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Contributor (s)

1. Ms. Neha Elsa John
2. Ms. Akshara B

THE MISSING CASE OF ELISA LAM

Ms. Neha Elsa John
Ms. Akshara B

Elisa Lam (21), also known as Lam Ho Yi, was a Canadian student in British Columbia in Vancouver. She was last seen on 31st January 2013, in Cecil Hotel, Los Angeles, California where she had checked in a few days before she went missing. Elisa started her journey from San Diego in California to Los Angeles. She had planned to check out on the 31st of January and travel to Santa Cruz. She always wanted to travel around the US, and she had been constantly contacting her parents, telling them about her adventures. After the 31st of January, the relatives reported her missing to the police since they did not get any information about her.

On 19th February 2013, as per complaints of Cecil's guests about the water tasting weird and having dark colour, a maintenance guy checked the water tanks on the rooftop of the hotel. Elisa Lam was found dead in one of the tanks, where she was found floating naked. She had been lying there for at least 2 weeks. In June 2013, Los Angeles County Coroner's office ruled the death accidental due to drowning, and the autopsy result confirmed that there was no trace of drugs in her system.

The footage released by the security camera placed on the Cecil hotel's elevator shows the last minutes of Elisa before facing her death. Her behaviour was the subject of numerous speculations and analysis. Body language experts confirmed that she manifested anxiety and stress and even looked playful and excited at some point.

In her blog, she mentioned that she was on medication. Her prescription suggested that she suffered from bipolar disorder, which was later confirmed by the LAPD and autopsy report. One thing to be noticed in the

case is that she had been sharing her room with another person when she checked in. After two days, the front desk got a call complaining about Elisa's odd behaviour, and they felt discomfort in staying with her. Later on, Elisa was moved to another single room, and this floor was not under CCTV surveillance.

She once wrote on her Tumblr: "Would I become psychotic and want to off myself? I doubt that very, much yes there is a huge risk that will happen. I wouldn't do anything rash like actually jump off a high bridge, I'm too much of a coward. Instead, I will just lie in my bed and let the days pass by. That's my physical manifestation sleeping for days in my bed."

Theories behind her death:

- **Bipolar Disorder:** Elisa Lam was mentally ill, and she used to take antidepressants, antipsychotics, and mood stabilizers. According to the toxicology report, on the day of her missing, she had taken antidepressants and not the other medicines. Antidepressants alone can cause severe mania, inducing symptoms like hallucination, delusion, paranoia, catatonia, and lack of insight.
- **Elevator game:** Another popular theory about her death is the Elevator Game. The Elevator Game is a ritual that originated on a Korean website. When performed properly, you can supposedly be transported to another dimension. After her death, the footage of the elevator went viral, and that showed Elisa acting very oddly in it, pressing random buttons, talking to seemingly nobody. This raised suspicions that she was playing the Elevator Game.

Mysteries behind the Cecil Hotel:

The Cecil Hotel is a budget hotel in Downtown Los Angeles, built in 1924. The hotel has a checkered history, with many suicides and deaths occurring there. The first case was reported on January 22, 1927 - a suicide attempt by Percy Ormand Cook. Subsequently, there

were many more suicidal attempts and deaths, one among them being the missing case of Elisa Lam.

The serial killer, Richard Ramirez, infamously called “The Night Stalker”, guilty of killing 40 women during the ‘80s, had been living in this hotel. Also, the Austrian prostitute serial killer from Vienna, Jack Unterweger, stayed at the hotel, where he committed several homicides.

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Myth - Polygraph test can be done on the suspect without their consent.

Fact - Forensic Psychology tests such as polygraphy, narco analysis and BEOS (Brain Electrical Oscillation Signature Profiling) are conducted only if the subject consents to it.