

BLIND RAGE

Blind Rage
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This is a true story, represented here as factually as possible. In order to maintain their anonymity in some instances I have changed the names of individuals and places. I may have changed some identifying characteristics and details such as physical properties, occupations and places of residence.

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ISBN: 978-1-942428-24-4
Printed in the United States

Cover and interior design by Kelsey Rice



BLIND RAGE

A TRUE STORY OF SIN, SEX, AND MURDER IN A SMALL ARKANSAS TOWN

by **ANITA PADDOCK**



Pen-L Publishing
Fayetteville, Arkansas
Pen-L.com

DEFINITION OF BLIND RAGE:

Rage can sometimes lead to a state of mind where the individual is capable of doing things that may normally seem physically impossible. A person in rage may also experience tunnel vision, muffled hearing, increased heart rate, and hyperventilation.

A person in a state of rage may also lose much of the capacity for rational thought and reasoning, and may act violently on impulses until the source of their rage is destroyed.

People in a rage have described experiencing things in slow motion and may suffer a form of amnesia regarding the incident itself.



**Crime scene photograph
May 17, 1981**

CHAPTER ONE

MAY 16, 1981

Ruie Ann Park glanced at herself in the bathroom mirror. Her head was covered with thirty pin curls held in place by thirty bobby pins. On her chest were red splotches, sure signs she was angry. She grabbed her pink nylon robe from the hook behind the door and threw it over her matching nightgown with an exaggerated motion that made the robe fan out in a half-circle. Joan Crawford had donned a robe with the same flair in one of her early gangster movies, *The Damned Don't Cry*, and Ruie Ann thought she favored the movie star.

She returned to the guest room and sat on the bed, crossing her arms over sagging breasts, impatiently waiting for the apology that never came. Instead, she felt the first of ten hacking blows to the top of her head and left temple. She screamed and struggled to fend off the attacker, grabbing hands, hair. Blood spurted and ran down her face and onto her neck and chest.

She fought hard and broke two fingers on her left hand and cut her right. She fell over onto the foot of the bed, soaking the mattress with blood. And then she felt hands around her ankles.

She was dragged off the mattress, face down across the hard floor, down the hallway, and across a rug that bunched under her. She

raised her left arm, knocking books from a shelf in the den. Finally, she lay still, the metallic scent of the blood pooling under her head filling her nostrils. She felt something thrown over her, and seconds later, she heard the den door open and quietly close.

At first, the seventy-five-year-old widow didn't realize how badly she was injured, but she could feel the sticky blood on her neck and arms. Her head throbbed worse than any migraine she'd ever had, and when she tried to lift it, she couldn't. Her throat was dry, and she wished for a sip of water. Minutes passed before she lost consciousness, and her last thoughts were of how she would ever get rid of the blood stains in the showplace of Van Buren, Arkansas.

CHAPTER TWO

MAY 17, 1981

Sam Hugh Park awakened around eleven on Sunday morning with the sun shining behind old and uneven Venetian blinds. Hung over, as usual, he stumbled into the kitchen of the small house he rented from his mother. With a shaking hand, he reached for the bottle of vodka he kept in the refrigerator, took a long swallow, and immediately felt some relief.

He walked into the living room where his newest boy, Santos, was asleep on the couch. He tousled his long, black hair.

“Get up,” he said and jabbed his ribs with his hand, but Santos only stirred slightly and rolled over. “Fuck it,” Sam Hugh said.

He heated a cup of coffee in the microwave and walked out onto his small front porch. He realized he had slept in his clothes and noticed a semen stain on his yellow sweater. He briefly wondered whose it was.

Across the street at his mother’s house, her morning paper still lay on the sidewalk where she demanded it be thrown.

“Mom hasn’t gotten her paper yet?” he said aloud and then laughed, realizing he was talking to himself more and more these

days. Ever since he'd lost his job as the youngest US prosecuting attorney of the Fifth District of the State of Arkansas, he found the most interesting conversations were those he had with himself.

He had made good money, but he spent it foolishly on liquor and entertainment with other homosexuals, sometimes supporting as many as three young men he had rescued from the county jails. Now he lived in one of his mother's three rent houses and hung his shingle out in the front bedroom. He did not have a thriving legal practice, but there weren't that many lawyers in Van Buren, so he billed enough clients that he was able to employ a secretary.

He went back inside and met Santos coming out of the bathroom.

"I tried to wake you up earlier," he said to the boy, who was clad only in his underwear.

Santos was currently Sam Hugh's favorite, and Santos wanted to keep it that way. He lived there rent-free, with all the beer and drugs he wanted.

"Got anything you want me to do today?" he asked.

"You can pick up the place. I had people in and out all night, but alas," he said with a chuckle, "I don't remember who they were."

"Anything else?"

Sam Hugh unzipped his pants. "Yeah."

A couple of hours later, after Santos had left to go horseback riding, Sam Hugh walked outside again and saw his mother's newspaper still lying where it had been earlier. He and his mother fought bitterly—and often—over his excessive drinking and fondness for young boys, but they always made up.

He had talked to her on the phone the night before and remembered the conversation.

"Oh, Sammie, I'm so tired from that bus trip to Cincinnati, but I think I got everything I need for my new book."

Sam Hugh knew she used trips for tax deductions, but he played along, mainly because he needed to borrow some money.

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“Steamships on the Arkansas River should be interesting,” he said, “but you need to take a break from it and relax.”

“Oh, I have. I’ve been watching the *PTL* show, and Tammy Faye told the sweetest Memorial Day story. That’s coming up, you know. Oh, yeah, there was a wonderful gospel trio from Kentucky on the show, too.”

“I watched a movie on HBO. *Wholly Moses*. I laughed all the way through it. That short guy, Dudley Moore, was in it.”

“You shouldn’t watch movies that make fun of the Bible. I forbid it.”

Oh, Jesus, he thought, as he remembered the phone conversation. *How long will I have to put up with her?*

Humming “Slow Hand” by the Pointer Sisters, he walked across the street with the keys to his mother’s house in his hand and picked up the rolled newspaper, thick with ads from stores like Wild Bill Engle’s Appliances that sold 19-inch television sets for \$399.98 and under-the-counter dishwashers for \$249.95. Hunt’s Department Store advertised ankle strap sandals for \$19.98 and a taffeta dress for \$38.99.

He unlocked the kitchen door at the back of the house. There were two other entrances, but this was the one he used when he visited her.

“Mother?” he called. The house felt cold for such a warm afternoon. “Mother?”

He saw his mother’s house shoes on the kitchen floor and thought that was strange. A sick feeling hit him that maybe she’d fallen down the basement stairs just off the kitchen, but he saw nothing suspicious there.

He stepped into the den and saw her body on the floor, partially covered with a yellow quilt or something like that, and for a second, a ridiculous thought popped into his head that she could be taking

a nap. With her bare buttocks exposed, she lay on her stomach next to a wingback chair. Her bloody head was turned to the side, under which a good bit of blood pooled on the wooden floor.

He walked closer and knelt down for a better look. He felt lightheaded and thought he might faint. Or vomit. He felt bile rising into his throat, and he was desperate to get away from the sight on the floor. He hurried into his mother's kitchen and dialed the police.

"I've got an emergency here," he said. "Four eleven Fayetteville Road."

And then he went outside, sat down on the grass, and cried until the police arrived.