

## Why A Cop Killed A Man

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One story I came across when working for the Michigan circuit court was especially memorable. I will let the policeman involved tell the highlights of his story.

“Early on the early morning shift, I noticed a car parked on the side of the road, close to the road. I walked to the car to determine why it was there. I was surprised to see a young woman sitting in the driver's seat.

“Madam, why are you illegally parked here?” I asked.

“My car engine died and it finally stopped here. I was lost and did not want to start walking home alone in the dark.”

“I will need your license, registration, and insurance, please.”

“OK. Here they are,” she said, as she handed them to me.

I went back to my patrol car and found her record was clean except for a parking ticket several years ago.

“Everything checks out. Can I call your husband or someone else to pick you up?” I asked.

“My husband is under a court order not to have any contact with me. I am deathly afraid of him, and drove as far as possible away from my home to get away from him. He has made it clear to me that he has no intention of obeying the court order. All my relatives live over three hours away from here in another state. I have no one

else to contact.”

“I see. Let me check the records for verification.” I went back to the patrol car and found her story was completely accurate.

After walking back to her car I told her, “I called for your car to be towed to the police garage. Then I explained I could not leave her here alone. “I would be terminated from the force if I did that. I will have to find a place for you to stay for now.”

She then gathered her things that were in her car and put them in my police car. After driving to several places that could temporarily house her, none even answered the door. It was close to 3:00 AM, so that did not surprise me. Frustrated, I said “I will have to call the sergeant for suggestions.”

She then asked me, “What does your wife think about your working so late? She must be very worried. I have read that police work can be very dangerous.”

“My wife died two years ago. Cancer. One reason I take the night shift, besides more money, is I have had a very difficult time adjusting to her loss, and so I don’t sleep very well anymore.”

“Well,” she added, “Maybe I could stay at your house. I would be safe and have less worry about my husband. Do we have any other choice?”

“I cannot just drop you off on the street, so it appears that my house is our only option at this time.” We drove to my house and she took the bedroom I used when I was married, explaining, “I have too many memories in that room, so I just sleep in the guest room. Actually, I wanted to sell this house but could not get the price I needed to buy another house. This house was my parents’ home until they retired and moved to Florida.”

I was awake for over 9 hours, so I was able to sleep better than usual. In the morning when I got up and went into the kitchen, I discovered she had made a hearty breakfast for us. I have to admit I really enjoyed her breakfast and her company! I had to work the day shift due to the shortage of policemen and several protest events were expected today that required extra officers for security. When my shift was over, she had the evening meal ready for us. We then talked for several hours. She told me about her problems with her husband, mostly that he

was an irrationally jealous man, especially when he was drunk, a side he never showed when they were dating. She was an elementary school teacher, and even friendly conversations with male teachers set him off.

Three days later she mentioned she was sure her husband was casing the house. I felt she was overreacting. On Friday, my police car was taken to the station for a check-up. "Patrol cars get a lot of use and abuse, so they have to be maintained beyond that of the average automobile," I explained.

I was looking forward to a day at home, and by this time I enormously enjoyed her company. Her name was Katerina. I had to put on my uniform most days, as I was on call for most of today. About 10:30 in the morning a large man came crashing through the front door with a gun raised. I instinctively fired three shots and he died instantly. It was Katarina's Husband. I assumed he did not see the patrol car, so thought I was working the day shift and Katarina was home alone.

Not surprisingly, Katarina soon became my wife and we have been together for 18 years now. As I think back, there was a clear attraction the first time we saw each other. When I picked her up that cold early morning, other options could possibly have existed, but neither one of us wanted to pursue them. She felt safer in the home of a policemen than anywhere else. I guess you could say it was love at first sight. This is, in brief, my story. Oh yes, I do not drink, never have, never will.

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