

The Innocent Teen Who Died After Being Stuck to a Couch for 12 Years

The last time neighbors saw Lacey Fletcher was in 2007. At that time, she was in her early twenties. Years went by, and no one saw or heard from her. At least not until a call to 911 by her mother, Sheila Fletcher, at 2:27 a.m. on January 3rd, 2022, brought emergency responders into the Fletchers' home.

Before they arrived at the scene, Sheila and her husband, Clay, went through the motions of performing CPR on Lacey while following the 911 dispatcher's instructions over the phone.

So the emergency responders expected to find an unresponsive or, worse, a dead body at the Fletchers' home. But the scene they walked into was so horrific, it left them with a memory so haunting, it'd be etched in their minds forever.

First came the sordid stench that engulfed the entire house, and then the gruesome sight.

Before them, on a worn-down brown leather couch right in the center of the Fletchers' home, was Lacey, seated upright with her legs crossed. Her eyes were wide open, and her upper lip was drawn upward, exposing her teeth. But that wasn't even the horrifying bit. Lacey wasn't just sitting on the couch. She was covered in so much fecal matter that her emaciated ninety-six-pound body had melted into the leather cushions, creating a hollow filled with urine and feces.

Lacey's entire body was in a horrific state. Her hair was matted and crawling with insects. Her skin was covered in flesh-eating ulcers that left portions of her bone exposed, and maggots were feeding off her wounds. Her tissues and bones were so deteriorated from years of neglect that they'd begun to decay. Even the floor beneath the couch was buckling from years of accumulated waste.

Lacey's entire existence revolved around that couch. She sat in the same position on her couch prison for over twelve years, unable or unwilling to escape, even when insects crawled down her face from her infested hair or when maggots feasted on her open wounds. Even the pain from ulcers gnawing at her bones wasn't enough to get her off the couch. She could see her flesh rotting before her eyes, yet she remained glued in place by her own feces.

But Lacey Fletcher wasn't always the woman stuck to a couch. She was once a vibrant young girl who attended school, played volleyball, and loved Disney movies. However, in her mid-teens, a shift occurred. Lacey's interests no longer matched those of kids her age. So, she

progressively withdrew into herself. It was at this point that she was diagnosed with autism and social anxiety disorder. Shortly after, Lacey's parents withdrew her from school and enrolled her in a home-schooling program, citing severe social anxiety and developmental challenges as their reason.

Although she was withdrawn, Lacey was occasionally sighted around the neighborhood up until she was twenty-one. After that, she vanished completely from public view.

In her final moments, hunger drove Lacey to eat whatever she could lay her hands on, which in this case was couch foam coated in feces. While their daughter starved, Sheila and Clay Fletcher were away on their New Year's vacation. They returned home on the 2nd of January, and by 3:07 on the 3rd of January 2022, 36-year-old Lacey was declared dead.

The autopsy report showed that she died from sepsis, caused by severe malnutrition and medical neglect. Lacey was neglected and treated worse than a captive animal by the people who were meant to love and protect her.

In May 2022, Sheila and Clay Fletcher were indicted for second-degree murder. After a series of indictments and technical dismissals, they eventually pleaded no contest to manslaughter and were sentenced to 40 years in prison, with 20 years suspended.

Clay and Sheila's defence for letting their daughter rot was that it was her choice not to leave the couch, and since she was an adult at the time, they were simply respecting her wishes. The Fletchers chose to ignore Lacey's developmental and psychological issues even when it was obvious that she needed help desperately.

This makes me wonder whether Sheila and Clay Fletcher truly loved Lacey, or whether resentment toward her special needs led them to withhold the care and attention she so desperately needed. Also, in a small town like Slaughter, Louisiana, where everyone knew everyone's business, was it possible that not a single person knew what was happening in the Fletchers' household, or did they choose to look the other way? Let me know what you think in the comments.