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## THE UNSOLVED MURDER OF MARIA JAMES

**On the anniversary of a brutal homicide, new ABC podcast, *Trace* digs back into the case**

There are 1300 cold cases in Australia, many of them sitting in the dusty boxes of police archives. Among them is the casefile of 38-year-old mother of two, Maria James.

On a winter morning in June 1980, Maria James turned to her son Mark and looked him in the eyes.

‘She said to me, “if anything happens to me, look after your brother.”’

Later that day she was found stabbed to death at the back of her suburban Melbourne bookshop, where she lived with her two boys.

The killer has never been found, and on the 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Maria’s death, the ABC brings you [Trace](#), a podcast examining the events leading up to her murder, and the investigation that followed.

ABC Walkley Award-winning journalist Rachael Brown heard through the grapevine that maybe something had been overlooked in the original investigation, and went looking for that seemingly insignificant detail, that piece of evidence, that trace of the killer.

*Trace* is the result of that journey, propelled by the three men who won’t stop looking for the missing pieces to the puzzle of who killed Maria James.

With the help of Maria James’ sons and Ron Iddles, one of Australia’s most prolific and best-known homicide detectives, Rachael has sifted through the files and revisited theories, evidence and suspects to try to find some answers. Was it a scorned lover, a random stranger, or was Maria's murder tied up in the sins of the Catholic Church.

‘Someone knows who killed Maria James,’ says Iddles. ‘The answer’s always in the file, somewhere.’

Launching overnight as Australia’s #1 podcast, *Trace* is a co-production from ABC NEWS and ABC RN.

[Episode 1 is now available](#). Subscribe to *Trace* on the [ABC Radio app](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), or wherever you get your favourite podcasts.

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