

Dear Zachary: a letter to a son about his father



An Oscilloscope Laboratories production

By Kurt Kuenzle

OSCILLOSCOPE

MSNBC Films Presentation of Dear Zachary: a letter to a son about his father



PBS International

1 x 90

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“What begins as a poignant tribute to filmmaker Kurt Kuenne’s dead best friend snowballs into a gut-wrenching true-crime story, a film that, like the twist-filled events it covers, isn’t always what it appears to be.”—Variety

*“It is impossible not to be fired up by Kurt Kuenne’s incendiary *cri de Coeur*.”*
—The New York Times

Andrew Bagby was 28 years old when he died. Before his untimely passing, he was working as a doctor in a small Pennsylvania town. Warm and generous, no one who met him wasn’t instantly charmed or affected by his presence in their life.

On Nov. 5, 2001, Andrew was shot to death in a parking lot in California, and the prime suspect was his ex-girlfriend, Dr. Shirley Turner, with whom he had attended medical school in Newfoundland. After being questioned by police, she fled the United States to her home in Canada, where she announced that she was pregnant with Andrew’s child. On July 18, 2002, she gave birth to a little boy, and named him Zachary.

Filmmaker Kurt Kuenne, Andrew’s childhood friend, originally began this film as a way for Zachary to learn about his father. *Dear Zachary* was conceived as a cinematic scrapbook culled from extensive home movies Mr. Kuenne had made with Andrew and from loving reminiscences by Andrew’s family and friends, all of whom attest to what a wonderful, kind, life-loving fellow he was.

After Andrew’s death, his parents, David and Kathleen, sold their house in California, and moved to Canada to be near their grandson. Fearing that the boy was in danger from his mother, they waged a protracted custody battle with Shirley. To their horror, she was freed on bail pending extradition, on the grounds that she posed no danger to society because she had killed the one person she wanted dead. The film’s conclusion is fraught with emotion in this story of love, murder, loss, and a travesty of justice.

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CREDITS

Writer, Director, Producer: Kurt Kuenne

Photo Credit: Evan B. Harris, David Bagby



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