"I Just Killed My Daughter"

Margaret Borys

1970

Sandra Garland, Scott Kabran, Gregory Walls, Anthony Brown.

Four young freaks who were outcasts of a stultified, corrupt society with rules and morality they could not accept. Their concerns were no longer with going to Sunday church services, living in suburbia and the lifelong task of acquiring material possessions. They ended up as corpse numbers 243, 67, 66 and 32 at a large apartment house on Lincoln near Canfield on the fringes of the Wayne State campus. Caught by surprise, they were shot to death with a.38 caliber revolver and a German Luger in their apartment at about 2:30 A.M. on May 8th by one Arvillb Garland—white, 45 years old, a railroad engineer, Tennessee migrant and Holy Roller.

On June 6th, Garland was bound over for trial in Detroit's Recorder's Court on charges of 1st degree murder of Scott, 18, and Greg, 18. Earlier he had been charged with only the 2nd degree murder of Anthony, 18 and released on a $2,000 bond. He was then re-arrested on the other charges and is being held without bond. It is expected that Garland will also be charged with the murder of his daughter, Sandra, 17.

Both Arville and his wife, one week before the murders, went to try to "convince" Sandra to leave her friends and come home. The manager of the apartment building, Ruben Rodriguez, said that on May 4th around midnight, Arville Garland said he would get Sandra back home "dead or alive."

A friend of Sandra's, Regina Moore, who graduated from Chadsey H.S. with her in 1969, said that Sandra had often mentioned threats her father had made to chain her to a radiator in his house so that she wouldn't try to ever leave home again.

Regina characterized Sandra as a bright girl in high school and with hopes of becoming a veterinarian. She graduated at age 16 and immediately enrolled in Wayne's summer session.

She had always attended summer sessions even in high school because her parents forced her to occupy her time with study so she wouldn't have time to go to rock concerts or hang with what her parents regarded as undesirable friends, i.e. "hippies," blacks, men, etc. Regina states that even after Sandra left home, she was so concerned about embarrassing or hurting her parents that she wouldn't call the police to protect herself from the constant harassment she was receiving.

Even though she was legally free to leave the residency of her parents, they could not accept the fact that she was an individual capable of responding to life as she saw fit with no outside interference.

Her father regarded his children as "property" and subject completely to his demands. His wife concurred in his treatment of Sandra, and Sandra's friends can attest to the frequency of visible bruises on her body and rigid disciplinary procedures for violations of the family rules.

Another resident of the apartment building, Keith Parker, said that on May 4th Arville Garland offered him $50 for information as to when Sandra would return to the apartment so he could talk to her.

Karen Rivedt, also a resident, testified to Mr. Garland's threats on May 4th. He told her, "You'd better find her or you'll be dead!"

It was Karen who on Friday night heard 6 shots, a pause, and more shots, and then saw Mrs. Garland with blood on her hands crying "Baby's dead! My baby's dead!"

Mrs. Garland was so concerned about Sandra's leaving home that on Thursday she had gone to talk to her at her job as a dental assistant. After work, Sandra walked out of the office and got into Scott Kabran's car as her mother watched. Mrs. Garland became so furious that she had failed to convince Sandra that she began kicking Scott's car.

So on Friday, May 8th, 2:30 A.M., Arville Garland armed with two guns and accompanied by his wife came to the Lincoln Street apartment building, went upstairs, kicked down the door and ran into the bedroom.

There he saw Scott and Sandra making love and became so enraged that he ran up to Scott, hit him in the forehead with one pistol and pumped three bullets into Sandra and eventually killed Scott, Anthony and Gregory. (The exact sequence of the shootings of the three men appears to be a confusing issue.

Defense Attorney Oliver Nelson (an old Cavanaugh lackey) boldly suggests that somehow the murders were accidental or as a result of temporary insanity. He said that the earlier threats of death made by Garland to Ruben Rodriguez and Karen Rivedt were just expressions of anger.

Approximately 30 minutes later, an emotional Arville Garland and his wife walked into the 2nd precinct at Vernor and 20th, laid his two guns and shells on the desk and said to Sgt. Jerome Jaszinski, "I just murdered my daughter and her hippy friends."

The murder trial will be heard before Visiting Judge James McNally, from Harper Woods and the State's case will be handled by assistant prosecutor Bernard Friedman.

Already the media has begun a campaign to create an atmosphere of sympathy for the defendant instead of for the victims of this shocking crime. There are Arville Garlands everywhere who cannot understand what their children are doing and why they reject the American Dream.

The public is being primed to accept him being absolved of the killings on the basis of sympathy for a "distraught" Garland, who simply did what any red-blooded American father would do in the same circumstance. Garland's defense is that of "temporary insanity."

This must not be allowed to happen. Garland's crime is clearly an attack upon a counter-culture that possesses an initial threat to this society as it is presently structured. For this reason alone, he must not be vindicated.



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Fifth Estate #107, June 11–24, 1970

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