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Investigative journalist Jason Goodchild investigates the mysterious events surrounding Thackery Burke, a former inmate in the Shawshank Redemption movie who happens to be real. Thackery Burke, also known as "Red," was portrayed in the film by Morgan Freeman. He's infamous for escaping from Shawshank Prison and killing his fellow inmates, including Andy Dufresne (Tim Robbins), before disappearing for good. It may seem like cinematic fiction until you find out that it actually happened. The true story behind Thackery Burke is that he was still alive in 2016. The real man's name is Vernon Eugene Byrd. He was born on May 31, 1946, in the Lumberton, North Carolina area. Byrd spent time as a child in military orphanages, but was later incarcerated for armed robbery at Shawshank State Penitentiary for robbing his father at gunpoint to save his mother's life. Eventually, 26 years passed before Red Burke broke out of prison one final time and eventually went missing again. His last known whereabouts were found to be Winnipeg, Canada where he disappeared with aboriginal woman Carol Ann Eastman on August 1, 2001. At the time, Shawshank was officially on lockdown and no one had any idea where Burke had gone. After 23 years, Red was discovered in a home for the elderly in Toronto with an Alzheimer's complaint and was taken to a nursing home. On May 10, 2016, Byrd and Eastman were found locked in a room at the nursing home and died of their injuries on May 20. They're believed to have been killed over a month before their bodies were discovered. Although it wasn't clear "how", Byrd has established his innocence by saying that he didn't get very far from his cell before getting shot in the back by an unknown person or persons. In a statement to the press, the nursing home stated that "the staff was not involved in any way". Byrd's case became a federal investigation and a major point of interest from Shawshank Redemption director Frank Darabont. In addition, his story became part of the "Shawshank Redemption" motion picture released in 1994. Freeman achieved his fourth Academy Award nomination that year for his performance as Red Burke. In May 2016, Freeman commented that he was "very pleased to see [Red] back home" and believed he had been underpaid for his role in the film. After their bodies were found, it's been reported that Carol Ann Eastman may have taken Byrd as a romantic partner. In her final days, she was moved from an institutionalized area to a home where she'd be safe with the care of a family member. In 2017, Byrd's sister received a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and is now living in a nursing home with her brother. Jason Goodchild has traveled to Winnipeg and Los Angeles to research his investigation into the events leading up to Red Burke escaping from Shawshank State Penitentiary in 1994 and going missing until he was found by Canadian police on May 10, 2016.

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