

'Grace killer told police he tried to end life with overdose after burying body'

Benedict Moore-Bridger

THE man accused of murdering British backpacker Grace Millane told police he was in "utter shock" to discover her dead in his hotel room and tried to kill himself after burying her in a shallow grave, a court heard.

The 27-year-old man, who cannot be named for legal reasons, claims the backpacker consented to being choked

while they were having sex, and that her death was accidental.

Ms Millane, from Wickford, Essex, was travelling in New Zealand when she died the night before her 22nd birthday.

In a police interview played to the jury at Auckland high court, the defendant admitted disposing of her body but said he had acted in panic.

He claimed he had attempted to kill himself by taking an overdose after

burying her body in the Waitakere Ranges hills outside Auckland.

He told police that after having "rough" sex with Ms Millane, he had a shower and fell asleep before waking the next day to find her with "blood coming from her nose".

"I yelled out at her, I tried to move her to see if she was awake ... I was in shock, I didn't know what to do. I picked her up and tried to wake her up ... then I



Victim: British backpacker Grace Millane was found in a shallow grave outside Auckland. The man accused of her murder told police her death was an accident

was screaming 'Grace, Grace,'" he said. He told police he began to dial the emergency services but did not make the call. "I was scared how bad it looked ... there's a dead person in my room, I thought it looked terrible. I was in utter shock that that had happened. I was just terrified and scared," he said.

The man admitted buying a large suitcase and cleaning products in an attempt to remove Ms Millane's blood from the carpet of the room.

In the police interview, the man said: "I went into the bush and I dug a hole, and I sat there, I sat there and I took 20, 30 paracetamol tablets because I didn't want to be around if Grace wasn't there, and I didn't feel like I deserved to be around, because of what happened."

I was scared how bad it looked... There's a dead person in my room, I thought it looked terrible
Defendant in police interview

Ms Millane was on a round-the-world trip when she went on a Tinder date with the defendant.

Prosecutors have told the court he murdered her on December 1 last year. His defence team claim the death was an accident during consensual sex.

The man initially told police he had parted company with Ms Millane at about 8pm on December 1, before changing his story and leading them to her grave.

He told officers: "I want her family to know that it wasn't intentional ... I also want her family to have closure."

He said the "violent" and "kinky" sex was initiated by Ms Millane, after they had discussed the film *Fifty Shades Of Grey*, and that he had no previous experience of it. A former partner has told the court he liked sex involving domination and strangulation.

The trial continues.

ARREST AFTER AXE ROBBERS TARGET ROYAL DESIGNER

A MAN has been arrested after royal fashion designer Amanda Wakeley was robbed by two thieves on a moped armed with an axe.

The British designer, 57, a favourite of the duchesses of Sussex and Cambridge, was forced to hand over a £25,000 Rolex.

She was targeted in Chelsea Harbour yesterday at 9.30am, her partner Hugh Morrison said.

The Met said a man, 28, was arrested last night on suspicion of conspiracy to commit robbery, and their inquiries continued.

CHARITY WINS AWARD FOR YOUTH WORK CONTRIBUTION

THE Jack Petchey Foundation was today named the winner of a new award for its contribution to youth work.

The charity London Youth is holding its annual awards at City Hall tonight, recognising dozens of youth workers and groups. The foundation has been honoured with the first Prince Philip Award which is named after the London Youth patron, the Duke of Edinburgh. It has been recognised for its contribution to providing education, activities and training for thousands of young people in London and Essex.

SUMMIT LOOKS AT TACKLING KNIFE AND DRUG CRIME

A SUMMIT of community safety groups to discuss ways to tackle knife crime, child sexual exploitation and county lines drug dealing is to take place in London tomorrow.

The conference, at the British Medical Association's HQ in Bloomsbury, will bring together law enforcement, local authority, housing and grassroots groups. It is being organised by Resolve, which lobbies the Government on antisocial behaviour.



Middle of Lidl
From Thursday
14 November



Light-Up Christmas Scene
6 hour timer with automatic daily repetition

£12.99



1.8m Artificial Christmas Tree
Choose from Green or White

£19.99



580 LED Fairy Lights
Total length: 14m (power cable: 10m)

£16.99



3D Rope Light Figure
For indoor and outdoor use

£14.99



All is glam, all is bright

lidl.co.uk/christmas See online and in store for more

Big on quality
Lidl on price

While stocks last. Subject to availability. Selected stores. Excludes ROI & NI. Packaging, sizes & measurements may vary. Decorative items not included. Prices correct at time of going to print & valid for a limited period only. Light-Up Christmas Village, Nativity or Christmas Scene, 580 LED Fairy Lights £16.99, 1.8m Artificial Christmas Tree £19.99, 3D Rope Light Figure, £14.99

I can't wait for Lizzo's X Factor, says Nicole

NICOLE SCHERZINGER said she "can't wait" for Lizzo's performance on *The X Factor* this weekend as she attended the launch of a London hotel.

The show's judge wore a red suit to the opening of Treehouse, Marylebone, last night, with models Daisy Lowe and Erin O'Connor also in attendance.

Scherzinger said: "Lizzo is so good, I can't wait for her performance."

Lizzie Edmonds



DAVE BENNETT