



QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE
STATEMENT OF WITNESS



Occurrence #: 78/2007

Statement no.: _____ Date: 30/04/2007

Statement of

Name of witness: THOMAS, Alanda Michele

Date of birth: 17/11/1980 Age: 26 Occupation: Insurance Customer Service Representative

Police officer taking statement

Name of police officer: CAMPBELL, Gary Colin

Rank: Detective Sergeant Reg. no.: 6690

Region/Command/Division: Northern Station: Townsville Criminal Investigation Branch

Statement:

Alanda Michele THOMAS states:

I am divorced woman, 26 years of age, and reside at 7572 Spencer Lane, Helena, Alabama, 35080, USA. My mother is Cindy THOMAS and my father is Tommy THOMAS. I am currently employed as a Customer Service Representative with Alfa Insurance. I have a sister and her name was Christina Mae THOMAS. Her married name was Christina Mae WATSON. I knew has Tina. I have no other brothers and sisters.

Tina was married was David Gabriel WATSON. I know David Gabriel WATSON as Gabe.

Tina was a person who was full of life and energy, she was the type of person who walked into a room and lit it up. Tina was the type of person who after meeting people, people didn't forget her. She was my big sister and we would talk just about every day either on the telephone or in person. We worked together and spent a lot of our time together. It was like us against the world. We talked about everything together, we talked about our work lives, our private lives, our relationships and our future plans with our lives. We even talked about being in the same nursing homes together as room mates.

Tina even joked about beating each other with cans.

(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Police officer's signature)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: THOMAS, Alanda Michele

Before Tina died I became pregnant with my first child William. Tina was with me when I first heard his heart beat and she was the only other person who knew I was pregnant for three or four months. Even mom and dad didn't know I was pregnant at the time. This was the sort of relationship Tina and I had.

Tina told me everything about her life. The only times Tina would not tell me things or not tell me everything about something was if it was something with one of her boyfriends or Gabe. These were issues where she thought I might get upset or cause arguments between me and who ever it might be. Tina was my older sister and I was very protective of her. I am a very direct person whereas Tina was very non confrontational.

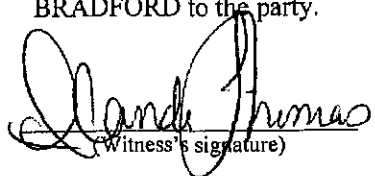
When Tina was younger she had a heart condition from when she was little to when she was 21. This made me very protective of Tina and I always wanted the best for her.

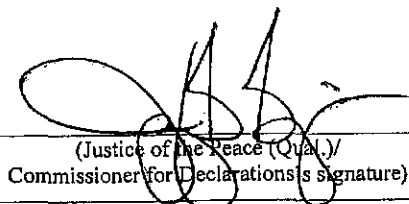
Tina was always a bubbly person who was talking and full of energy. If you had more than two people in the room than Tina was talking. Tina could get up in a room full of people and talk. In college her major was public relations or mass communications. Tina could not sit still for more than five minutes and not talk. Tina had to be talking all the time. If there was a disagreement or argument Tina would always try and make light of it, make jokes and make people happy.

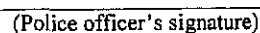
Tina was a true romantic. We must have watched the movie, "Gone with the Wind", a hundred times. We even drove to Atlanta, Georgia I think it was, to see the museum for "Gone with the Wind". Tina could watch romantic movies and cry at the drop of a hat. Tina loved to watch the old romantic movies and she loved them.

I remember from Tina's early 20's she would say that she was old. She had a sense of urgency of wanting children and the white picket fence around the family home. She wanted to love someone and for someone to love her and to grow old happily together.

I met Gabe for the first time on my 21st birthday which was the 17th of November 2001. Tina and Gabe were not dating at the time. Tina was going out with a Stan MARKS at the time. Gabe came with a Jeff BRADFORD to the party.


Witness's signature


(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)


(Police officer's signature)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: THOMAS, Alanda Michele

This was about the only time I met Gabe until Tina and Gabe started dating. Tina had broken up with Stan MARKS about mid to late December 2001. Around spring 2002 I became aware that Tina and Gabe were dating. I did see a little bit of Gabe after that.

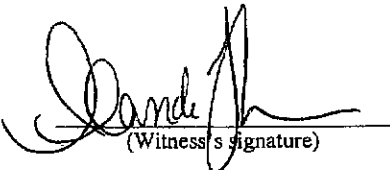
Around October or November 2002 Tina told me that she knew that Gabe had bought her an engagement ring. That Gabe was keeping it in a bag on the television at his condominium. That Gabe had told her that if Tina looked at the ring that he would take it back to the jeweller. It bothered Tina at the time but she didn't push it with Gabe as didn't think there was anything she could do.

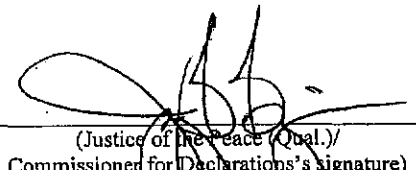
It was strange to me that he didn't hide it or anything like that, he was leaving it out so she could see it every time she visited. This went on for about six months. Tina told me that a lot of people had talked to her about the situation and that this bothered her aswell.

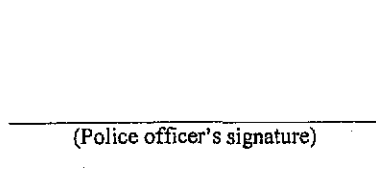
I did not get along well with Gabe. We were around each other a hand full of times and the way he acted towards Tina in my presence I did not like.

I remember Saturday the 5th of April 2003. This weekend my friend, Kelli DUKE @ SMITH, was getting married. I was the bridesmaid for Kelli. Tina had told me that she was fed up with things in relation to the relationship with Gabe. The primary reason Tina told me was that she was sick of looking at the bag with the engagement ring inside it for the last six months. Tina told me that she was going to go and see Xander who is Amanda PHILLIPS cousin. His proper name is Alexander LORENZ but we just called him Xander. He was living in Atlanta, Georgia. Tina had told me that she had a crush on Xander in high school. The reason Tina was going to see Xander was that she wanted to see what else was out there. By this I understood this to mean Tina was going to see if there could be a relationship with someone who she had previously had a crush on.

Tina me that she was going to see Xander and not to tell mom or anyone else. Tina told me this before she left. She told me that she had told mom that she was going to see Amanda PHILLIPS. Tina told me that she had told mom that Amanda PHILLIPS was visiting her cousin Xander but this was not case. All this was told to me over several telephone calls on her way to Georgia.


(Witness's signature)


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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: THOMAS, Alanda Michele


Tina came home on the Sunday of that weekend. Tina and I spoke a few times on her way home. I asked Tina how it went with Xander but she really didn't want to say. Tina told me that things had not gone the way she hoped and did not think it would go anywhere. Tina sort of told me that nothing had happened and that they had just talked. By this I mean that they did not sleep with each other.


I am pretty sure that it was the next weekend that Tina got engaged to Gabe. Tina told me that she was engaged to Gabe. Tina told me that Gabe asked her to marry him. Tina told me that she had said yes. I was very surprised that Tina had got engaged considering the previous weekend. I did not say anything to Tina as I didn't want to rain on her parade. She seemed happy but I would have expected her to react to be screaming to the world about it.

Tina was married on the 11th day of October 2003. I was the Maid of Honour for the ceremony. Later that day as they left in the elevator after the reception was the last time I saw my sister Tina alive. I later had a voice mail left on my telephone by Tina. This was on Sunday the 12th day of October 2003. Tina was inquiring about the location of her debit card.

On the 22nd day of October 2003 I went to work and started at about 9.30am. As I walked in everybody was asking me if I was okay. No one would tell me what was happening and I was escorted into Ceasar Lamonica's office. Ceasar told me that Tina had been in an accident and to get hold of one of parents. I tried to ring my mom and she did not answer the telephone. I then rang my dad and asked him what had happened to Tina.

Dad told me that there had been an accident and that Tina had drowned. I can't really remember what he said after as I pretty what lost it after that and I gave the telephone back to Ceasar. One of the ladies from the Human Resources department came over and got me and took me back to their department. Everything was a blur after that, I was hysterically bawling, people kept asking if I wanted someone. I would ask for me sister in this situation but she was dead. Someone then went and got Kelli DUKE-SMITH and she came and got me. When she got there we left and we went to my home.


(Witness's signature)


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(Police officer's signature)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: THOMAS, Alanda Michele

When I got home I spoke to Glenda WATSON who is Gabe's mother. Glenda told me that there had been accident and that Tina had drowned. Glenda also said that her husband had got her passport or visa for her and was taking her to the airport to fly to Australia. It was a fairly quick conversation and that she did not know anything else.

I spoke to dad again and was still trying desperately to figure out what was happening. I also spoke to dad as I was worried about mom waking up and finding out about Tina's death. We decided it was better for me to go and tell mom so she didn't find out some other way. I went to mom and dad's house with Kelli and Kelli's parents Ruthie and Dennis DUKE.

When I got to my moms house we kind of stalled for a while in the basement as we did not know what to do or say. I then headed up to my moms bedroom and Ruthie DUKE was not far behind me. I knocked on the door and opened it up. My mom was sleeping but roused as I came in. I went over to the bed and that there had been an accident and told her that Tina was gone.

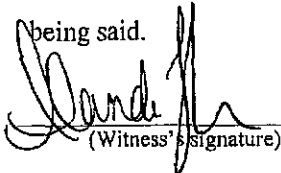
Mom was hysterical. Mom could not accept what I was saying. Ruthie then came in and I left the room.

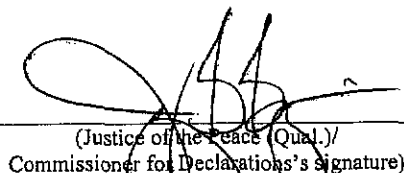
I spoke to dad after that and he was on his way home from the airport. Dad spoke to mom on the telephone and she could not accept what we had already told her. I also spoke to Amanda PHILLIPS. Someone got me the contact numbers for the police in Townsville and I spoke with someone who confirmed that Tina had died. I was also given Glen LAWRENCE's name and contact details. I later gave them to dad.

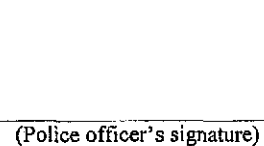
Dad got home some time later. Some time later Kelli's parents left but Kelli stayed around for a while. Dad tried to ring David WATSON's contact numbers several times but could not get an answer.

Dad later spoke with Charlene ROBINSON who also confirmed that there had been an accident and that Tina had drowned. We still had not heard from Gabe at this time. Charlene called back later and she had found where Gabe. It was after dark that she put us through to the hotel where Gabe was.

Mom, dad and I were all on the telephone extensions. I was on one of the portable telephones and we were all in the basement or garage. With these telephones we could all hear at the same time what was being said.


(Witness's signature)


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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: THOMAS, Alanda Michele

Gabe then came on the line and I recognised his voice. Mom asked a few times if he was okay and he said he was but that he had an ear ache and that it hurt. Mom asked what happened to Tina. Gabe asked did we want to know and mom said we did. Gabe then asked someone who was in the room with him to leave.

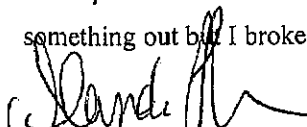
Gabe said that he and Tina had gone on a dive, that while they were down there that Tina motioned that she wanted to up or back to the rope, that he had grabbed Tina's hand and started heading to the rope, that she was grabbed at him, that she had knocked his mask off, that he had let her go of her hand, that he had got his mask on, that he had looked down and Tina was below him, looking at him with her arms reached towards him, that he saw her blink, so he knew she was alive, that he had tried to go to her but she was going down to fast, he had to make a decision to go up for help, that he went as fast as he could to the top, that he was ripping off his equipment, that he surfaced, and that he was screaming for help.

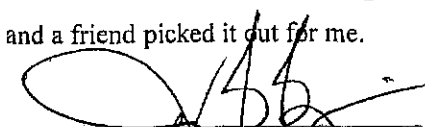
Mom told Gabe that it was okay and that Tina would have known that he was going for help. Gabe was asked by mom if he was with her while they tried to revive her and he said he was by her side the whole time. We all told him that we were sorry for him and I felt very sorry for him knowing that he would have that mental image with him for ever. We all pretty much told him to take care of himself and to look after Tina and to call us if he needed anything and to let us know what was happening.


The telephone call was finished a little while later. This was the worst day of my life.

Dad then told some other people that were there what Gabe had said and Kelli something like it just didn't sound right. Kelli then made a telephone call and told us that her father said something similar. I didn't know anything about scuba diving before that night. I can't remember what Kelli said that she said was wrong.

I spoke to Gabe again while he was still in Australia. We didn't actually talk about what happened underwater. Some days later we went to the funeral home but we were not allowed to contribute to the funeral arrangements unless Gabe gave some sort of power of attorney. I spoke to Gabe about that on the telephone but he told me that he could not give that as there was only one or two notary's and that it would be impossible for him to get that done. I spoke to Gabe again at a later time and he said that I could pick out an outfit for Tina and that it would be something for me to do. I tried to go and pick something out but I broke down and a friend picked it out for me.


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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: THOMAS, Alanda Michele

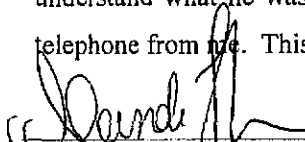
The day before Gabe left Australia he rang and told us about the travel arrangements. The telephone was on speaker telephone. Gabe laughed and told us that if the Australian authorities ever wanted him to come back that they would have to drag him back, kicking and screaming. That comment did not sit well at all with me, I could not finish my meal, I was confused about this. All of us were. There was my dad, mom and Leia TRAVIS. Just before the call was finished Gabe promised us he would be with Tina the whole way home.

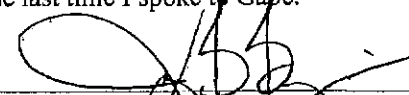
Tina came home a few days later and Gabe and his mom arrived the next day. I went and saw Tina at the home and it was a major shock. We did not see Gabe until the day of making the funeral arrangements at the funeral home. During the arrangements I remember Gabe making comment about wanting to release doves during the funeral, that he knew what arrangements Tina had wanted for her funeral, that he and Tina had discussed every detail about how the funeral was to occur.

I found these comments very strange. Tina was big into the World Wildlife Foundation and was against birds being caged. As far as discussing her funeral arrangements, if a discussion came up about funerals, Tina would change the subject immediately and make jokes. It was her way of trying to lighten the mood. There is no way Tina would discuss specifics about her funeral arrangements. No one will ever convince me otherwise.

An argument then occurred between the families and Gabe told us that we had to understand that this was about him and not us. Gabe then left the room and mom went out and spoke to him. The funeral arrangements did not go well between the families. The arrangements were completed later with Gabe present.

I went to a viewing of Tina the day before the funeral. Before the viewing I spoke with Gabe on the telephone. It had become quite ugly in that Gabe wanted all of Tina's personal possessions prior to the viewing. There was no problem in handing these items over including her Grand Jeep Cherokee but we just wanted to get through the funeral the next day. Gabe was also after a mattress, some clothes and some wedding presents, basically everything Tina owned. When I spoke to Gabe I said to him why are you doing this, why do you need this stuff now. Gabe told me that we had to understand that he had already completed the grieving process and we were just starting. I was appalled at this and could not understand what he was saying and why he was doing this. I became really upset and dad took the telephone from me. This was the last time I spoke to Gabe.


(Witness's signature)


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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: THOMAS, Alanda Michele

I went to the viewing and I was crazy with grief. I really don't remember much from the viewing of Tina's body. The funeral was the next day. It was one of the worst days of my life.

On Saturday the 28th day of April 2007 I went to the Helena Police Station and started giving this statement to Detective Sergeant Gary CAMPBELL. I returned on Tuesday the 1st day of May 2007 to the Helena Police station and completed the statement with Detective Gary CAMPBELL.

The death of my sister Tina has literally destroyed my family. My mom has become very ill because of Tina's death. My mom was ill before Tina's but she is now a million times worse. My dad has aged considerably and his entire focus is to find out what happened.

My health has suffered because of Tina's death. I have had nightmares and bad dreams. For so long I could not accept that Tina had died and expected that she would appear one day still alive. I know that is not going to happen. I think about Tina every day and will love her always.

Alanda Thomas
Alanda Michelle THOMAS Oaths Act Declaration

OATHS ACT 1867 (DECLARATION)

IAlanda Michele THOMAS..... do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

(1) This written statement by me dated 4/5/2007 and contained in pages numbered 1 to 8 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and

(2) I make this statement knowing that if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything I know to be false.

and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act 1867

Alanda ThomasSignature

Taken and declared before me at Helena Police Department.....

this 1st day of May, 2007.

Witness *[Signature]*

Justice of the Peace /
Commissioner of Declarations
Other (Please State) Notary Public for the State of Alabama
My commission expires 2-1-2008

Alanda Thomas
(Witness's signature)

[Signature]
(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner of Declarations's signature)

[Signature]
(Police officer's signature)