# Intruders break into Claudia Lawrence's home after new evidence found in her disappearance case



The mother of missing chef Claudia Lawrence has reported that her daughter's home in Heworth, York, was broken into following the discovery of new evidence linked to Claudia's disappearance. Claudia, who was 35 at the time, vanished without a trace after failing to attend work at the University of York’s Goodricke College on March 19, 2009. Despite multiple arrests and searches, including the draining of a nearby lake, Claudia's whereabouts have remained a mystery for nearly 16 years.

Joan Lawrence, Claudia’s mother, revealed that intruders may have targeted the property on two occasions after a previously unknown attic space was found within the house. The attic was discovered on January 3 by Joan and journalist Tom McDermott, who hosts the 'Answers for Claudia' podcast and has been working with Joan to seek new leads in the case. The attic hatch was hidden within a built-in wardrobe in Claudia's bedroom and contained a tissue and a half-used packet of chewing gum inside a black leather jacket, items hoped to yield potential DNA evidence.

However, a few days after the podcast release detailing the discovery, Joan Lawrence found signs that the house had been entered by unknown individuals. She found an internal door, which she normally “meticulously” locks, left wide open, the front door lock scratched and bent, a shelf unit moved, clothes missing from Claudia's wardrobe, and signs that the attic hatch had been tampered with. She described the experience as “absolutely shellshocked” and said she now feels uneasy about visiting the property alone, adding, “I will go in daylight. It's made me really nervous and I can't go in the house on my own now.”

Tom McDermott told the Mirror that he too was “shaken” by the incident and inferred that someone connected to the case may be unsettled by the new findings. He commented, “Somebody has been here, twice! That's very disturbing and it's frightening because Joan is now visiting this house on a regular basis knowing someone else has been there.” McDermott speculated that the break-in appeared to be “a professional job” because there were no signs of forced entry through windows or doors, and suggested the intruders might have had a key or specialist knowledge of breaking into houses. He also noted that the disturbance seemed focused more on clothing and the tissue rather than the attic itself.

Both Joan Lawrence and Tom McDermott have reported the break-ins to North Yorkshire Police, but as yet, the force has not visited the property to investigate. A spokesperson for North Yorkshire Police confirmed they were aware of Mrs Lawrence’s concerns but stated they had not been granted access to the house to conduct a formal inquiry. The police also reiterated their ongoing commitment to the investigation, urging the public to provide any information that might help.

Claudia Lawrence's disappearance remains one of the most high-profile missing person cases in Britain. On the night she vanished, CCTV footage showed her walking home from work in Heworth. Later that evening, she spoke to her parents around 8.30pm, informing them she planned to wake early the next morning for work. Claudia failed to meet a friend at a local pub, The Nag's Head, and did not answer calls. Her father, Peter Lawrence, found her house in an unusual state the next day after using his keys to enter—her bed was made, and only a few personal items such as chef’s whites, mobile phone, and hair straighteners were missing. It was six weeks before police carried out a full forensic search of the property.

Over the years, an extensive investigation involving hundreds of officers and costing over £1.5 million has been conducted, but no conclusive leads have emerged. The case continued to draw public interest, particularly through the efforts of Tom McDermott and his podcast, who alongside Joan, have sought to “move the dial” on the investigation by uncovering new evidence and encouraging witnesses to come forward.

Joan Lawrence also uncovered a lead from a van driver named Dave. He reported seeing a woman matching Claudia’s description wearing a leather jacket on the A1M highway northbound on March 18, 2009—one day before Claudia disappeared. Dave grew concerned that the incident might involve a scam and alerted police, but he later believed the tip was not pursued adequately.

Despite these developments, Joan has expressed frustration with the police investigation's handling of the case and has vowed never to give them the keys to the home again, citing a previous search by officers that left the house “a mess.” She wishes for the newly found attic space to be searched but wants to do so without further police involvement.

Podcast producer Mark Sandell commented on the situation, saying, “There are encouraging signs that we are going to generate some answers for Mrs Lawrence. The police and Tom are talking to each in a proper grown-up way. People are still coming forward with information. And we've clearly rattled somebody who has been into this house.”

North Yorkshire Police stated their ongoing efforts to assess information related to Claudia's disappearance and suspected murder and expressed continued commitment to supporting Claudia’s family. Meanwhile, Joan Lawrence continues to hold out hope for answers about her daughter's fate nearly 16 years after her disappearance.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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3. <https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/24191055.claudia-lawrence-inquiry-not-closed-15-years/> - This article discusses the 15th anniversary of Claudia Lawrence's disappearance, highlighting the police's continued efforts and the family's plea for information.
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