L470S12.T18 Text 18

The Race Riot on Conestoga Street

Interviewer: David Wilson

1. The other bit of violence I saw again happened on Connestoga street,
2. and that really I think had to do with race, you know, cause…
3. the person in our house, and I’m gonna tell you about this guy named Jimmy Grugan,
4. he started…mother fucker he started it.
5. We used to in the summer time have a really great time by throwing a bunch of blankets on the floor and watch Dr. Shock, horror movies, really cheap horror movies and made popcorn, and all that kind of shit,
6. it was great fun.
7. So one night we were just doing that.
8. There’s a bunch of you know, us in there.
9. And my mom always had like, people stayin’ there whatever, this was Jimmy Grugan,
10. He was a friends of Johnny Ecks’s, my mom’s brother.
11. And he got all dressed to go out on a date,
12. and he you know, he left,
13. and about 15 or 20 minutes later, we heard like a bang on the door,
14. and he tried to come in
15. and we opened the door
16. and he just fell in
17. and he…his face was bloody his hands was…were bloody, his clothes looked, you know.
18. He looked all real sharp when he left
19. and it was a big thing, and he looked like, oh my god, horrible when he came back.
20. When he came back, Bob Glisson and my mom came down from upstairs
21. and he was telling Bob Glisson that he saw some black guy with a white woman in a car down at the end of the street makin out,
22. and that he called that guy a nigger and called him this and called him that.
23. Guess what he didn’t know?
24. That guy was fucking much bigger than him.
25. He got out of that car from making out with that white woman
26. and KICKED…HIS…ASS.
27. He came back to the house like I said, looking like…woah.
28. But like, he told Bob Glisson that,
29. and he called up Johnny Eck,
30. and Johnny Eck called up a bunch of his friends,
31. and you know, within a half an hour there were like, you know, 10-12 kind of guys, 22, 23 years old, mulling around our house,
32. and obviously that black guy did the same thing,

cause then like, a rock, came through…or something came up and hit the porch.

1. It didn’t break the window,
2. didn’t do all that,
3. but like, suddenly, they were all outside
4. and there were a bunch of black guys out there
5. and for the next half an hour there was like (…) screams and this and that.
6. No gunshots, absolutely no gunshots,
7. and I think that has to do with..I don’t know, there’s more guns these days, but none of that,
8. but you could hear bangs on cars, maybe two broken car windows or something like that.
9. And then police sirens, and you know, everyone dispersed
10. and what I remember, what happened next was all those guys came back into the house
11. and it was like..it looked like triage after a war.
12. Everyone had black eyes or bloody noses or bloody hands,
13. their clothes were torn
14. or…just for like, a third grader it, you know, I was sitting on the steps, looking at all these people.
15. To me too, they didn’t seem like, all cracked up,
16. it seemed more like…”That was fun” you know, or like “no problem with that, lets go have…”
17. And you know, it was like all their fault,
18. and I don’t know why…
19. You know that’s why I think that if I was trying to think of any violent thing that happened to me, it would be no,

because I’m a woman and, I think men are nuts, I think Johnny Eck was nuts, I think Grugan was nuts,

1. and like that he said something to that guy was the stupidest thing (laughter) he ever did in his life.
2. I’m really sure he regretted that one.
3. But like aside from that, I’ve lived here in Philadelphia for fifty years
4. and really’ve never been a victim of crime…