

# The Washington Daily Star

## DEATH OF AN INTERN

Exclusive by Daily Star  
Reporter Laura Wolfe

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### Murder Victim Worked For Vice President

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# Keith M. Donaldson

A Laura Wolfe Thriller



**I**t was a rainy April night in the nation's capital with wind gusts turning umbrellas inside out, tearing them from frustrated hands. The torrents blurred the nighttime beauty of monumental Washington.

Second Street NE was within close proximity to the brightly lighted Capitol Dome, but in this part of Washington, D.C., there were no gleaming lights on buildings—unless there was a police search. Tightly drawn curtains and boarded up windows prevented inside light from getting out, and there were few if any street lamps working. These back streets were dark and invisible in the shadow of the Federal enclave, business, and tourist areas.

It was the perfect place.

In a corner house, a clinic for unwed mothers-to-be quietly attended to its clients' needs. Like the once lovely house that practically had the Washington Mall for its front yard, 2nd Street had seen better days.

This night, a stranger sat parked in a black cargo van a half block from the clinic. The torrential rain obscured any view inside; however, the hooded person sat passively behind the wheel, attention fixed on the clinic's front door. The van's radio went from soft rock to an announcer reading headlines and a weather forecast. The weather would improve; the rain would stop after midnight. Tomorrow would be a clear and sunny day in the low 70s—a beautiful day in a beautiful city.

Except for one person, the driver reflected.

The clinic's last class should be ending any minute, and the women would flow out. Would one come toward the van? Would she be alone? Last night, the women had dispersed in all directions. Two had gone past the

van. Either was ripe for selection, but last night had been for planning only. In addition, it hadn't been raining.

The stalker had done a complete survey of the neighborhood. There were no construction barriers obstructing the roads. No stores were along the escape route that the driver had selected. No clutter of cars. No stores to be robbed or bringing the police. This was a quiet, rundown residential neighborhood.

A police scanner sat on the van's front seat and announced no local disturbances. Bad guys didn't go out on nights like this. Well, with certain exceptions. A gust of wind shook the van as the rain kept beating down.

A light was reflected on the windshield—the clinic's porch light had come on. Women gathered under the small portico, turned up collars, pulled up hoods, tested umbrellas. Two walked down the half dozen steps to the sidewalk and turned in the opposite direction. A third stopped at the bottom to say a final goodbye. She turned, bent her head down under her small, virtually useless umbrella to ward off the relentless bombardment, and walked quickly away toward the van.

No one followed her.

The approaching woman was alone. Stealthily the stalker moved through the van to the rear, opened its doors, and then stepped out carrying a large box, placing it in the middle of the sidewalk. Its positioning would force the oncoming woman to step closer to the van. Hidden by the van's doors, the driver waited. The pedestrian nearly stumbled over the box. She adjusted, and then did as expected. She sidestepped it to the outside, all the while looking down, stepping carefully to avoid falling off the curb into the stream of water flowing down the gutter.

The stalker was swift. Strong, gloved hands grabbed the woman. In one was a chloroformed rag, which the attacker held against the struggling woman's mouth, instantly preventing a scream. She dropped everything in an attempt to free herself, but the anesthetic quickly reduced her to a crumpled mass. Her deflated body was shoved into the van. The mugger climbed in, quickly pulling the doors closed.

Moving with mad purpose, the assailant strapped the woman down and gave her another dose of chloroform just to play it safe, even though the ride would be short. Up ahead, the clinic's light went off. The street was again dark and lifeless. All to the kidnapper's liking.

The driver eased the van out of its snug harbor and drove past the clinic, leaving 2nd Street in its wake, the woman's bag and umbrella in the gutter.

The van was soon on K Street NW, heading west through the central business district, and then under the Whitehurst Freeway to Georgetown's waterfront. A black cargo van fit in well here with the usual Mercedes or Lexus—a very eclectic place, Georgetown. The parking lots were mostly empty, unlike the norm. People were not idly out on this unpleasant weeknight. No drunks to contend with. The van passed Wisconsin Avenue, rumbled over old trolley tracks and potholes, and moved under Francis Scott Key Bridge.

Practically everything in Washington was named for somebody, and then later renamed to accommodate a new saint, while discarding the old one. There would be no ceremonial naming for the woman in the rear of the van. Maybe a moment, a brief news item, but then she, too, would become old news. The van glided into a lot occupied by commercial vehicles and parked. Those vehicles would not see their drivers until the predawn hours.

There was plenty of time. The abductor clamored eagerly into the back.