

Dan Rather Reports

Episode Number: 502

Episode Title: Kidney Pirates

Description: A look into the growing criminal trade for human kidneys run by traffickers exploiting desperate buyers and sellers.

DAN RATHER (ON CAMERA)

GOOD EVENING. ORGANIZED CRIME HAS INJECTED ITSELF INTO SO MANY DARK ALLIES OF OUR SOCIETY. FROM NUMBERS RACKETS TO DRUGS AND PROSTITUTION. YOU CAN NOW ADD MEDICAL CARE. LET'S START TONIGHT WITH A HYPOTHETICAL. IMAGINE THAT YOU, OR A LOVED ONE, IS SICK --SUFFERING FROM KIDNEY FAILURE...THERE ARE NOW TWENTY-SIX MILLION AMERICANS WITH CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE. THE BEST CHANCE OF SURVIVAL FOR THE SICKEST OF THOSE IS A TRANSPLANT... BUT TIME IS TIGHT, AND YOU'RE NEAR THE BOTTOM OF A LONG WAITING LIST FOR DONATED KIDNEYS MOST OF WHICH HAVE COME FROM THE DEAD. IN THE UNITED STATES ALONE THAT WAITING LIST NUMBERS IN THE TENS OF THOUSANDS. THERE IS SUCH A SHORTAGE OF AVAILABLE KIDNEYS THAT SOME FOUR THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AMERICANS DIE WAITING EACH YEAR. BUT THEN YOU HEAR FROM A FRIEND THAT THERE'S A WAY TO JUMP THE LINE. IT'S ILLEGAL, BUT IT COULD BE LIFE SAVING... YOU PAY A LOT OF MONEY TO A MIDDLEMAN, A KIDNEY BROKER, AND HE TAKES CARE OF THE REST... FINDS YOU A LIVING KIDNEY DONOR... A DOCTOR... EVEN A HOSPITAL...WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

MORE AND MORE PEOPLE-- GOOD, REASONABLE PEOPLE-- ARE CHOOSING THIS SHORTCUT... THEY'RE UNABLE TO FIND A RELATIVE WHO WILL DONATE A KIDNEY AND UNWILLING TO SUFFER YEARS OF GRUELING DIALYSIS TREATMENTS. THE WAITING LIST GROWS LONGER AND LONGER... SKYROCKETING RATES OF OBESITY HAVE LED TO AN EPIDEMIC OF DIABETES-- A MAJOR CAUSE OF KIDNEY FAILURE. MORE AND MORE PEOPLE EACH YEAR NEED KIDNEYS. THIS INTENSE DEMAND HAS MADE THE ORGAN A PRECIOUS COMMODITY. THE KIDNEY -- UNLIKE SAY, THE HEART, OR LUNGS -- CAN BE TAKEN FROM A DECEASED OR LIVING DONOR. MOST OF US ARE BORN WITH TWO, BUT CAN LIVE HEALTHILY WITH JUST ONE... AND SO IN RECENT YEARS, A BLACK MARKET FOR THE ORGAN HAS GROWN AND FLOURISHED. YOU DON'T HAVE TO SPEND TOO MUCH TIME LOOKING ONLINE TO FIND ADVERTISEMENTS POSTED BY PERUVIANS, BRAZILIANS, UKRAINIANS -- ALL LOOKING TO EARN A FEW

THOUSAND DOLLARS BY SELLING KIDNEYS... BUT THESE ARE THE EXCEPTION...

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

WE FOUND THAT MOST KIDNEY SALES ARE BROKERED BY ORGANIZED CRIMINALS -- SOME TRAFFICKING IN DRUGS AND SEX WHO IN RECENT YEARS HAVE DIVERSIFIED THEIR PORTFOLIOS TO INCLUDE THIS VITAL ORGAN. CRIMINALS WHO HAVE GOTTEN RICH RECRUITING, TEMPTING AND COERCING THE WORLD'S POOR AND DESPERATE INTO SELLING A KIDNEY. THIS CRIMINAL ELEMENT IS THE SUBJECT OF OUR INVESTIGATION...ONE THAT SPANNED THREE CONTINENTS, AND BROUGHT US FROM POOR RURAL VILLAGES TO SLEEK U.S. HOSPITALS. TONIGHT ON DAN RATHER REPORTS, THE COST OF KIDNEY TRAFFICKING.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

WE COME TO YOU TONIGHT FROM A COUNTRY YOU MAY NEVER HAVE HEARD OF--MOLDOVA. THIS TINY NATION IS AT THE FAR EDGE OF EASTERN EUROPE... LANDLOCKED BETWEEN ROMANIA AND UKRAINE. BUT THIS POOR, OUT OF THE WAY PLACE IS WELL KNOWN TO A CRIMINAL UNDERWORLD USING PEOPLE HERE IN SCHEMES TO BUY HUMAN KIDNEYS FOR DESPERATE WESTERNERS WHOSE LIVES DEPEND ON A TRANSPLANT.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

FOR CENTURIES, THIS VILLAGE, CALLED MINGIR, WAS AN UNREMARKABLE SWATHE OF FARMLAND IN ONE OF EUROPE'S POOREST CORNERS...WHEN THE NOW INDEPENDENT MOLDOVA WAS PART OF THE SOVIET UNION, ITS VILLAGERS SUBSISTED AS WINE PRODUCERS, BUT THAT MARKET DRIED UP WITH THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM. UNEMPLOYMENT, POVERTY AND HUNGER SPREAD ACROSS MINGIR'S ROLLING HILLS... AND DESPERATE VILLAGERS BEGAN LOOKING BEYOND MOLDOVA'S TINY TERRITORY FOR A WAY TO MAKE A LIVING... WHAT THEY FOUND WAS A WORLD THAT SAW THEM NOT AS PEOPLE, BUT AS LIVING COLLECTIONS OF SPARE PARTS.

JULY 23, 2009. THE FIRST ARREST FOR ALLEGED ORGAN TRAFFICKING IN THE UNITED STATES... FEDERAL AUTHORITIES ACCUSED ISAAC ROSENBAUM OF BROKERING KIDNEYS THROUGH A FRONT CHARITY BASED OUT OF THIS BROOKLYN BUILDING... REPORTEDLY PART OF AN ISRAELI CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION THAT HAS TAPPED COUNTRIES IN EASTERN EUROPE FOR A SUPPLY OF KIDNEYS FOR TRANSPLANT. ROSENBAUM HAS PLEADED NOT-GUILTY AND IS AWAITING TRIAL.

OUR INVESTIGATION FOUND THAT KIDNEY TRAFFICKING IS GLOBAL -

AND GROWING. ACCORDING TO A 2005 WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION STUDY, ONE IN TEN KIDNEY TRANSPLANTS IS NOW BOUGHT ON THE BLACK MARKET, SOME PERFORMED AT UNDERGROUND CLINICS LIKE THIS ONE IN TURKEY, WHICH WAS RECENTLY RAIDED BY POLICE.

FOR YEARS, THE IDEA OF ORGAN TRAFFICKING WAS THE STUFF OF URBAN MYTHS AND HORROR FILMS... LIKE THE 2006 SLASHER "TURISTAS", IN WHICH BLOODTHIRSTY ORGAN THIEVES PREY ON FRESH-FACED AMERICAN BACKPACKERS.

RATHER

Tell me what I and the audience needs to know about the trafficking and kidneys.

NANCY SCHEPER-HUGHES, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY
ANTHROPOLOGIST

Well, that it's real. That it's not an urban legend.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY PROFESSOR NANCY SCHEPER-HUGHES HAS MADE IT HER LIFE'S MISSION TO PROVE THAT ORGAN TRAFFICKING IS A VERY REAL CRIME.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

That people don't get kidnapped off the street and end up in a bathtub with you know, ice and a kidney removed but there's other kinds of thefts that exists in the world.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

A RENOWNED ANTHROPOLOGIST, SCHEPER-HUGHES HAS SPENT MUCH OF THE PAST DECADE RESEARCHING THE CASH-FOR-KIDNEY PHENOMENON, AND WRITING OFTEN-CITED PAPERS AND ARTICLES... BUT SHE WAS SO OUTRAGED BY THE EXPLOITATION SHE FOUND, THAT SHE DECIDED TO BECOME NOT ONLY AN ACADEMIC BUT A RELENTLESS ACTIVIST--- ONE DETERMINED TO END ORGAN TRAFFICKING WORLDWIDE, EVEN IF IT MEANS GETTING IN BETWEEN VIOLENT CRIMINALS AND THEIR CASH.

RATHER

So there's real money in this to be made.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

There's big money to be made. When you break it down everybody's got to be paid.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SCHEPER-HUGHES' RESEARCH HAS BROUGHT HER FACE TO FACE WITH SELLERS AND BUYERS, BROKERS AND DOCTORS, FROM BRAZIL TO SOUTH AFRICA, FROM ISRAEL TO NEW YORK.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

And if I go and talk to the buyers and I say I know who you sold to.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SHE'S SO CONNECTED THAT SHE SAYS ALLEGED BROOKLYN ORGAN BROKER ISAAC ROSENBAUM APPEARED ON HER RADAR YEARS AGO.

RATHER

You had alerted the FBI, how long before they broke this case?

NANCY SCHEPER-HUGHES

Oh, about six years.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT SCHEPER-HUGHES SAYS THE FBI REFUSED TO TAKE HER SERIOUSLY.

RATHER

You talked to the FBI agent and he said quote, "Lady you're all over the place" and you said well so is this.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

So is- so is organ's trafficking.

RATHER

And so six years later they broke the story.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

They broke the story. And I said there's Isaac Rosenbaum's picture, I said they got him.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THERE'S NO WAY TO KNOW IF FEDERAL AUTHORITIES USED THE RESEARCH SCHEPER-HUGHES' HAD PRESENTED THEM. IN A STATEMENT, THE FBI REFUSED TO DISCUSS THE CASE WITH US, CITING THE ONGOING INVESTIGATION. ROSENBAUM'S LAWYER, RICHARD FINKEL, DECLINED TO COMMENT ON THE CASE. BUT THE HIGH-PROFILE ARREST WAS ENOUGH TO LAUNCH SCHEPER-HUGHES ON HER LATEST MISSION. FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT WAS FOCUSED ON THE SHADOWY ORGAN TRAFFICKERS, AND SCHEPER-HUGHES WANTED TO SEE HOW THEY WOULD RESPOND. SOON AFTER THE BROOKLYN ARREST, SCHEPER-HUGHES AGREED TO TAKE US TO SOME OF THE HOTSPOTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN HUMAN ORGANS -- WE PAID FOR HER TRAVEL EXPENSES... I MET HER IN MOLDOVA, A COUNTRY SHE'S CALLED ATTENTION TO FOR YEARS BECAUSE IT HAD BECOME A GO-TO PLACE FOR KIDNEYS. AFTER FOLLOWING CLUES FROM CASES ALL OVER THE WORLD, SHE ENDED UP HERE, A SLEEPY TOWN, EVEN BY MOLDOVAN STANDARDS. BUT THE TOWN OF MINGIR WAS WELL KNOWN TO ORGAN TRAFFICKERS, AND NOW, THANKS TO THE RESEARCH OF SCHEPER-HUGHES, THE SECRET IS OUT. OVER THE YEARS, SHE HAS DOCUMENTED MORE THAN 20 VILLAGERS AROUND HERE WHO SOLD THEIR KIDNEYS, AND SHE SUSPECTS THERE ARE HUNDREDS MORE ACROSS MOLDOVA. SHE SAYS IT IS IN VILLAGES LIKE MINGIR THAT YOU CAN SEE THE HUMAN COST OF THE BLACK MARKET IN ORGANS -- A COST KIDNEY BUYERS ABROAD PREFER TO IGNORE.

RATHER

Let's say that my sister needs a transplant. She's 161 on the list or whatever it is, and what's wrong with saying look I don't care who gives it I don't know where we have to go to get it, lets saddle up, go, pay the money, get it done. What's wrong with that?

SCHEPER-HUGHES

Well, it's just wrong to take kidneys from people who don't understand the consequences. They don't understand the pain they are going through, and especially the people who are the sellers are the most vulnerable to kidney disease afterwards.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

IN MINGIR, AS WITH MANY VILLAGES IN MOLDOVA, YOU WON'T SEE MANY ABLE-BODIED YOUNG MEN IN CHURCH ON SUNDAYS -- MOST ARE WORKING LOW-PAYING JOBS IN TURKEY OR RUSSIA. UNTIL RECENTLY, LITTLE CONNECTED MINGIR TO THE REST OF THE WORLD... BUT THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION BROUGHT A WAVE OF ORGANIZED CRIMINALS EAGER TO EXPLOIT THE VULNERABLE CITIZENS OF ONE OF

EUROPE'S POOREST COUNTRIES. THEY FIRST TARGETED MOLDOVA'S WOMEN, BINDING THOUSANDS INTO FORCED PROSTITUTION AND TURNING THE SMALL COUNTRY INTO A MAJOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING HUB... AND THEN, 10 YEARS AGO, THE SAME CRIMINALS FOUND A WAY TO ALSO MAKE MONEY OFF OF YOUNG MEN. MEN LIKE NICOLAE BARDAN. THE FARMER AND WELDER WAS ONE OF THE FIRST HERE TO SELL A KIDNEY. LIKE MANY, HE WAS DESPERATE TO TAKE CARE OF HIS FAMILY AND WILLING TO LEAP HEADFIRST INTO THE UNKNOWN. WHEN SCHEPER HUGHES FIRST MET BARDAN IN 2003, FOUR YEARS AFTER HE SOLD HIS KIDNEY, HE WAS REGRETFUL AND IN POOR HEALTH. ON THIS TRIP, SHE WAS EAGER TO CATCH UP WITH HIM AND HIS WIFE OLGA.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

I think about them often. And want to know how they are doing now and how things... because things were very shaky when we were here.

NICOLAE BARDAN, KIDNEY SELLER (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

It's hard. We have no stable work.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BARDAN SAYS HE USED THE MONEY TO BUILD A HOUSE FOR HIS FAMILY, AND THAT IS WHERE I MET HIM.

RATHER

How do you do?

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

WE WANTED TO KNOW WHETHER HIS ORDEAL WAS WORTH IT.

BARDAN (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

They paid me very badly. Later, I found out that kidneys cost much more than they paid me. They could at least have paid half. But they didn't give us much.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

WHILE BUYERS SPEND UP TO \$200,000 FOR A KIDNEY, MOST OF THE MONEY GOES TO A WEB OF MIDDLEMEN. EVERYONE FROM BROKERS TO ROGUE SURGEONS, TO BRIBED POLICE AND CORRUPT CUSTOMS AND BORDER OFFICIALS... ALL THE AVERAGE SELLER GETS OUT OF THE DEAL IF HE'S LUCK IS ABOUT \$3,000... AND A TELL-TALE SCAR.

RATHER

Oh my goodness. From here down to over here.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AND MANY, LIKE BARDAN, SAY THEY WERE UNWILLING SELLERS TO BEGIN WITH.

RATHER

You thought you were going to Turkey to do what?

BARDAN (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

To work there.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

HE SAYS A LOCAL WOMAN, WORKING AS A RECRUITER FOR THE TRAFFICKING NETWORK, BROUGHT HIM TO TURKEY WITH THE PROMISE OF LEGITIMATE WORK... THEN TOOK HIS PASSPORT AND HELD HIM PRISONER UNTIL HE AGREED TO SELL HIS KIDNEY. THE STORIES OF YOUNG MEN BEING DUPED ARE DIFFICULT TO CORROBORATE. IN AN EARLIER INTERVIEW WITH SCHEPER-HUGHES, BARDAN SAID HE SET OFF FOR TURKEY KNOWING HE WOULD SELL HIS KIDNEY, BUT WAS MISLED ABOUT THE RISK. BUT TO ME, HE INSISTED HE HAD BEEN TRICKED.

RATHER

I want make sure I understand. When you left the village did you understand then that you will be having a kidney operation?

BARDAN (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

Only afterwards, when I came to Istanbul. They asked me if I knew why I was there. I answered that I came for work. They laughed and told me that soon I am going to see what kind of work it is going to be.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BARDAN HAD NOWHERE TO TURN. SCHEPER-HUGHES SAYS AUTHORITIES DON'T TAKE ORGAN TRAFFICKING SERIOUSLY.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

Those crimes have been put under the rug.

RATHER

And as your judgment, they are crimes?

SCHEPER-HUGHES

They are crimes, and they are defined crimes. Now, every country doesn't have an anti-trafficking for organs law, but they have laws against kidnapping people who are coerced into travel who don't know you know where they're being taken across borders.

BARDAN (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

Before the surgery, they asked us to sign a document to say we were giving our kidneys out of our free will. So that they weren't responsible.

RATHER

And did you sign that document?

BARDAN (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

Yes, I had no choice. It was right before the surgery. I was on the surgery table.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BEFORE HE HAD EVEN HEALED FROM THE SURGERY, BARDAN WAS ON A BUS RIDE BACK TO MOLDOVA-- WITH JUST ONE KIDNEY... AND A LIFETIME OF PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL PAIN.

RATHER

Do you have health problems now, what kind of health problems, if you have any?

BARDAN (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

I have pain. I feel pain at the place where the surgery was done. Even last night I had pain. Also I can not lift much weight. I don't lift more than ten or twenty kilos. If I lift, I am in pain. I also get dizzy.

RATHER

Is there anything else you want to say, anything you want people to know about this?

BARDAN (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

What can I tell people, just that they should not do this. They should avoid going through what I did. Better that they go work, and not repeat what happened here in Moldova. That's what I want to tell people.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

The culture is a very male oriented culture based on honor; codes of honor. And a, a good man is one who takes care of his family, is a good neighbor and that sense of honor was replaced by a profound, profound sense of shame which is why you know when men talk about it they cry, and these are not men who cry.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

MINGIR'S EASTERN ORTHODOX PRIEST, FATHER ANTOINE, FEELS SYMPATHY FOR THOSE WHO WERE TRICKED INTO SELLING THEIR KIDNEYS. BUT HE SAYS PURPOSEFULLY SELLING ORGANS IS AN OFFENSE TO GOD.

FATHER ANTOINE, MINGIR'S PRIEST (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

It is a sin because it is not a sacrifice made to save somebody's health. Instead, you are doing it out of greed, to get money.

RATHER

We have talked to a number of a people who had given up their kidneys, and they are ashamed, they feel guilty. Have any of them sought comfort through you and the church?

FATHER ANTOINE (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

No. They are not coming. And we can not insist and make them ask for help or confession so that they open their hearts.

RATHER

As for those who recruit the people in the village, those who run this business do you consider it to be criminal activity?

BARDAN (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

Yes, I do. I am positive that they are criminals. In the truest sense of the word. Because they use the health of the others to enrich themselves. For what they are doing they are going to answer in front of God almighty.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

IT'S NOT JUST MOLDOVAN PRIESTS WHO ARE WRESTLING WITH THE ETHICS OF ORGAN TRAFFICKING. ARTHUR CAPLAN IS DIRECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA'S CENTER FOR BIOETHICS IN PHILADELPHIA.

ARTHUR CAPLAN, DIRECTOR OF PENN CENTER FOR BIOETHICS

In a lot of our Christian, even Jewish theology, you don't own your body, it's a gift from God. You are a steward of it, it's your body but it's headed back to the gift giver.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

CAPLAN HAS GUIDED EVERYONE FROM THE WHITE HOUSE TO THE UNITED NATIONS TO DOCTORS AROUND THE WORLD THROUGH MEDICINE'S GRAY ZONES. HE IS NOW LEADING THE CONVERSATION ABOUT THE RIGHTS AND WRONGS OF KIDNEY TRANSPLANTATION. HE SAYS ADVANCES IN MEDICINE HAVE MADE KIDNEY TRANSPLANTS BETWEEN NON-FAMILY MEMBERS RELATIVELY EASY.

CAPLAN

It used to be that one limit on selling organs to others was that you had to get the biology to match.

RATHER

So your brother's organ might or might not be a fit. Your sister's organ.

CAPLAN

Might not be your fit. Your body takes one look at it and says, "Foreign tissue, we're attacking it, get it out of here." But new drugs began to appear that tamp down the body's willingness to attack those transplanted organs and the most powerful drugs today tamp down the body's defense so much that it won't attack a kidney even if it's very different.

RATHER

That's the reason they're called anti-rejection drugs. They don't reject the new kidney.

CAPLAN

That's the anti-rejection drug; they don't reject the new kidney and that opens the door to almost saying, well anybody could be used as a source for somebody else. That's a little

extreme, but it's roughly true.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

CAPLAN SAYS THESE ANTI-REJECTION DRUGS INADVERTENTLY MADE THE ILLEGAL TRADE IN KIDNEYS POSSIBLE. IT'S NOW AN UNDERGROUND ECONOMY FEEDING OFF OF INCREASED DEMAND... THERE ARE MORE THAN 83,000 PEOPLE WAITING FOR LEGAL KIDNEYS IN THE UNITED STATES ALONE. AND SOME DOCTORS AND PATIENT ADVOCATES ARGUE THERE SHOULD BE A MORE OPEN MARKET FOR ORGANS. IN A RECENT OP-ED IN THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, ONE PHYSICIAN ARGUED FOR QUOTE-"LEGITIMATE INCENTIVES TO PEOPLE WHO MIGHT BE WILLING TO DONATE."

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

What about developing, a quote commodity market. The market goes up; the market goes down, have Chicago kidney exchange. I'm not joking with you.

CAPLAN

No, no. You can treat people, like orange juice, and wheat, and oil but I think human dignity and human rights say, look there are certain ways to exchange money, there are certain ways to treat individuals and one of them isn't as a portable farm of kidneys to sell off.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

CAPLAN SAYS THAT INEVITABLY THE WORLD'S POOR SUFFER THE MOST.

CAPLAN

If you say you are going to sell a kidney, coming from a poor village or a poor nation, nobody looks out for your health or your interest once that kidney's out of your body. They toss you aside like an old piece of Kleenex. They don't care. So you're getting infections, you're getting bleeds. You've got all kinds of problems going on, it'd be pretty easy to manage if you were getting followed post donation in an American or European hospital or in a developed country. You go back as a poor person who has sold their kidney, you're in trouble.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO VLADIMIR DIMINETI. HE WAS ONE OF THE YOUNG KIDNEY SELLERS SCHEPER-HUGHES MET ON HER LAST VISIT TO MINGIR IN 2003. AT THAT TIME, HE WAS STILL SUFFERING FROM COMPLICATIONS FROM HIS OPERATION FOUR YEARS EARLIER. SCHEPER-

HUGHES WANTED TO CHECK IN ON HIM, BUT SHORTLY BEFORE OUR VISIT, SHE FOUND OUT HE HAD ALREADY DIED. SHE MET WITH VLADIMIR'S FATHER, VASILE.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

I'm so sorry.

VASILE DIMINETI, FATHER OF KIDNEY SELLER (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

If we hadn't been struggling, maybe we could have done something. But that's the way it is.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT THE FATHER DID HAVE SOME URGENT QUESTIONS FOR SCHEPER-HUGHES. HE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THE WOMAN WHO HAD RECRUITED HIS SON FOR THE KIDNEY TRAFFICKERS, THE SAME WOMAN WHO HAD COERCED NICOLAE BARDAN, WHOM WE MET EARLIER, AND DOZENS OF OTHER YOUNG MEN FROM MINGIR INTO SELLING THEIR KIDNEYS.

TRANSLATOR

He's asking us whether we know anything about that woman?

SCHEPER-HUGHES

Just that she's a criminal and she was a part of a mafia and she deserves to be in jail and she deserves to be punished.

DIMINETI (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

Hey says there were about forty boys she tricked into doing this.

RATHER

Oh, he's a tall boy. He's handsome like his father.

DIMINETI (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

Yes, of course!

RATHER

Did he know what he is getting into when he went to Turkey?

DIMINETI (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

The recruiter said she was taking them there for some work and they were going to earn some money but she did not tell them about what was going on.

RATHER

When your son came back was he all right physically, was he all right emotionally?

DIMINETI (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

Oh, no... When he came back home I was frightened. He was as yellow as wax, he was only a skeleton. He was not at all like he was in that photo.

RATHER

Well, it's a beautiful place my friend.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

DIMINETI STILL BLAMES THE KIDNEY HUNTER FOR HIS SON'S MISERY AND EVENTUAL DEATH. HE TOLD ME HE EVEN GATHERED A GROUP OF VILLAGERS TO LYNCH HER A FEW YEARS BACK.

DIMINETI (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

We could have killed her. Not just me -- there was a bunch of us. But we couldn't find her. We went to her house many times.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

MOLDOVA REMAINED ONE OF THE WORLD'S TOP SUPPLIERS OF KIDNEYS UNTIL RECENTLY. BUT WHEN SHEPER-HUGHES AND OTHER ACTIVISTS BEGAN CALLING ATTENTION TO ORGAN TRAFFICKING HERE, THE CRIMINAL NETWORKS STARTED LOOKING TO OTHER COUNTRIES FOR KIDNEYS. WHILE THE BIG BOSSES MANAGED TO STAY AHEAD OF THE LAW, THEY LEFT BEHIND LOW-LEVEL KIDNEY HUNTERS LIKE MARIN STUGARU, WHO GRANTED US A RARE INTERVIEW AT THE PRISON WHERE HE IS SERVING A 28-YEAR SENTENCE.

MARIN STUGARU, CONVICTED OF TRAFFICKING (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

My life led me to the point of doing what I did. Which maybe I should never have done.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

STUGARU WAS A DOWN AND OUT POLICE OFFICER. HE OWED A LOT OF MONEY AND SOLD HIS OWN KIDNEY TO AN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKER. AUTHORITIES SAID THAT WAS HIS GATEWAY TO BECOMING A KIDNEY HUNTER, RECRUITING OTHERS TO FEED THE DEMAND FOR ILLEGAL ORGANS. STUGARU SAYS THE FOREIGN TRAFFICKERS TOSSED HIM ASIDE ONCE THE JOB WAS DONE.

RATHER

How do you feel about the people abroad who come into this country and recruit to get kidneys, to buy kidneys. How do you feel about those people?

STUGARU (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

The people who came to me and got me into this situation were interested not in saving people but in getting money and pocketing it.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

STUGARU SAYS IT'S HIS BOSS, THE TRAFFICKER, WHO SHOULD BE IN PRISON, NOT HIM, A SELF-DESCRIBED SMALL-TIME LOCAL RECRUITER.

STUGARU (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

Nobody else is guilty except him. I have asked that any methods they use in order to find the truth to be applied on me so that I can prove that I am not guilty.

RATHER

We heard some people in the village here in Moldova use the word mafia.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

Mobsters.

RATHER

Mobsters.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

Yeah, mobsters.

Well, do you consider them to be mobsters? Is it that organized?

SCHEPER-HUGHES

Oh yes...yes! I mean it's known at the very top who's really making the money are, are the top criminal organizers who I see as a- to use, maybe it sounds rhetorical, but they are an organs mafia.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANS MAFIA... THAT SCHEPER-HUGHES SAYS HAS MADE UNLIKELY ASSOCIATES OF ALLEGED BROKERS LIKE ISAAC ROSENBAUM IN THE UNITED STATES AND SMALL TIME KIDNEY HUNTERS IN LITTLE TOWNS LIKE MINGIR.

RATHER

Father have you spoken to any of the traffickers or any of the people in the village who did the recruiting?

FATHER ANTOINE (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

No, unfortunately not. I do not know these people. If I had, I would have tried to talk to them and ask them at least to go and beg forgiveness from the people who went through this.

RATHER

Did it change your life for the better?

BARDAN (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

No, because I am not as I used to be. It changed my life because I'm infirm and shall remain like this for my entire life. And I will never be the man I used to be.

RATHER

I find myself thinking if I were you, I would be angry about what happened to me.

BARDAN (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

Sometime I do feel angry. But I am not a person who gets angry very easily. Besides I know that anger does me no good.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

NOW, WHEN WE COME BACK, WE TAKE YOU ALONG THE TRAIL FROM TINY MOLDOVA, UP THE RANKS OF THE ORGAN MAFIA TO THE DOCTORS AND TRAFFICKERS WHO MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE. YOU'LL WANT TO SEE IT SO STAY WITH US.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE SPRAWLING TURKISH CITY OF ISTANBUL... A HISTORIC CROSSROADS BRIDGING EAST AND WEST... FOR CENTURIES IT HAS BROUGHT PEOPLE AND CULTURES TOGETHER. IT'S LONG BEEN A CENTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. THE BOSPHORUS STRAIT, WHICH BISECTS ISTANBUL, SEPARATING EUROPE FROM ASIA, IS A VITAL SHIPPING PASSAGE.

ISTANBUL'S GEOGRAPHY ALSO MAKES IT A PERFECT PLACE FOR THE BLACK MARKET IN ORGANS TO FLOURISH. KIDNEY SELLERS FROM POOR COUNTRIES LIKE MOLDOVA COME TOGETHER WITH WEALTHY, DESPERATE BUYERS FROM THE WEST.

TOURISTS FLOCK HERE TO SOAK UP ISTANBUL'S BEAUTY AND HISTORY, BUT THERE WAS NO TIME FOR SIGHTSEEING WHEN NICOLAI BARDAN WAS BROUGHT HERE A DECADE AGO.

BARDAN (TRANSLATED FROM ROMANIAN)

When we reached Istanbul, they closed us in a room. In that room there were other guys, also from Moldova. There were around 7, 8, 9 people.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

UC BERKELEY PROFESSOR NANCY SCHEPER-HUGHES KNOWS BARDAN'S STORY WELL. AND SHE HAS SPENT YEARS UNCOVERING WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON IN TURKEY TO IMPOVERISHED SELLERS LIKE HIM.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

The sellers were brought in from Moldovan villages, they were trafficked in.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

OUR INVESTIGATION JOINED SCHEPER-HUGHES IN ISTANBUL TO SEE HOW TURKEY, AND ONE LOCAL SURGEON IN PARTICULAR, HELPED MAKE THE INTERNATIONAL ORGAN TRADE POSSIBLE.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

The operations took place here in Istanbul by a doctor who was, one of the founders of

transplant medicine in Istanbul, he was- studied in Paris, he was considered a brilliant doctor, but he decided to throw it all away, essentially to conduct illegal operations.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THIS IS THAT DOCTOR, YUSUF SONMEZ, SEEN HERE ON TURKISH TELEVISION. HE ADMITTED TO PERFORMING THOUSANDS OF TRANSPLANTS AND HAS BEEN ARRESTED REPEATEDLY FOR ORGAN TRAFFICKING -- LIKE AFTER THIS 2007 RAID... BUT SINCE CHARGES AGAINST HIM HAVE NEVER STUCK, HE'S NEVER SERVED MORE THAN A FEW MONTHS IN JAIL. AND HE KEEPS RETURNING TO THE BLACK MARKET HE PIONEERED...

SCHEPER-HUGHES WAS EAGER TO FIND OUT IF ONE OF SONMEZ'S BUSIEST CLINICS WAS STILL IN BUSINESS... BUT THE DOCTOR HAD MOVED ON... IT'S NOW A NURSING HOME, AND ITS STAFF WANTED TO MAKE IT CLEAR THEY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH ORGAN TRAFFICKING.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

Did he know what was going on here?

SCHEPER-HUGHES

Yusuf Sonmez was known as Dr. Vulture in Moldova because over the years he had transplanted over two thousand patients illegally using donors, some of whom were been coerced from Moldova.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SCHEPER-HUGHES SAYS SONMEZ PLAYED A VITAL ROLE IN GLOBALIZING THE CASH-FOR-KIDNEY BUSINESS. HE GOT HIS START MORE THAN A DECADE AGO, MATCHING WEALTHY TURKISH KIDNEY PATIENTS WITH POOR SELLERS AND PERFORMING THE TRANSPLANTS. BUT BUSINESS TRULY TOOK OFF AFTER SONMEZ TEAMED UP WITH AN ISRAELI COUNTERPART, DR. ZAKI SHAPIRA, WHO WAS ABLE TO TAP INTO A WAVE OF NEW ISRAELI CLIENTS. SHAPIRA'S LAWYER MAINTAINS HIS CLIENT'S INNOCENCE.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

This place was run like a factory, they basically were bringing bodies in and you know doing one or two a night, and you know it was very, very productive and very profitable. Some of the Israeli buyers said, I took my life in my hands going to this place, why would I trust a place that had fewer medications than I had in my- in my medicine chest at home. And he said a skeletal a staff, he said I though transplants you needed ten

people, and he said it looked like that everybody, including the cleaning lady, was involved in being drawn in to help out at this surgeries.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

PROFESSOR SCHEPER-HUGHES GOT A GLIMPSE IN 2003, WHEN SHE POSED AS AN ASSOCIATE OF SHAPIRA, AND SNUCK INSIDE.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

I went upstairs and I found that there were two Israelis and two Romanians or Moldovans being housed and at that point they came after us, and we were basically thrown out.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THOUGH SHE WAS HOT ON SONMEZ'S TRAIL FOR YEARS, SCHEPER-HUGHES HAS NEVER PERSONALLY CONFRONTED SONMEZ. BUT IN 2007, TURKISH TELEVISION REPORTER MEHMET ALI ONEL SAT DOWN WITH THE DOCTOR FOR A LENGTHY INTERVIEW THAT CAPTIVATED THE COUNTRY.

MEHMET ALI ONEL, TURKISH REPORTER (TRANSLATED FROM TURKISH)

He doesn't think that it's a mafia job that he is doing. He thinks that he is serving for humankind.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

ONEL HAS BEEN INVESTIGATING SONMEZ AND ORGAN TRAFFICKING IN TURKEY FOR 15 YEARS. HE WAS THE FIRST TO EXPOSE SONMEZ TO THE PUBLIC, AND DESCRIBED THE SURGEON AS CHARMING, INTELLIGENT AND CHILLINGLY DETACHED. THE SURGEON DESCRIBED HIMSELF AS A SIMPLE INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN RICH PATIENTS AND POOR PEOPLE WITH KIDNEYS TO SPARE. ONEL TOLD US SONMEZ WAS SO DETERMINED TO CONTINUE HIS WORK THAT AFTER HIS LAST ARREST, HE FLED TO AZERBAIJAN, WHERE HE REMAINS BUSY PERFORMING TRANSPLANTS. SCHEPER-HUGHES WANTED TO SEE WHETHER DRIVING THE NOTORIOUS DR. SONMEZ ABROAD HAD REALLY MADE AN IMPACT ON TURKEY'S ILLEGAL ORGAN TRADE. SO SHE WENT TO SPEAK TO THE MAN WHO ACTUALLY TRAINED SONMEZ IN HOW TO CONDUCT TRANSPLANTS - ONE DR. ULUG EREZ.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

You trained Dr. Sonmez. What went wrong?

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BY DR. EREZ'S ACCOUNT, SONMEZ WAS AN EXCELLENT SURGEON... BUT HAD QUESTIONABLE ETHICS FROM THE BEGINNING, LEADING EREZ TO EVENTUALLY DISTANCE HIMSELF FROM HIS FORMER STUDENT. EREZ NOW DIRECTS THE KIDNEY UNIT AT ISTANBUL'S STATE HOSPITAL AND HAS BEEN PUT IN CHARGE OF FINDING A WAY TO REGULATE HIS COUNTRY'S ORGAN TRAFFICKING PROBLEM. HE STARTED WITH HIS OWN HOSPITAL, SETTING UP A PANEL THAT CAREFULLY SCRUTINIZES EVERY PROSPECTIVE TRANSPLANT...

DR. ULUG EREZ, TURKISH DOCTOR

If we see anything wrong , we say no, it's not possible to make any transplant. This is closed.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT DETERMINED TRAFFICKERS HAVE FOUND THAT DODGING THESE MEASURES IS AS SIMPLE AS SHOPPING AROUND TO ISTANBUL'S PRIVATE HOSPITALS, WHICH HAVE LESS STRINGENT STANDARDS.

EREZ

They are private hospitals in order to gain money, not state hospitals, not university hospitals. Because if you have money, they will say, "Ok, come."

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BY 2008, ISTANBUL HAD BECOME SUCH A CENTER FOR ILLEGAL TRANSPLANTS THAT AN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRANSPLANT DOCTORS CHOSE IT AS THE SITE FOR THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT ON ORGAN TRAFFICKING. HUNDREDS OF PHYSICIANS FROM NEARLY 80 COUNTRIES RELEASED AN UNPRECEDENTED STATEMENT CONDEMNING THE PRACTICE. SCHEPER-HUGHES SAYS THE DECLARATION WAS COMMENDABLE, BUT IN THE END, TOOTHLESS.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

They're transplant professionals. They want to you know, to handle it through their norms, through their network and...

RATHER

Police themselves.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

Police themselves, and I have constantly said the next meeting has to have law authority, it has to have anti-trafficking people and they don't want to go there.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THERE ARE SIGNS IN ISTANBUL THAT POLICE ARE FINALLY CRACKING DOWN. THE SAME DAY WE SPOKE TO DR. EREZ, TURKISH POLICE ROUNDED UP MORE THAN 40 ALLEGED KIDNEY TRAFFICKERS. BUT AUTHORITIES HERE ARE STILL FIGHTING AN UPHILL BATTLE AGAINST AN INSATIABLE GLOBAL DEMAND FOR KIDNEYS.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

They feel it's very very hard at this point to control. People know about Turkey as one of the places where you can be transplanted and they want living donors, and they'll pay whatever necessary to get them.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

BUT TRANSPLANTS OF BLACK MARKET KIDNEYS ARE NOT LIMITED TO PLACES LIKE TURKEY. SCHEPER-HUGHES AND SEVERAL OTHER SOURCES FOR OUR INVESTIGATION TOLD US A NUMBER OF SURGEONS AT TOP-NOTCH AMERICAN HOSPITALS HAVE TRANSPLANTED KIDNEYS PURCHASED ON THE BLACK MARKET. BIOETHICIST ARTHUR CAPLAN SAYS THESE DOCTORS JUSTIFY TURNING A BLIND EYE BY SAYING THEIR OBLIGATION IS TO THEIR PATIENTS.

CAPLAN

I don't want to believe that some of our finest and best institutions would be involved in exploitation, would be involved in what I consider human rights abuses, would be involved in what I consider racketeering by these bridge and middle men folks that do it, but I fear some of them are. I think that you can justify it by saying I've got people dying and my job is to them. It isn't to Moldovans, it isn't to people in the Dominican Republic, it's not to people from Egypt it's to the waiting list that exists here in Houston, New York, Los Angeles today, that's my worry. Whatever it takes to get them better, that's what I do. I don't accept that as an ethic but I think that's partly how they might justify it.

RATHER

But no U.S physician I know would do this.

CAPLAN

Well, American doctors kind of wind up getting away with this because they don't look very hard. What I mean by that is if you meet your donor on the web and you're a transplant center doc, you wind up saying, you know I'm glad you're here Dan and I'm glad you want to give your kidney to Art. Now is it really true that you want to give your kidney to Art? And you would say, ummm hmmm --Well, that's good enough for me then I'm not going to ask any further questions.

RATHER

Don't ask, don't tell?

CAPLAN

Don't ask don't tell. You're basically not going to push, and why wouldn't you push? It's because you want the business, we don't have enough organs around and you've got people waiting to get them and you make money, significant amounts of money by doing the transplants.

RATHER

But surely they can't do it, or do they, in hospitals? No hospital would put up with this.

CAPLAN

No, they do it inside hospitals.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

IN A 2009 REPORT HE PREPARED FOR THE UNITED NATIONS -- ONE THAT REPEATEDLY CITES SCHEPER-HUGHES' RESEARCH -- CAPLAN CALLED FOR ENFORCING CRIMINAL PENALTIES AGAINST COMPLICIT DOCTORS.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

WE LOOKED INTO TWO CASES WHERE TRAFFICKED KIDNEYS WERE ALLEGEDLY TRANSPLANTED BY AMERICAN DOCTORS, IN AMERICAN HOSPITALS. WE COULD NOT INDEPENDENTLY CONFIRM THE ALLEGATIONS -- MANY OF THE PARTIES INVOLVED, INCLUDING THE HOSPITALS, REFUSED TO SPEAK ON CAMERA. BUT SCHEPER-HUGHES TOLD ME SHE HAD FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE OF TWO RECENT CASES AT WELL-KNOWN AMERICAN HOSPITALS -- INCLUDING ONE IN LOS ANGELES THAT SHE SAYS SHE WITNESSED HERSELF AFTER BEING TIPPED OFF BY AN INFORMANT.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

There was a purchase online through Craig's list and two people present themselves. You know, one is Asian, you know one is Anglo and they don't really know each other at all. In fact, they are very nervous about each other... they have not even I would say, a cockamamie story... and they...

RATHER

And they went through.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

And they went through without any problem, and twenty-five thousands dollars went through an elevator that was carried up by the member of the extended family and the money was paid, I believe in a hallway or I believe it was a bathroom behind the surgical unit.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

SCHEPER-HUGHES SAYS THIS TOOK PLACE AT THE RENOWNED LOS ANGELES' HOSPITAL CEDARS-SINAI. WE REACHED OUT TO THE HOSPITAL TO HEAR THEIR SIDE OF THE STORY. IN A FOLLOW UP EMAIL, WE ALSO ASKED A CEDARS SPOKESWOMAN SEVERAL GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW THE HOSPITAL SCREENS DONORS. BUT THE SPOKESWOMAN DECLINED TO RESPOND, CITING PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY RULES, AND INSTEAD ISSUED A STATEMENT THAT SAID, QUOTE: "IF AT ANY TIME DURING THE EVALUATION PROCESS THE TRANSPLANT TEAM SUSPECTS THE DONOR IS INAPPROPRIATELY BEING PAID FOR A KIDNEY, THE TRANSPLANT IS CANCELLED." NO ONE HAS ALLEGED CEDARS DOCTORS BROKE THE LAW, WERE PART OF THE TRANSACTION, OR WERE AWARE THE KIDNEY HAD BEEN PURCHASED -- BUT SCHEPER-HUGHES SAYS THAT THEY COULD HAVE, SHOULD HAVE DONE A BETTER JOB SCREENING.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THEN THERE'S THE CASE OF NICK ROSEN... A FEW YEARS AGO, THE ISRAELI MAN SENT SCHEPER-HUGHES A HOMEMADE VIDEOTAPE THAT DOCUMENTED HIM GIVING ONE OF HIS KIDNEYS TO A STRANGER FOR TRANSPLANT. ROSEN SAYS HE WAS MATCHED WITH THE RECIPIENT, A LONG ISLAND MAN, THROUGH AN ISRAELI TRAFFICKER. THE TRANSPLANT TOOK PLACE AT MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL IN NEW YORK. ROSEN SAYS HE RECEIVED \$20,000 AFTERWARDS. IN A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW, ROSEN TOLD US HE SIMPLY WANTED TO SAVE A STRANGER'S LIFE. THE RECIPIENT DIDN'T RESPOND TO SEVERAL REQUESTS FOR AN INTERVIEW WE MADE TO HIS WIFE. A MOUNT SINAI SPOKESMAN ALSO DECLINED TO COMMENT.

RATHER

You spend a great deal of time on ethics, what's right, what's wrong what are gray areas when it comes to physicians, nurses, and hospitals. What ethical obligation do hospitals have when it comes to verifying kidneys, verifying that they were not purchased. What are their- what are their ethical obligations?

CAPLAN

Every hospital has a duty that they owe to the potential recipient to verify the identity, health status and competency of the person who is there to donate. You have an absolute duty to check aggressively. I know they're not the FBI in hospitals. I've been around hospitals a long time, you can't get the facts fully on everybody. Time is limited and we don't send detectives out to track down. But basic simple verification. Basic, simple questioning. That ought to be a part of standard expected practice.

RATHER

That would be their ethical obligation.

CAPLAN

That's their ethical obligation.

RATHER

Do they have any legal obligations?

CAPLAN

They don't really have a legal obligation right now because we haven't established a clear standard of care in the U.S. about how to deal with donors who may be sellers.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

U.S. PROSECUTORS SAY ISAAC ROSENBAUM, THE ALLEGED BROOKLYN BROKER, BROUGHT KIDNEY SELLERS FROM ISRAEL TO AMERICAN HOSPITALS, WHERE DOCTORS REMOVED THEIR ORGANS. THE FBI SAYS THEY HAVE RECORDINGS OF ROSENBAUM REFERRING TO HIMSELF AS A QUOTE-"MATCHMAKER," BRIDGING HIS CLIENTS TO THE ISRAELI SELLERS. THE ISRAELI CONNECTION IS NOT INCIDENTAL. FOR YEARS, ISRAEL HAS BEEN AT THE NEXUS OF THE BLACKMARKET ORGAN TRADE. THE COUNTRY HAS A DISPROPORTIONATELY LONG WAITING LIST FOR ORGANS -- ITS LARGE ORTHODOX POPULATION IS UNCOMFORTABLE WITH HARVESTING ORGANS FROM THE DEAD, EVEN THOUGH RELIGIOUS LEADERS HAVE CONDONED THE PRACTICE. SCHEPER-HUGHES HAS

TRAVELED TO ISRAEL SEVERAL TIMES, AND WE ACCOMPANIED HER AS PART OF OUR INVESTIGATION. ON PAST VISITS, SHE HAD CULTIVATED CONTACTS WITH TRAFFICKERS, SELLERS AND BUYERS. THEY PREVIOUSLY HAD SPOKEN TO HER QUITE OPENLY -- BUT SHE SOON DISCOVERED THE SPOTLIGHT OF THE ROSENBAUM ARREST, COMBINED WITH NEW ANTI-TRAFFICKING LAWS IN ISRAEL, HAD DRIVEN HER SOURCES DEEPER INTO THE SHADOWS.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

It's absolutely a taboo topic right now, in fact the word taboo has come up. People in Israel are good talkers, they- they'll you know, generally are very, very open, and will talk about almost anything. But now the people who would have not thought twice about giving an interview, especially in the medical profession, say we're not gonna, we just- this- it can only reflect badly on us.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

WE DID FIND AN ISRAELI FAMILY WILLING TO SHARE THEIR STORY--THE NAGAUERS- FATHER YECHIZKEL, MOTHER BAT-SHEVA, AND DAUGHTER RIKI SHAY, SAID THEY ARE SO DESPERATE FOR JUSTICE, THEY ARE WILLING TO COME FORWARD. BOTH PARENTS SUFFER FROM KIDNEY FAILURE, A COMPLICATION OF THEIR DIABETES. BAT-SHEVA NAGAUER HAS BEEN WAITING ON A TRANSPLANT LIST FOR MORE THAN A DECADE, AND HAD HER LEGS AMPUTATED RECENTLY. HER HUSBAND ALSO WAITED FOR A KIDNEY FOR MANY YEARS. WATCHING HIS WIFE DETERIORATE, YECHIZKEL NAGAUER BECAME DESPERATE.

SHAY

My father didn't want to be my mother, because my mother is waiting, still waiting, but while she is waiting they took her legs, they took her everything. So, he wants to take the chance to live.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

SO IN APRIL 2009, HE TOOK DESPERATE ACTION: HE PLACED AN ADVERTISEMENT IN A LOCAL NEWSPAPER SEEKING A KIDNEY DONOR. ACCORDING TO THE FAMILY, THE FIRST TO RESPOND WAS THIS BROKER, YOSSI TZE-IRI... HE'S SHOWN HERE IN HIDDEN CAMERA FOOTAGE RECORDED FOR A STORY ABOUT THE NAGAUERS THAT RAN ON THE ISRAELI TELEVISION PROGRAM UVDA. TZE-IRI SAID THAT -- FOR \$100,000 -- NAGAUER COULD BUY A NEW KIDNEY... BUT THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO TRAVEL THE THOUSANDS OF MILES TO CHINA FOR THE TRANSPLANT, AND WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE RIGHT AWAY.

SHAY

He told him that in two days he can have a new kidney and a new life. He sold- sold him a big story, and the next day he was in the airport.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

NAGAUKEER DIDN'T TELL ANYONE IN HIS FAMILY WHERE HE WAS GOING... AND FOR TWO WEEKS, DIDN'T ANSWER HIS DAUGHTERS' FRANTIC PHONE CALLS. RICKI SHAY RECALLS THE CHILL SHE FELT WHEN AT LAST HE PICKED UP THE TELEPHONE, AND SHE HEARD HIS WEAK VOICE ON THE OTHER END OF THE LINE.

SHAY

He said to me once sentence, they are killing me here, come and rescue me.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

FURIOUS AND FRIGHTENED, SHE DROVE TO JERUSALEM TO CONFRONT THE MAN SHE LEARNED HAD SENT HER FATHER ABROAD, THE BROKER SHE NOW REFERS TO AS "THE KILLER."

SHAY

I talked to that killer in Jerusalem that told me you are not going there, you just sitting home and pray for your father, that's all, you are not going to China. I told him if he will not give me his address I will hunt him.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

THE BROKER EVENTUALLY RELENTED, AND SHAY AND HER SISTER SET OFF FOR CHINA TO RESCUE THEIR FATHER. SHE FILMED THEIR TRAVELS WITH HER CELL PHONE. WHEN THE TWO ARRIVED AT THE HOSPITAL, THEY COULD BARELY RECOGNIZE THEIR FATHER.

SHAY

I can't imagine in my worst dream that my father is in this place.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

HE WAS BLOATED...UNCONSCIOUS...AND TOO FRAIL TO MAKE THE LONG RETURN TRIP HOME TO ISRAEL, SO THEY CHARTERED A SPECIAL MEDICAL FLIGHT COSTING TENS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS, AND EVACUATED HIM TO HONG KONG.

SHAY

It was a very terrifying picture to look at him. He was lying and do nothing, he couldn't open his eyes, he couldn't speak.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

NOW BACK HOME, NAGAUKEER APPEARS TO BE HEALTHIER, BUT LOOKS ARE DECEIVING. HE IS ACTUALLY IN WORSE OVERALL HEALTH THEN WHEN HE LEFT FOR CHINA BECAUSE THE DOCTORS THERE BOTCHED THE TRANSPLANT. HIS NEW KIDNEY IS FAILING, AND THE RETIRED SOLDIER IS NOW WEAKER THAN EVER -- AND BACK ON DIALYSIS SEVERAL HOURS A WEEK.

SHAY

He is very tired very weak, he don't have the power to stand. I think my father became older, 20 years. So my father's life changed because he's not the person he was before.

RATHER (VOICE OVER)

WE CALLED THE ALLEGED BROKER FOR AN INTERVIEW AND HE DECLINED. BUT RICKI SHAY AND SCHEPER-HUGHES WERE DETERMINED TO CONFRONT HIM. SHAY SHOWED UP AT HIS HOME WITH A COUPLE OF FRIENDS. THE ALLEGED BROKER WOULDN'T COME DOWN, AND THAT'S WHEN THINGS GOT UGLY.

RATHER

Do you ever reach the point where you say this is such an ugly underbelly of society.

SCHEPER-HUGHES

Yeah.

RATHER

I'm sick of it, don't want anything more to do with it?

SCHEPER-HUGHES

Well, I feel that way sometimes I just want it to be over. That or you know really go after the criminals, but don't let it go into this total gray zone of where it's invisible and there's no regulation, no laws, anything can happen to people.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

IN A MOMENT, AN UPDATE ON THIS FAMILIES STORY AND SOME FINAL THOUGHTS. THAT'S NEXT.

RATHER (ON CAMERA)

IN REPORTING THIS STORY WE WERE STRUCK BY HOW DEEP THE SUFFERING IS FOR MANY PEOPLE TOUCHED BY THE BLACK MARKET KIDNEY TRADE. THE DESPERATE PATIENTS WHO TAKE ON IMMENSE RISK AND EXPENSE TRYING TO SAVE THEIR LIVES, THE EXPLOITED SELLERS AND THE FAMILIES OF BOTH. WE RECENTLY LEARNED THAT THE ISRAELI MOTHER WE MET WHO LOST BOTH LEGS WHILE WAITING SO MANY YEARS FOR A KIDNEY TRANSPLANT DIED SHORTLY AFTER OUR VISIT. HER WIDOWER WHO UNDERWENT THE UNDERGROUND TRANSPLANT IN CHINA HAS GOTTEN EVEN SICKER. THE KIDNEY HE PURCHASED IS FAILING FAST. HIS DAUGHTER RICKI SHAY WHO RESCUED HIM FROM THE CLINIC IN CHINA SAYS SHE'S NOW GOING TO RESCUE HIM AGAIN, THIS TIME BY GIVING HIM ONE OF HER OWN KIDNEYS. BUT THE TRAGEDY CONTINUES, THE FAMILY SAYS THEY HAVE LEARNED THAT THE CHINESE DONOR WHO SOLD HER KIDNEY TO MR. NAGAUKEER HAS DIED FROM COMPLICATIONS OF THE SURGERY. SHE WAS A TEENAGE GIRL. AND THAT'S OUR PROGRAM FOR TONIGHT, FROM NEW YORK, FOR HDNET, DAN RATHER REPORTING, GOODNIGHT.