

A Daughter's Deadly Deception

Reporter Jeremy Grimaldi's first book chronicles Jennifer Pan murder trial

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In December 2014, Markham's Jennifer Pan was found guilty in the first-degree murder of her mother Bich Ha Pan and the attempted murder of her father Hann Pan. York Region Media Group reporter Jeremy Grimaldi covered the trial and has written a book on the subject. The following is an excerpt from the first chapter of *A Daughter's Deadly Deception*, which was released this month.

"Nine-one-one. Do you require -?"

Before the operator can get the all the words out of her mouth she hears a young woman's frenzied cries for assistance: "Help me, please! I need help ... I don't know where my parents are ..."

"Ma'am, ma'am, calm down. What's going on?" asks the operator.

"Some people just broke into our house and they just stole all our money!" the girl screams. "I just heard shots, pops. I'm tied upstairs. I had my hands tied behind my back. I had my cellphone in my pocket. Please come ... help!"

"What did they look like?"

"I'm not sure ... the guy who was with me, he was a male ... one of them had a hoodie. They had most of the lights off before they left. I think he was black, I think, I'm not sure. They didn't hurt me... They had guns and they were holding me at gunpoint.... They took my parents downstairs and I heard pops ... All they said was 'You're not co-operating.'" The woman is calling from a live crime scene.

In the background a blood-curdling howl is heard.

"Dad ...? I'm calling 911 ... I'm okay!" the caller yells out.

"Do you hear [your] mom anywhere downstairs?"

"I don't hear her anymore ..." The girl's voice trails off and cracks with emotion. She sounds petrified and begs the operator to remain on the phone with her until the police arrive.

Moments later, sirens and loud shouting can be heard as police officers arrive on the scene.

Three men jump out of the cruisers and take in the gruesome scene, their eyes struggling to grasp what lies before them. Two

men, one partially dressed and dishevelled, are in the driveway of 240 Helen Avenue. Neighbour Peter Chung stands worriedly beside Hann Pan, who screams about the pain in his face in broken English. His clothes are drenched in blood, a "thick red liquid dripping from his nose." When Constable Mike Stesco approaches, he hears the confusing cries of Hann, but quickly realizes that gunmen have robbed the home when Hann

motions with his fingers in the shape of a gun. Hann manages to get across that the intruders shot him and his wife and left his daughter inside the house.

Nothing is further from York Regional Constable Mason Baines's mind than murder as he drives around the peaceful city of Markham, Ontario, in his cruiser that night. After hearing the gun call on his CB, he races over to Helen Avenue, breaking the posted

limit and covering the mile and a quarter in two minutes flat. When he gets out of his car and draws close to the door of the house, he recalls from his training what to do when faced with a gun call - hit the wall, draw your pistol, check that the coast is clear.

The young uniformed officer glances down and notices blood droplets leading to the front door. Following them inside and through the home's dining room, he calls out, trying to locate the person yelling from within. A panicked female voice answers, telling him that she's "upstairs."

"I'm okay!" she cries, but says something is wrong with her mother, who's in the basement and has been shot.

Baines makes his way through the house and is confronted with an eerily calm scene. The trail of blood leads him slowly forward. Other than the red drops that stain the hardwood, the rest of the main floor seems in order.

Mike Stesco, along with rookie partner Brian Darroch, follows Baines. He later notes: "Everything in the house seemed to be where it should be. Obviously, we've done home invasions in the past where the house had been ransacked, but [in this case], nothing was out of place, nothing taken."

When the three officers descend into the basement, Baines recoils at the sight before him.

Stesco later describes the scene: "There was a lot of blood.... It was by her head and then she had a blue towel over her head."

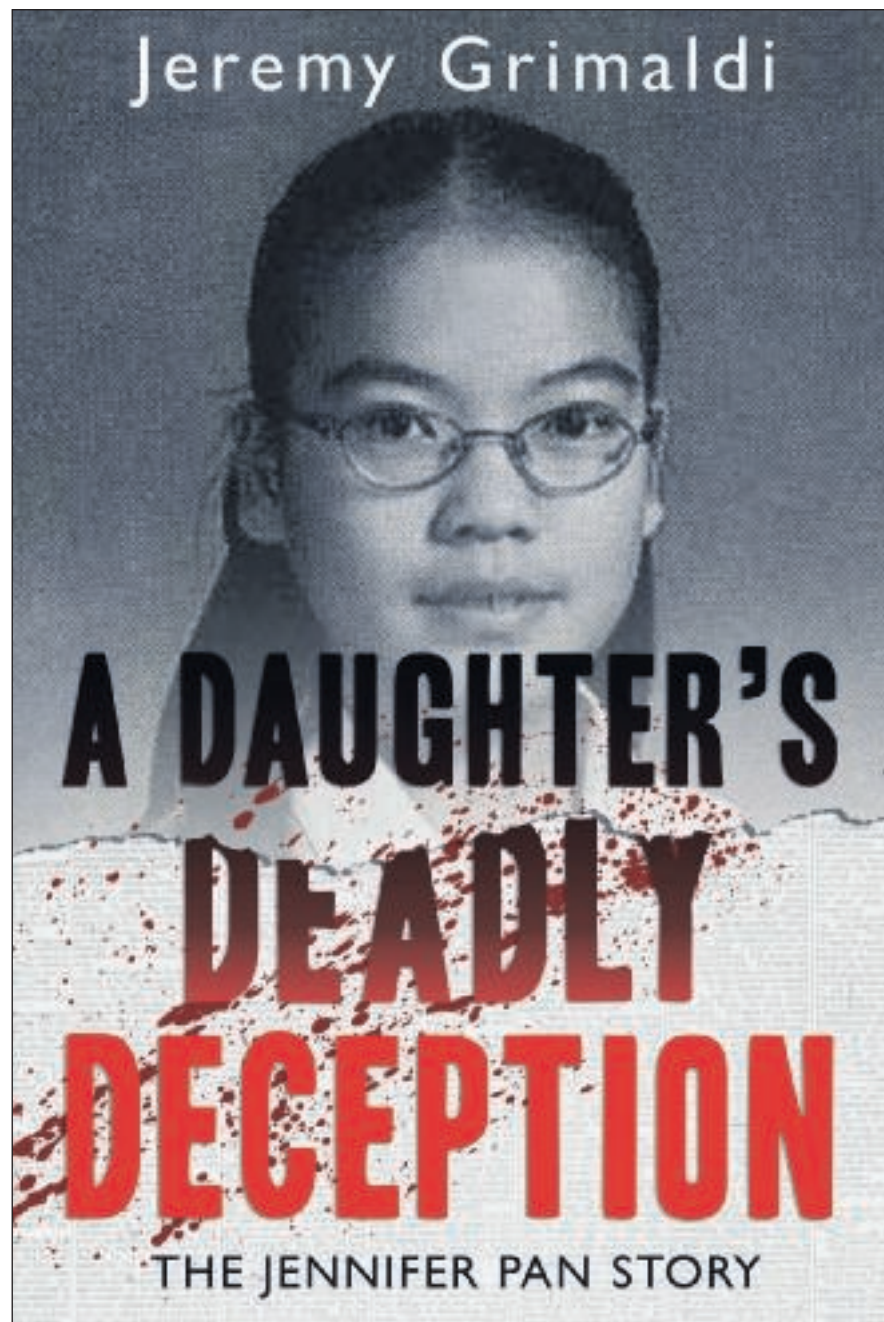
Stesco speaks to the woman but knows deep down it's pointless. There is no response.

Four paramedics rush in soon after and flip over the lifeless body. They try to revive her, but it is a useless exercise.

Stesco tells his partner to head upstairs to secure the young woman. Darroch, his gun drawn, moves cautiously up through the house. As he approaches the home's final victim, he starts to holster his weapon. When he calls out, Jennifer tells him she's unsure if the assailants are actually gone. Darroch grips his service pistol again and quickly raises it. Peering through the gun's sight finder, he acknowledges Jennifer, then proceeds to clear all the rooms.

Satisfied that no intruders are still present, Darroch returns to Jennifer. He retrieves a pair of scissors from Jennifer's bedroom and cuts the bootlace binding her tiny wrists.

For more information or to purchase the book, visit <https://www.dundurn.com/books/Daughters-Deadly-Deception>.



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