 days	\$4,000
Airfare	\$315 per person per round-trip flight	10 people	1 round-trip flight for 9 people 2 round-trip flights for Charles	\$3,465
Hotel	\$150 per room per night	10 people/5 rooms	6 nights	\$4,500
Meals	\$49 per person per day	10 people	16 days	\$7,840
Car Rental	\$100 per day	1	8 days	\$800
SUBTOTAL PRODUCTION:				\$82,005
POST-PRODUCTION				
Editor	\$300 per day	1	120 days	\$36,000
Assistant Editor	\$300 per day	1	60 days	\$18,000
Colorist	\$300 per day	1	7 days	\$2,100
Graphics Titles VFX	\$300 per day	1	10 days	\$3,000
Hard Drives	\$2700 per 32TB RAID Array	2		\$5,400
Music Composition	\$100 per minute of final film length	1	Final film length: 90 minutes	\$9,000
Audio Mixing	\$100 per minute of final film length	1	Final film length: 90 minutes	\$9,000
Digital Cinema Package	\$3,000	1		\$3,000
SUBTOTAL POST-PRODUCTION:				\$85,500
PROMOTION				
Festival Entry Fees	\$85 per festival	20 festivals		\$1,700
SUBTOTAL PROMOTION:				\$1,700
PROJECT TOTAL COSTS:				\$175,055