

RE: Case 06-2255 PAT HUGHES (murder)  
Marshall City Police Headquarters  
TRANSCRIBED ORAL STATEMENT OF Chris Paris  
May 24, 2006; 1:35 am  
Present: Officer Terry Daniels (star 252) and Chris Paris.

Officer Daniels: This statement is taken regarding the May 23, 2006 death of Bubba Davis, 4515 N. Beacon here in Marshall City. It is now 1:35 AM, May 24, 2006. We are in the interview room, room 105, of the Marshall City Police Headquarters. I am detective Terry Daniels, star 252, of the Marshall City police department, and we are recording a statement from an occurrence witness, Chris Paris.

Chris, you understand that we are recording this interview. You do not have to make a statement. You are not under arrest, but you certainly can have a lawyer here if you want. You can stop the interview any time you want. If you have a question or do not understand something we are talking about, you should stop me and ask. You can stop the interview any time you want. Do you understand?

Paris: Yes.

Daniels: You understand that all of this will be transcribed – that is, written out from the recording – and you will have the opportunity to look at the typewritten statement, and make corrections or additions if you want, later on. OK?

Paris: OK.

Daniels: Let's go. State your name and address.

A. [Paris]: My name is Chris Paris, 4515 N. Beacon, 1<sup>st</sup> floor. I own the building – it is a three flat. I rent out the other two apartments.

Q. [Daniels]: Tell me what happened. I will ask for clarifications later, or as we go along.

A. What occurred earlier today, last night?

Q. Right. Just start by saying where you were and what was going on when things began to happen.

A. OK. I was going to bed, but still watching TV in my front room in my building at home, at around 9:30 PM, I hear a lot of noise upstairs. I live on the first floor, see, and the second floor flat I rent to Pat Hughes. So I am pretty upset, as these arguments keep going on and you can hear right through the floors. Especially yelling and pounding against the walls. Worse, they are not paying the rent and they are

fighting every other night, even though the police have come a few times. I think that Hughes is nothing but trouble, and Davis was worse. I think I got to try another lawyer. I paid this one lawyer \$500 cash to evict these people, and that was a couple of months ago. I am new to this landlord business. I only own this place for two years now so when the rent isn't paid I get a lawyer to collect or evict or both. If I had a decent attorney they would have been evicted a long time ago. I guess that won't be an issue any more for Bubba. You know, I don't know what happens to that apartment now.

Anyway, the noise is so bad I go up the front stairs but they won't let me in. There is a lot of yelling so I go around to the back stairs, the back porch stairs. I cut through my place, pick up my cell phone and call Hoffman, the police officer who lives across the street. Hoffman says "I am getting out of my car. I'll be right there."

I am now at their back door which is open, not the screen door, but the main, the regular, door, so I can see right in, and you know I can hear everything even as I am going up the stairs. Pat is yelling at Bubba to get away and Bubba is yelling, like I ain't going nowhere. Each is hollering, but when I get upstairs and look in I see the two of them, and they are moving at each other. Bubba is moving with his hands up, like a surrender - hands half way up, but moving towards Pat who is backed up and Pat is taking a knife out of Bubba's belly! Robbie is standing right there by the door. Bubba gets calm and says, OK I am leaving; take it easy, but I can see Bubba is also doubling up a little and backing off, but Pat stopped yelling at him. I see Pat drop the knife on the floor, and I see red on the floor and I think, oh-oh, somebody got cut bad. Robbie Johnson, the kid who also lives there, sees me - looks right at me. I reach for my cell phone, but it not connecting - like I'm in a dead zone, so rather than fool around with it I go down and I grab the land line phone and I call 9-1-1 and say that someone is hurt on the second floor at 4515 N. Beacon. The operator says someone will be right there, and I say second floor, second floor. I am really tripping out, you know, so I go back upstairs. I looked in the kitchen and I saw Bubba on the floor, he had not moved and there is a lot of blood nearby. Bubba is not moving, not even breathing. I do not touch anything. I do not move anything. But I am thinking, well, Hughes, you did it this time.

So, I'm standing there like, thinking what I am going to do now. I am thinking, feeling like maybe I should do something more.

Now, I'm scared, you know, for Bubba. So I yell at Robbie Johnson, who still is at the other side of the kitchen, to go get care for Bubba. I think someone should help Bubba. I need to make sure Pat gets arrested. I am also looking at my, the brand new Cherry Cedar hardwood floors I put in last summer. That was going through my mind. Then I look up and see Detective Hoffman is there. Hoffman tells me to stay on the porch. Then more officers arrive. They came running in. So I stay out on the porch. I tell Hoffman what I just saw; Pat Hughes just stabbed Bubba.

Q. How do you know Officer Hoffman?

A. From the neighborhood. Hoffman has been there, here at my place, before when there were other fights, you know, on the second floor.

Q. OK. So you own this building?

A. Yes, it is mine. Well, there's a mortgage, so like the bank owns it. I own like over, a little over 10 per cent of it, as I have an 80, 10, 10 loan I took out in 2005.

Q. What is that, 80, 10, 10?

A. I put down 10 percent payment on the building, and the bank lends me 90 percent – ten per cent is a home equity loan, and 80 per cent is a regular mortgage. So I make payments every month on both loans. The mortgage is for thirty years, and the equity loan is for when I can pay it off as long as I pay the interest each month. Truth is I borrowed the ten percent I put down from a friend. So I really have three loans. But you know that's how you start making money when you have no money. Get into real estate and then flip the properties and also you can pyramid-borrow on the appreciated value of one place to put a down payment on the next place. It works as long as the tenants are paying the rents.

Q. And Pat Hughes paid or owed you rent?

A. Yes, the rent is \$800 a month, but I am not getting it. I get the rent from the third floor, Mrs. Lee, she is retired or something and is not in town this month, so I take the mail up to her floor and water her plants. She will be back after Memorial Day – She will be back on June 1. She is not around half the time. She never complains, and she pays her rent by automatic deposit. She pays \$800 a month, too. But she pays it.

Q. So who is on the lease on the second floor?

A. Pat Hughes.

Q. What about Bubba . . . ?

A. They were both going to pay half, but Bubba did not have a job, and I had the impression he was not going to live there full time, so I told Hughes to go for the whole lease and to work it out with Bubba. I did not want to have to evict two tenants if it came to that.

Q. When did they move in?

A. Summer, ah, October 2004. I bought the building with the 80-10-10 loan, and I said I was still fixing up the place when Hughes and Bubba asked to take the second floor apartment. I told them that I was going to keep fixing up, and I would take care of the floors if they moved in. That's why I had the new kitchen floor put in. It cost me \$880,

and I have a year to pay it off at \$80 a month, so I am almost max'd out. There is blood all over that wood now, and I am thinking how do I get it out and what do I do. I have to get those people out of there.

Q. Is this your only property?

A. Yeah. I figure I can get this paid off some, then use the growth in value to refloat another loan to buy another three flat—maybe a six flat, and rent out those apartments. But I can't afford to have people live in the place and not pay rent.

Q. You said you heard them arguing.

A. Well, I knew they were arguing about Bubba not paying his share of the rent. He was supposed to come up with half, and Hughes told me that's why they were not paying rent. Bubba was not paying.

Q. You heard them arguing about the rent?

A. Well I did not actually hear the words, but I assumed that's what it was about.

Q. That apartment – there were three people there?

A. Well, Pat, Robbie, and sometimes Bubba. I think Robbie is a cousin. Robbie is in some kind of college. Comes home with books. I don't know much about Robbie. I know that Robbie never hands me a rent check. Sort of a loner, at least around the house. Never brings friends over, as long I have been keeping an eye on the place. One thing: Robbie gave me a bag of Starbucks coffee last Christmas.

Q. Do you have a regular job?

A. I run the building. I have a part time job as a home health care worker. And, I also make money selling stuff on eBay.

Q. Home health care worker?

A. Yeah, you know I go in and clean up after old people. I got three regular clients. It's dirty work. But, what you gonna do. I got tenants who don't pay. I got to eat somehow, even if that means throwing out the diapers of old geezers.

Q. And, you make money off of E-Bay? How does that work?

A. I know people who collect stuff – trading cards, old books, postage stamps, DVDs, - I put them up for bid, and I get a commission when I sell it. I pay the postage and insurance, and take a percentage. I do all the work, I do it at home, and it's no heavy lifting.

Q. Wasn't there a complaint filed against you? I just recall . . . .

A. That was a totally bad beef. Someone was trying to rip me off. I had a couple of Babe Ruth trading cards, and this guy bids \$600.00 each. I got a check for \$1200.00, and I sent the cards to him. Three months later he writes and complains to me, so I say send the cards back and I will arrange a refund if your complaint is true. He said the cards were counterfeit. So he sends me two counterfeit cards, not the cards I sent him. He was trying to rip me off. That's how I met officer Hoffman – he came over to investigate, and he even wrote up a misdemeanor complaint for theft by fraud. But when the buyer shows up in court, the state's attorney threw out the case. I still get letters from the guy. I gave him back his phony cards. I kept the money.

Q. How did you happen to have two Babe Ruth cards?

A. Davis sold them to me for \$50 each over two years ago. That's how I met Pat and Bubba. They sold me this, these cards, but I think the cards belonged to Robbie originally. The cards looked 100% authentic to me when I sold them. When the buyer returned them, I said they were not the same cards, and I was not giving the money back.

Q. So, you and Officer Hoffman are friends now?

A. Sure. I even sold some stuff on eBay for Hoffman. We made a few dollars. I told Hoffman I bought the cards from Bubba and Pat Hughes before they first moved in. Hoffman was trying to buy direct from them. Hoffman was pushing them to sell stuff. One time Hoffman told me that Hoffman couldn't stand either Bubba or Pat and asked me why I even bothered to deal with either of those low lifes. Hoffman predicted one would wind up dead on a slab in the morgue and the other would be killed in prison. I wonder if Hoffman knows the Lottery numbers for tomorrow.

Q. You grow up in Marshall City?

A. Yes. I went to Spiro Agnew community college, studied a little real estate. That was in 2001, just two semesters. I should go back some day and take some more credits.

Q. You think of going in the military to get an education?

A. Forget it. I want to make money, not get shot at. You sound like Bubba – he was always bragging, join the Army and be a killer. Join the Navy and drown – that the Navy was for sissies. He said his biggest mistake was getting thrown out of the Army.

Q. How long had you been hearing arguments from upstairs?

A. Tonight?

Q. No, no. Before last night - tonight.

A. Months now. I think the first big blowup I heard was like last Christmas. But the last couple of months it has been getting regular, like two three times last week. Tonight was the loudest.

Q. What did you hear?

A. Well, last week I could hear Hughes, Pat Hughes, I am pretty sure, yell, "I am going to kill you, you liar!"

Q. Where were you when you heard this?

A. In my front room. I could hear it from upstairs. About ten at night. Like tonight, last night, you know?

Q. Through the floor?

A. I could hear. I am sure it was Pat.

Q. Why are you sure it was Pat?

A: Well, Bubba's not paying the rent, so Pat has to be mad. It was Pat. I know it wasn't Robbie. Never heard Robbie say anything loud. I know Pat's voice. Not at all like Bubba's.

Q. So you have never had a conversation with Robbie.

A. I didn't say that.

Q. Isn't Robbie studying desktop publishing and computer design in college?

A. I don't know about that. I just know Robbie showed me some baseball cards a couple of times, not too long after they moved in. They looked phony to me. I would not touch them. Hoffman told me to try to get Robbie to show them to me again. To try to get them, buy them. Hoffman wanted me to catch Robbie or Bubba or Pat selling counterfeit stuff.

Q. Had you ever seen Pat Hughes threaten or hit Bubba?

A. No. Can't say that I have. The other way around actually. I heard Bubba threatening Pat. One time, maybe a month ago, I heard Bubba harassing Robbie – like, what do you do all day? Nothing. You're worthless. And Pat told Bubba to lay off. Pat

takes care of that kid – buys the groceries, fixes the meals, takes care of the cleaning and laundry. Robbie mostly goes to school and studies.

Q. Last night, when you came up the back stairs, you saw the knife in Pat's hand.

A: I knew Pat had stabbed Bubba when I came upstairs the second time. I saw Pat pull the knife out. It was obvious by the way everything was. Bubba fell on the floor. Blood on the floor, the knife in Pat's hand, Pat standing over Bubba. That knife was sharp, I know that.

Q: How do you know it was so sharp?

A: I was up there one day, a couple of months ago. Pat was sharpening the knives. They are steak knives, and they were like razor blades. They've been sharpened so much, half the blade is gone. Pat said, "Bubba can shave with this knife." Bubba was there, and he laughed. It was something I will have nightmares about for the rest of my life.

Q: What happened after Pat pulled the knife out?

Pat turned away, went to the sink and turned on the faucet. That's when Hoffman came in and checked out Bubba. After that they arrested Pat. Maybe, well we – I went around, through my apartment, and came back up the front. Robbie and I eventually went outside and waited for a ride to the police station. A couple of reporters came by and asked questions. I would not talk to them.

Daniels: Okay I think that is all for now. If I have any questions I can give you a call?

Paris: Sure. And if you see Hoffman, please say thanks for me. Hoffman got there fast. Hoffman's a friend.

I have read the above statement, and it is a true and accurate transcript of the interview I gave on the above date and time

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*Chris Paris*