

RE: Case 06-2255 Pat Hughes (murder)

STATEMENT OF PAT HUGHES

Recorded in interview room 107, Marshall City Police Headquarters, Marshall City, May 25, 2006, 8:27 AM.

PRESENT: Wil Langelier
Assistant State's Attorney of Thompson County, State of Marshall

Officer Terry Daniels
Star No. 252
Marshall City Police Dept.

Pat Hughes

State's Attorney Langelier: We are now recording. Okay. Today is May 25, 2006. We are in room 107, Marshall City Police Headquarters. Present are Officer Daniels, the suspect Pat Hughes, and myself, Assistant State's Attorney Wil Langelier.

This will be the voluntary statement of Pat Hughes who has been arrested in connection with the May 23, 2006, killing of Bubba Davis, at approximately 10 PM, at 4515 N. Beacon, Marshall City.

This statement will be typed up for your review, OK, Pat?

Pat Hughes: Right, OK.

Langelier: Pat, I have advised you of your constitutional rights. Correct?

A [Pat Hughes]: Yes.

Q [Langelier]: You signed this waiver of your right to an attorney.

A: Yes.

Q: This is your signature?

A: Yes.

Q: You feeling OK?

A: Yes.

Q: You have not taken any drugs or alcohol?

A: Not today. I am fine.

Q: If at any time you don't understand my question, or you don't understand what is going on, or you have a question, just stop and ask. OK?

A: OK.

Q: If you get thirsty or tired, or need to take a break, just let me know and we will take a break, OK?

A: OK.

Q: Good. Earlier today you told me about the events leading up to the death of Bubba Davis the day before yesterday – the 23rd of May. And at that time you told me in summary that Wednesday night you had argued with Bubba, who was your co-tenant, at your apartment at 4515 North Beacon. I would like you to tell me again, so that we can record your statement and try to get to the truth of what happened. Just say what you want, and I will maybe stop you if I don't understand and ask you to clarify, OK?

A: OK. Now?

Q: Go ahead. We are recording.

A: OK. Let me say I know Bubba from high school. We both went here in town, to the Spiro Agnew Upper School. It was in a computer and math class. So when we got out of high school we signed up for the military, except that Bubba goes into the Army and I go into the Navy. We kept in touch, you know, a couple of postcards. He was in basic training at some base in the South, and I was at Great Lakes Naval Training Center north of Chicago – what is called "boot camp." I signed up for four years, so after boot camp I was sent to one of the schools for several months.

Q: Did you have a specialty?

A: I don't know if I should tell you this, but I was assigned to a special operation unit. The work I did was classified as secret. We were assigned to what was known as "black ops."

Q: How can we get your records?

A: You can't. The Navy won't reveal that, even that I was in that unit. I'm not sure that unit is on the books. Let's just say I had a background in computers and math, which I can't talk about, and I was trained for sensitive work that sometimes required deniability.

Q: O.K. I'll worry about that later. Go on.

A: I get out of the Navy after twenty-seven months – I was forced to leave, but they gave me an honorable discharge even though I was being kicked out. I pulled a survival knife on an officer who was hassling one of my buddies. Nobody got hurt, but the officer reported me. I had a Captain's Mast, like a private trial with the Commanding Officer. We cut a deal that the Navy would not court martial me for assaulting an officer or possession of cocaine, if I agreed to get out and not discuss my activities in the Navy.

Q; What cocaine?

A: The cocaine that they said they found in my footlocker. The cocaine was not mine, so it got worked into the deal. I think one of the officers was a user and they slipped me his stuff. I know they also made very clear that I am not to talk about that "Black op" stuff.

Q: Excuse me; can we get to the other night?

A: OK. Bubba comes in about 9:30, see, and announces he is going to stay over the night. So, like I told him, well, I have to get some sleep and maybe you should sleep on the couch, and Robbie has final exams, so you got to keep the TV off. Bubba says he wants to, you know, take a shower, to get the rain off. And I get mad and I say, look, it's almost June 1, and I am going to be evicted unless we pay back rent. We owe four months -- \$3200.

Q: Was Bubba on the lease?

A: No Bubba and I had an agreement that he would pay half of the rent and he could stay here whenever he wanted to. Bubba paid at first, but then started paying late, and lately has skipped paying altogether. So much for the agreement. It's not enough that he doesn't come up with any money even though he stays here when he wants. Last month when he stayed, some money came up missing. \$40 from the top of my dresser.

Q: What did he say about the \$40?

A: He says maybe Robbie took it. I say, no way. He says, maybe it was mice. Then we were having another argument over some e-bay stuff, and then Bubba started going off on Robbie. I had enough and I told Bubba to get out. Bubba said it was raining and he

wasn't going anywhere. But it wasn't really raining, you know. Not much, so that was just an excuse to stay around and stick it to me, and get me angry. It's not like Bubba was homeless. You know, Bubba had some other place to stay, otherwise where was he staying all those nights when he was not coming to the apartment? He comes and goes when he wants. What is he, the star boarder? So I'm saying to pay rent and leave Robbie alone. Bubba says, "I am going to stay and I'll say what I want, to who I want, whenever I want, and if you don't like it, try to stop me." I called out to Robbie to call the police, but Robbie is in the other room.

Q: What room?

A: The front room, because by now Bubba and I have taken the argument into the kitchen so Robbie does not answer, and Bubba is by the kitchen sink and grabbed my neck. I pushed Bubba away and he came at me again. I grabbed a knife out of the sink and told Bubba to stay back. I have the knife in my fist, and it is pointing up. You know, the handle is in my fist, and the pointy end is pointing up between my thumb and fingers. Bubba is coming at me, see, and Robbie is hollering for him to stop it.

Q: Okay. Did you stab Bubba?

A: I guess you can say that. I mean the knife was in my hand and it went up into his stomach.

Q: So you stabbed him?

A: Yes. He was coming at me like he was going to hit me. He already hit me pretty hard in the chest with the flat of his hand. He tried to choke me. He was saying, "I'll kill you – you and that punk, Robbie." He was on me, and the knife went in. Up and in. In and up. Then he stopped. I pulled back the knife, and he fell down. Excuse me, but I think I am going to get sick.

Q: We'll take a rest.

A: OK. I'm a little tired.

Q: OK. We're back on the record. Are you OK?

A: Yeah.

Q: You say you stabbed Bubba.

A: Yes.

Q: You had to stab pretty hard.

A: No. That knife was really sharp. Bubba used to sharpen them so they were razor sharp. He said, "I can shave with these knives."

Q: Wow.

A: Yes.

Q: Let's go back a bit. You knew Bubba before?

A: Sure. I knew Bubba from over ten years ago. We were in high school together, I knew him from then. We were in some classes together. Bubba played sports, you know, football and weight lifting. But Bubba did not really get through. See, they made a mistake with Bubba. The football coach caught Bubba smoking pot, and threw him off the team. Everybody at that high school smoked pot. You could major in pot. The coach knew that. The coach had pot growing in his back yard. Coach got rid of Bubba for personal reasons, and pot was just an excuse. I think the coach had a thing for Bubba, you know, and – well, Bubba was not interested. Bubba then enlisted in the Army, and I ended up in the Navy. That was before Bubba came out of the closet. I mean, Bubba was like bisexual. Or pansexual. Or whatever the term is now. But not back then. Anyway, I knew Bubba from back then, and when we were both out of the military, and Bubba was doing different jobs, like working at Smokey's Joe. The coffee shop. I went there sometimes because you could sit around, work with a laptop, read some travel books they had out on tables. Bubba worked behind the counter. But we were getting along pretty good, so about two years ago I was looking for a new place to stay. I was taking care of my cousin, my half-cousin, Robbie, who I am like raising or taking care of. Bubba said we should take a two-bedroom apartment, and Bubba would move in and pay half. So we found the place at 4515 Beacon, but the owner would not take Bubba's name on the lease because they thought Bubba had a drug problem and he didn't have any verifiable income. So I signed the lease, but Bubba agreed with me to pay half the rent and live there. That way, I could afford it. Robbie didn't have money, except for tuition and books. Well, that was OK for a while, but Bubba did not always stay there, and eventually Bubba did not want to pay half the rent. I was getting stuck, and we have this - I have this three-year lease at \$800 a month. I can't handle that because I have other obligations, and I am just getting by.

I am making maybe \$300 a week. I can pay the \$400 a month, but the \$800 is a stretch.

Q: How could you pay? What work do you do?

A: I work for minimum, below minimum, selling memorabilia at the "What's That?" store a couple of weekdays and on weekends. I work behind the counter, and people who collect things come in and buy and sell coins, stamps, trading cards, political

campaign buttons, and other kinds of stuff. We had a framed copy of the Chicago Tribune's famous headline front page, "Dewey Defeats Truman." Not for sale, but everybody asked if it was.

I've had the job since I got out of the Navy. I will always have the job, but I work on a minimum wage, no benefits, and a 1% commission. It's easy. I sit behind the counter and watch the store. My boss takes most of the sales. I get maybe \$300 a week. The owner trusts me with everything. I'm the only one in the family with a job, which is why the family allowed Robbie to come live with me the last two years. Robbie was ready to run away – my uncle is a real bully. It just made sense.

Q. Robbie was going to run away?

A. Yes. Robbie's father is an overbearing bully. When Robbie came to stay with me two year ago, Uncle Harold – Robbie's father – raised all kinds of hell. But I told him, Robbie's staying. Uncle Hal knew better than to threaten me. Nobody threatens me. Now Hal's OK. Robbie finished high school, is no longer a nervous wreck, started college, is getting good grades, and has made a real turn-around.

Q. So you are Robbie's protector?

A. Yes – that sounds right. I take care of Robbie.

Q. So are you still involved with computers?

A. No. I hate them. The Navy work was sickening. I don't want to be working in computers. I maybe do some e-mailing and on-line shopping. No programming. No spying. I do some eBay. Bubba told me about getting into the eBay business, selling stuff on eBay. I ran into some business snags, and Bubba decided not to do any more eBay business. Somebody accused me of stealing over the Internet. Bubba said, "No more." The prosecution dropped the charges, but Bubba said that doing eBay stuff was not worth the hassle. I stayed in, and have made some sales off and on. The last couple months have been bad because someone spammed a message saying I was a crook.

I might free lance on eBay. Like someone comes to me to sell something, coins, souvenirs, and like that, and I sell it and I work out a split with the provider. See, at the store, the store takes things on consignment and keeps as much 60%. If the merchandise is really good, and can sell fast, really good stuff they might buy outright and keep 50% to 80%. It depends. Mostly, 50%. But that's better than 40% on consignment. Bubba understood this stuff. I did better then.

I only do deals on stuff that my boss doesn't want to take. He knows what I do. You know, little small priced trinkets, modern baseball cards and stuff...the owner don't

want nothing to do with that, so he said I could do side deals, if I want, through the internet. Bubba set all this up. To be frank, without Bubba, I am not much good at this. That is partly why we were getting mad at each other.

Q: Let me ask you something. You were arrested a year ago for theft, and that had something to do with eBay?

A: Yes. The State's Attorney dropped the charges because there was nothing to them. The people who complained against me lied. It was a complete nolle prosequi. That is what my lawyer said. A full nolle pros.

Q: You know a little law?

A: I read a lot – sometimes law books. Since leaving the Navy, I have had no other trouble. That was the only time I've ever been arrested. And I didn't do anything wrong then.

Q: Was Bubba involved in that?

A: Not directly. But Bubba got sort of cool after that. Any way, originally Bubba stayed at the apartment most of the time, but started getting late with his half of the rent. Sometimes he would be a couple of weeks late. Then, in February this year Bubba did not come up with anything. Bubba is still staying with me, at the apartment, but not sharing the costs. No rent, no money for food or anything. I am starting to go crazy. He would come over. I would not let him stay in our room, so he wanted Robbie to move and he would take Robbie's room. But Robbie is a student, and needs a room. Besides, I told the family that Robbie would have a place to stay for college. Bubba could stay in my room or sleep on the floor, but not in Robbie's room. I have a king size bed. Plenty of room. So, in April, no rent and I am doing everything I can to raise money – there was a little overtime at the store mostly during December when people buy stuff for their kids, but not much merchandise moves in January through April. So, I am trying to sell stuff on eBay, but somebody put out a notice that I am a fraudulent dealer, you know, they can do that on the Internet, and you are screwed and you do not know how to fight back. I am telling Bubba, you got to pay half the rent. Bubba is calling me a cheat and a crook, and says everybody knows it, which is baloney. I am an honest businessperson.

Q: That is what you were arguing about the night Bubba got stabbed?

A: Yes. So Bubba showed up, and by 9:30 PM I was already getting ready to go to bed, and I said, hey, where do you think you are staying? I knew, but I was trying to get Bubba to admit he did not have the rent, and I was going to put the screws to him. So after a while, I am yelling for him to get out, and he is telling me he ain't gotta go nowhere. We are in the kitchen, and I am shouting. Somebody pushed. I don't know

whether it was me first, but Bubba sure pushed me. So I pushed back, you know? And Bubba pushed me against the wall, and it makes a pretty good thump. I mean, I am thinking that he had this Army training, and he is a big guy – 100 pounds bigger than me. You know I hit my head. I pushed him back hard. So I go into the kitchen to protect myself, and I am yelling for him to get out and he is yelling for me to get out and we are pushing and yelling, and Robbie come in and starts telling us to stop it. Bubba throws something at Robbie and says Robbie has to leave. Now this gets me really scared. There's always been something strange between Bubba and Robbie. I don't know what. Then, Bubba grabs a knife from the sink and comes at me, but I grab his wrist and twist it so that the knife comes loose and I grab it like this (indicating) in my right hand. I now have the knife. Everything moved so fast. So, I am holding this knife down low, but the point is pointing up towards Bubba, and he like comes at me. I am scared out of my mind. The next thing I know Bubba is acting very calm, but has the knife in his belly, and the knife is still in my hand. He pulls back and I hear the knife drop. There is blood coming out of his shirt. He falls down. Robbie is hollering, and the next thing I know there are police all over the place and I am taken in handcuffs to the police car. There are like five or six police holding me. One of the police is a neighbor, Officer Hoffman. Hoffman is telling the others to take it easy, that I am OK and not going to hurt any one. When we get to the station, Hoffman books me and writes up the report. Thank goodness Hoffman was there; I sure needed a friend.

Q: How old is Robbie?

A: 20, a mature 20.

Q: Okay, I want to clarify some things. Did you give Bubba anything that day?

A: A letter. I wrote him a letter telling him that I did not want him out of my life, but he had to help with the money. I wrote it earlier in the day.

Q: Okay. Was that like a love letter?

A: Love? Love letter? Hey, not really. It was a let's getting everything straight letter.

Q: Who ripped it up?

A: I did.

Q: When?

A: Just before he showed up.

Q: Not after?

A: No. Maybe 8 PM.

Q: Okay. When Bubba showed up that night you wanted him to leave, right?

A: Well, not right away, but after we kept arguing, yeah. I mean, he knew he wasn't paying rent. He was coming and going as he pleased. This was my and Robbie's home. So he's going to come up in here, and be angry at me? I don't think so.

Q: And he wouldn't leave so that made you angry, right?

A: I mean, I didn't want to keep arguing. I wanted him to leave.

Q: Okay. And this was just a verbal argument, correct?

A: Yeah a violent argument. More than verbal.

Q: Okay. Then you pushed him right?

A: Well, he pushed me first, and I pushed back

Q: Okay. So you are both pushing. Then you went into the kitchen.

A: Right. That's when he hit me really hard, with the flat of his hand. He bounced me up against the sink. Then he hit me again. I got very made, but I also was scared. When he had the knife, I thought he might really cut me up.

Q: Then he had the knife that you took from him.

A: No. First, Robbie came into the kitchen, and Bubba yelled at Robbie and threw something at Robbie. Robbie started yelling, "Stop it!" Then Bubba grabbed the knife, and came at me with it.

Q: Okay. Then you grabbed the knife. Right.

A: I grabbed his wrist. That knife was awfully sharp. I did not want my hand sliced up. You know Bubba's a lot bigger than me. But several years ago I took self-defense classes and learned how you grab the right wrist with your left hand, and twist and it hurts like hell and makes you drop whatever you got. So that's what I did.

Q: Okay, then at that point you grabbed the knife and stabbed Bubba. Right?

A: Well, if that's how you want to say it. I got hold of the knife. Bubba ran into . . . Bubba was coming at me and by then I was really angry and scared, and that's the way it was.

Q: Okay. Now let's go back. He had that letter that you gave him?

A. No.

Q: And at some point while he was in the house he tore that up and it ended up on the bed, is that right?

A: No. I don't think so. Not to my knowledge.

Q: Is this a copy of that letter?

A: Well that's pieces of it.

Q: Okay. Now, during this time, before you went into the kitchen, when you were arguing with Bubba, did you notice what Robbie was doing?

A. Robbie was closer by the -- in between the kitchen and the -- my living room. By the, the -- by the little -- Robbie saw, saw everything.

Q: Okay. Did Robbie make any phone calls at that time?

A: Yeah, called 9-1-1, the police.

Q: Okay. And when you saw that Robbie was calling 911, what did you do?

A: I said don't call the police.

Q: Okay. And did you -- what else did you say then?

A: I hung up the phone.

Q: Okay. And at that time what happened next?

A: Then I think Paris came pounding on the door, yelling and stuff. I was already having a hard time with Bubba; I didn't need any more stuff from Paris.

Q. Okay, so that's when Bubba answered the door and you came right behind Bubba and slammed the door in Paris's face?

A. No, I never said that. I didn't do that. The door stayed shut.

Q: Okay, what happened.

A: Paris was hollering. So I told Bubba to leave. Then Bubba didn't leave. He came back towards me.

Q: Okay. And what happened next?

A: That's when I went into the kitchen; Robbie came in, Bubba barked at Robbie, and threw something at Robbie and then came at me with a knife. How many times you want me to go over this?

Q: Okay. Just a few more questions. After you stabbed Bubba did you see blood?

A: I saw blood.

Q: You saw blood. What happened next?

A: He, Bubba, he passed out. He, he fell by the garbage can.

Q: Okay. At some point after that did people come in?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And who was that?

A: The police.

Q: Okay, and when you realized the police were there, you tossed the knife out the window.

A: No. I don't know what happened to the knife. I was looking at Bubba. Then I saw Hoffman, and knew I would not get hurt.

Q: Did they ask you what had happened?

A: Yes. I said he got stabbed.

Q: Well, did you tell them whether or not it was you who stabbed him?

A: Yes.

Q: What did you say?

A: I stabbed him.

Q: Okay. And eventually were you taken back here to the police station?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Let me ask you this. During the years that you have been together, has he ever acted in a violent manner towards you?

A: Yes.

Q: And how many times were you there when that happened?

A: About two.

Q: And were both of those incidents where he had hit you?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And did you call the police in either of those two occasions?

A: The second time.

Q: Okay. And did he get arrested?

A: Yes.

Q: And when was that?

A: In 2003.

Q: All right. But did you end up going to court on that?

A: No.

Q: Okay. And since 2003, he's never laid a hand on you, is that correct?

A: I never reported. We, we had our fighting and, you know, and tussles.

Q: And other than those two occasions did he ever hit you?

A: Yes.

Q: He did?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Well, I thought you were -- just so I'm clear.

A: I mean in 2002 and 2003.

Q: Okay. But other than those two times --

A: Yes.

Q: -- there were no other times when he hit you?

A: No.

Q: All right. And you only called the police on one of those occasions, correct?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Now, I want to ask how would you say you've been treated by both the police and myself since you been here?

A: Nice.

Q: Okay. I think that's all for now.

Transcribed: Lisa Carol Fremont