

Katie Couric interviews Raffaele Sollecito, Broadcast September 18, 2012

Transcript by Equinox Ecliptic

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Couric: Raffaele Sollecito, welcome. And I know that your new book...

Sollecito: Thank you so much

Couric: ... "Honor Bound, my Journey to Hell and Back" ..

Sollecito: I'm really glad to be here

Couric: ... "with Amanda Knox" is out today. Thank you very much. I know this is also your first interview in English

Sollecito: Yeah, this is my first one. I'm a little bit [unintelligible]

Couric: So you're a little bit nervous yes, So we're going to make the questions clear and I will speak slowly and concisely. But a lot of people I think might be surprised, Raffaele, to learn that you only knew Amanda Knox for nine days

Sollecito: Yeah It is

Couric: When this happened, tell me what was your relationship like?

Sollecito: Well, we started our relationship since the first day we met. Umm.. It was. umm.. We kissed umm.. to, upon beautiful sparkling light outside of Perugia. And ah, just the day we met, and ah, during the night we met. And, we started ah, really it was a really nice relationship. It was a dreamy one because I was living alone in my apartment and we shared almost all the day long. We just...

Couric: You are inseparable you were together all the time?

Sollecito: Yeah, almost all the time just for the lectures we just split for, during the time of the lectures at University. And so in that period she was much more at my apartment than in their one. It was really an intensive, umm.. intensive story, but it was the start, the start of knowing Amanda. So. It, yeah, so it, it's crazy.

Couric: It, it was that sort of wonderful beginning of a new romance. You were both sort of swept off your feet. I know you were especially. So nine days into this relationship. You are finding yourself in the middle of one of the most sensational murder cases in the last decade, what was that like going from this sort of love affair with this beautiful young girl to this

nightmare?

Sollecito: We, yeah, so four years of nightmare. It's hard to explain that, but just the media made, the media frenzy build up, build up an image that doesn't exist, is not the real image of me and Amanda.

Couric: But there were some things that raised suspicions and you can understand why the two of you became a target for the investigation. I know the morning after the murder, after Amanda had spent the night with you, she went back to her apartment. She found the front door was open, that blood was in the bathroom.

Sollecito: No, no, there were literally the little droplets inside the basin.

Couric: but blood was in the bathroom..

Sollecito: No, inside the basin..

Couric: the basin, but also on the carpet. There was some on the carpet as well right?

Sollecito: No, no it was kind of a water ah, um, stain but if it was not so clear that it was blood.

Couric: Meredith's door was closed and locked, and Amanda didn't call the police. Did you find that strange? In retrospect maybe at the time you were confused about what was going on, but why do you think she didn't call the police immediately?

Sollecito: Well, she didn't know Italian very well and she had no emergency number to call. I called the local Carabinieri right after I discovered all this peculiarities but no one was thinking about something bad because the media described it like there was blood in the, in the bathroom. But, you, there, there were only very little droplets that can, can come also if your nosebleed or is bleeding, so it's not so alarming the situation you look around. And she didn't know, umm.. the broke window. Well, after I realized all the peculiarities around step-by-step I, I alerted the local Carabinieri.

Couric: And you called the police.

Sollecito: And, umm.. Yeah

Couric: But there were other things. I know Raffaele, you both claimed you were at the apartment the night of the murder, and, but your stories were sometimes inconsistent as you know. Amanda confessed to being at the scene, being at her apartment. She then recanted., You told police at one point you didn't know if she might have left your apartment that night because you were asleep so it seems there are still a lot of unanswered questions. So can you understand at least why the police considered you two suspects?

Sollecito: Well, the police, the police, the detectives they wanted it. [full response appears edited

out]

Couric: You all say you were naïve as well..

Sollecito: Yeah we were, we were [unintelligible]

Couric: You didn't get lawyers..

Sollecito: We didn't, I didn't feel the need to have a lawyer because I , I didn't touch anything. I didn't get into the murder scene, I, ah, I was completely, logically for me it was impossible that I would be ever charged with a murder like that.

Couric: I think one of the strangest things that people observed following this murder was your behavior and Amanda's behavior when you all were cuddling, you were kissing, outside the murder scene, almost right after the body had been found and was being removed..

Sollecito: But, Amanda was shocked. She was completely shocked, she was staring inside, the mm.. In, in the middle of an empty space, and I was the only one who was ever there to comfort her. It was a comforting kiss. Her family was right ah, right on the other side of the world at that time. The only person she could trust at that time was just me.

Couric: but also you were snuggling at the police station. She was doing a cartwheel during your interrogation even you admit in your book *Rafaele*, that her behavior made you uncomfortable in retrospect.

Sollecito: No, it's not her behavior that made me uncomfortable. The detectives had eyes on us since the beginning.

Couric: So you think it was perfectly fine to be sort of cuddling and, at the police headquarters, and for..

Sollecito: no, no it wasn't fine.

Couric: I mean, I know that you've written that you did not feel comfortable with that.

Sollecito: Yeah, but I didn't feel comfortable because of the Amanda behavior. That was not the right moment because the detectives had eyes on us. So I felt comfortable, uncomfortable for that not because Amanda's personality.

Couric: When we come back. I know were going to talk about what *Rafaele* thinks happened that fateful night and what it was like to reunite later with Amanda in Seattle..

[break]

[Video of Amanda in the Seattle airport]

Couric: that was Amanda Knox last October when she arrived back in Seattle after spending four years in an Italian prison. We're continuing our conversation now with Raffaele Sollecito, Amanda's ex-boyfriend, who was with her on the night of the murder of Meredith Kercher in Italy. Raffaele, you spent almost 4 years in prison. What was that like? How did you spend your days?

Sollecito: It was impossible to bear, I wish no one would experience what I experienced. Because six months at first of solitary confinement having all the world against you. It's a wound that it's hard to, to a, to heal.

Couric: Did you stay in touch with Amanda while you were in prison? Did you exchange notes and letters and communicate?

Sollecito: Yeah, um almost umm.. Once a week, almost once a week and on average and we shared any kind of thoughts, just talking about days how the days passed on, how, just sharing magazines, books, music CDs. We, we told the relationship with our families, with friends.

Couric: I know that police your lawyers even your own father tried to get you to turn on Amanda during the course of this..

Sollecito: Yeah, um

Couric: this investigation, but you didn't. Why was it so important for you to stand by her?

Sollecito: Well I cannot blame my family and my friends to just push me and say, making me realize that I was risking all my life for a girl that I had dated just for, only, something more than one week. It was terrible. And, but, I, um, just, on, on the plate there was ah, just, be, umm, umm, my life over or throw Amanda under the bus. But these two place for me had the same weight, because I cannot walk on the street being a free man just realizing that I'm the reason for a 20 years old innocent to be spend the rest of her life in prison.

Couric: What do you think happened that night?

Sollecito: well, it's hard to, umm, to imagine what happened that night to Meredith but umm, my defense team just investigating found out that Rudy Guede, this guy, was in the murder scene, did the same kind of barbary to a lawyer office almost one month before. This style was almost the same. So hmm, just realizing that this guy was over there er, umm, was used also by the prosecution to, uh, to charge us.

Couric: And he is now serving 16 years in prison for the crime and you believe justice has been served?

Sollecito: Ah well, umm.. I have other ideas about the enjailment in general.

Couric: You think the sentence should've been longer?

Sollecito: Ah, Well, I'm ah, I don't want to judge, Eh, uh, I, ah, I, ess, For what I experienced, em, for me, um the enjailment is no reason at all. So, um, it's not the amount of years that you spend in prison that can relieve, er, uh kind of, er, umm, umm, [audible gulp], kind of pain like that.

Couric: When we come back we are going to talk about your reunion with Amanda Knox.

[break]

Couric: We're back with Raffaele, Amanda Knox's Italian ex-boyfriend. I know that you reunited with Amanda in Seattle in April, you went to visit her. What was that like for you?

Sollecito: Well, um, I had to spread the image of Amanda that was a ghost brought by, er, portrayed by the media um. in a bad way thas was my nightmare for four years. And the real Amanda, th, th, they, with, during that dreamy week. So when I look at her, I was, I get stuck a little bit. I was nervous, because I, I had, I had the still psychological wounds of this nightmare that had passed in prison. And, her, the, she, her image brought me up also the image of the nightmare. But when she hugging me after a while, um, I realized that Amanda is, the Amanda that I dated for that week, she is not the Amanda that was my nightmare, the ghost Amanda that was the nightmare during the four years.

Couric: Do you wish you had never met her?

Sollecito: No. I don't regret it. Because it is not her fault. The fault is from the detectives who brought up the case.

Couric: And do you still communicate with her now? Are you in touch?

Sollecito: Yes, we Skyped, we Skype sometimes. We exchange e-mails. Last time she is sent a song for me d.d. during the last Skype communication.

Couric: I know that the prosecution is appealing your acquittal. There is a chance you could, but it is quite remote, that you could go through another trial, go back to prison. What would you say to a significant number of people who do still believe that you and Amanda were involved in the murder of Meredith Kercher what would you say to them?

Sollecito: Well, um, I'm pretty sure that they just followed the case by the media. The media frenzy created just a figure that is, is, it doesn't exist. So they created a story to brought just to keep the audience, to keep the audience and make money. They just accepted what the prosecution brought to them. But all the details, they spread around were, were without any circumstance around. They were disconnected to each other and they created a fog of nonsense. So I wrote a book and just to have the opportunity to talk about me to, to keep the figure of me..

Couric: And to give your side of the story

Sollecito: to take the figure they portrayed and take that figure back to me, to my, to my own, and just tell the truth and the story of what happened during the all over, all over this ordeal.

Couric: It seems to me that the one person almost forgotten in all of this is 21 year old Meredith Kercher who was brutally murdered that night. Her family says they are still looking for answers. What would you say to them today now that time has passed?

Sollecito: Well, um, I cannot barely imagine their pain, there suffer and I'm really sorry for that. But, and I wish them, really badly, I wish them to find out what truly happened to their daughter, because if they found the truth about what happened to her. That would be also for me, um, um, a way to move on because finding the truth is the, is also the truth for me. That we, me and Amanda, we were not there, er, during that night of the murder.

Couric: Raffaele Sollecito, the book is called "Honor Bound My Journey to Hell and Back with Amanda Knox. Thank you very much for being here today. We appreciate it. Everyone here in the audience will be getting a copy of your book. Thank you.

Sollecito: I'm really glad to be here.

Couric: Thank you. Thank you.