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'River Phoenix - His Final Hours' details the life and death of a Hollywood "golden boy"

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A massive drug overdose caused the October 31, 1993, death of young, handsome, talented River Phoenix. He had speedballed heroin and cocaine and his body was found to have a cocaine level eight times that which is lethal. Phoenix was regarded as "Hollywood's golden boy—vegan, ethically minded, squeaky clean." Few outside his circle of family and close friends knew of the struggles with drugs he had been going through for two years. He would get straight for a few months, then binge, and he did everything from pills to heroin.



River Phoenix
Photo: MVD Entertainment Group

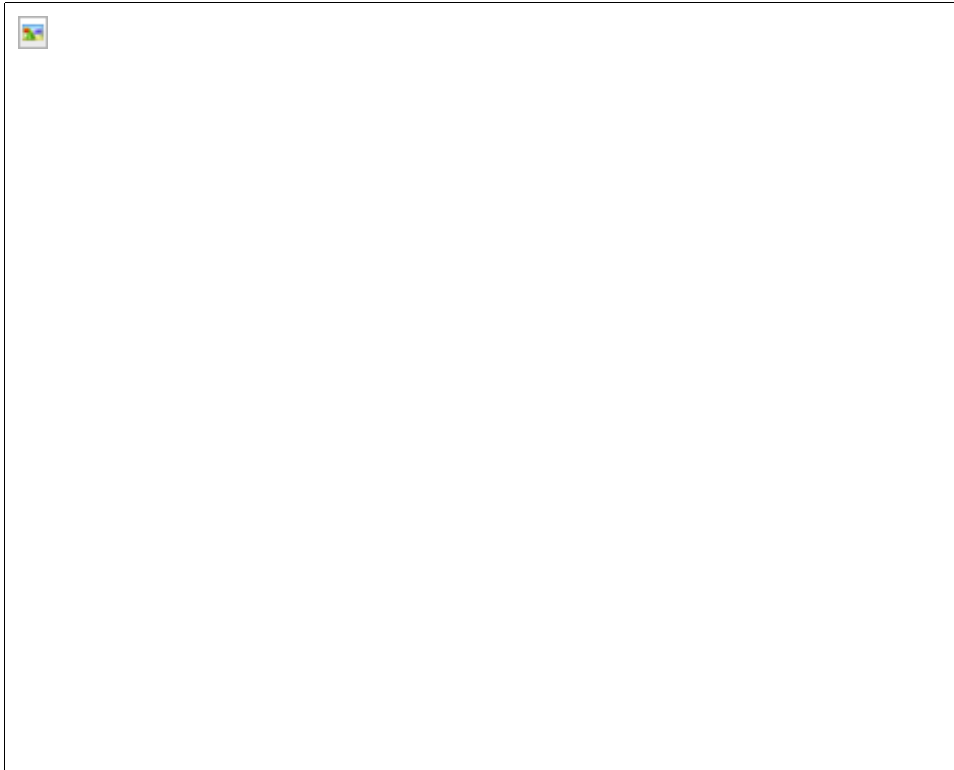
On the last day of his life, he was wrapping up his fourteenth film, *Dark Blood*. The movie had been a difficult shoot for him—his co-star had given him a hard time throughout the two-month shoot. During that time he had been clean, but the night before the last day of filming he had turned to drugs. (It has been reported elsewhere that when he died, three weeks of filming was yet to be done.)

River Phoenix had a passion for music, and believed—on the evening of October 30, 1993—that he would be joining his friend, Flea, onstage for a jam session with other musicians. Instead he was informed there were too many musicians and he wouldn't be able to join them. Having refrained from drugs that day because he wanted to play at the Viper Club, he was deeply disappointed and turned that frustration into a search for drugs, which was successful.

After ingesting the heroin and coke, Phoenix rejoined his sister, brother, and girlfriend at their Viper Club table. He wasn't aware that he had just poisoned himself, but the drugs were quickly attacking his organs. He rapidly became ill, passing out at one point, and his sister brought him outside for air. Someone gave him a valium because his heart was racing. Once outside he began having seizures, 911 was called, the paramedics tried to revive him, but he died in Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

At the age of 23, River Phoenix was a popular film star as well as his family's source of income. Self-medicating, he attempted to relieve the demands of both these roles.

In *River Phoenix - His Final Hours*, there are a number of details regarding the death of River Phoenix that are at odds with other sources. The events of his life as a child are glossed over, and the amount of drinking and other drugs he had consumed the night he died are not mentioned. This "psychological detective story" does not "uncover the mystery of why [Phoenix] died," but chronicles a life and death that had already been thoroughly exposed. There are no extra features on *River Phoenix - His Final Hours*.



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