

The Case of R's Daughter

R's family say the most horrible nightmare imaginable became a reality the day the Police gave them the devastating news that their youngest daughter had been murdered.

The killer, who was their daughter's husband, murdered her for financial gain. R's family believe that he planned her murder months before, and started to fabricate a completely untrue profile of her, in an effort to discredit her and place her in the worst possible light. He also connived to reflect himself in a good light, and thereby provide himself with a defence which did not hold up under cross-examination.

It seems the killer was a long-time conman, whose career ended in the death of R's daughter. R's family cannot recover from the fact that the only suspect in this murder case was given bail for 15 months prior to the trial. During that time he used his next-of-kin status to obstruct the victim's funeral, desecrate her grave, prevent close relatives from having access to her grave and thereby causing further severe mental suffering. R says that because this dangerous man was allowed bail, he was therefore able to take total control over proceedings subsequent to the murder.

R says that whilst on bail the perpetrator was able to exercise rights of kinship to his daughter and thereby tried to claim her personal insurance, and dispose of all her assets in the marital home - many of which were of particular sentimental value to her family - as well as the home itself. Following the murderer's final imprisonment, his brothers are now threatening legal action on **his** behalf to claim money from a will arranged by the murderer and signed just three weeks before he strangled the victim. The Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg states that there is a **moral obligation** to the living i.e. the family of the victim of homicide. R's family are now campaigning for blood relatives to be recognised in law. Where a person has been murdered by his or her spouse/partner, the victim's blood relatives should have rights of accessibility to property etc, also, in particular the religious aspect to be acknowledged on behalf of the victim, e.g. *prevention of a sacrilegious act*. Since the murder, R's family have not been able to access, without consultation, one single memento of their daughter, because the killer put all her effects immediately into storage and, following conviction, the killer's brother refused to disclose where these possessions had been stored. This information was eventually provided by the Official Receiver.

In the early days when R's family visited their daughter's grave, the killer would be at the graveside, or sitting in his car in the Church car park, as if he were waiting for them. He would predict that they would visit on Tuesdays and Fridays and often would drive slowly along the main road, past the Church, several times in an attempt to intimidate. R's family were stalked at the cemetery and the killer's behaviour around their daughter's grave, at times predatory, was hugely damaging to their grief. The aggressor went so far as to place heavy, obstructive objects on their daughter's grave, allowing little space for their floral tributes. The killer also placed unseemly, offensive material on the grave of the victim.

The victim was a beloved "Auntie" to her nieces and nephew and her loss is indescribable for these children, because the traumatic effect it has had on them will last for years.

R's family found the court case shockingly bizarre. The killer made a video diary of himself relating to each day in court and sold it to a TV company. An edited version of this diary was shown on television, until it was finally stopped. R's family question how this could be allowed in law? ***An advocate would have been extremely useful in this situation, as they would have been able to prevent this happening.***

The lack of **structured** care and acknowledgement for the victim's family meant that (as in so many cases) the killer was **also** able to exert cruel, excessive control over a vulnerable, grieving family. ***Families of homicide victims need protection.*** R's family feel the killer, who premeditated this tragedy, should be incarcerated forever, so that he is not free to ravage any other lives.

The jury in the case were unanimous in recording a guilty verdict-however, *two years later R's family have been advised that the tariff believed to have been set at the time by the Home Office is being passed back to the Judges to reset.* No reason is given for this delay. ***The system should act to minimise trauma for the families In this position. Sadly, delays In setting tariffs add to their distress.***

Under the Victims' Code of Practice there should be an up to date service for families who suffer homicide. This case highlights the lack of teamwork in the criminal justice system.