



A high, barbed-wire fence at Atascadero State Hospital keeps dangerous inmates within the grounds. Kemper stayed here for five years after murdering his grandparents, but fooled the doctors into trusting him.

Demon at LARGE

In psychiatric hospital, Ed Kemper hoodwinked doctors into believing he was responding to therapy. On release, he embarked on a trail of slaughter.

Atascadero was to be Ed Kemper's home for the next five years — years that were to prove a real learning experience. He soon became a trusted inmate and, under the guidance of the Research Director, Dr Frank Vanasek, began to administer psychological tests to the other inmates. He took pride in his work, and became good at it.

1964–69 Ed Kemper is held as a patient at Atascadero State Hospital

9.69 Kemper is released into a halfway house for three months

12.69 Kemper returns to stay with his mother in Aptos, California

1970 Joins Division of Highways and goes to live in Alameda, California

1971–72 Cruises highways to pick up hitchhikers

7.5.72 Murders Mary Ann Pesce and Anita Luchessa

DATE file 1964–72

MASTERSEARCH/Robert Oliver

At the same time, Kemper acquired a facile grasp of psychological concepts and terminology. He came to understand what the doctors and therapists wanted him to say, and he said it.

His learning increased in other areas, too. Atascadero specialized in treating sex offenders, and from his fellow inmates, both in private conversation and group therapy sessions, the teenage Kemper



absorbed highly graphic information about sexual matters.

He also learnt about rape. Listening to convicted rapists, he began to indulge in violent sexual fantasies of his own. Kemper noted how many rapists had been caught after being identified by their victims, and decided that the best chance for a campaign of sexual assault to succeed would be to make sure that no victim was left alive.

He naturally concealed such thoughts from the doctors, to whom he presented only the best picture of himself. Nevertheless, they still found him emotionally 'immature and volatile', with 'a rather substantial amount of latent hostility'. However, though they noted that the 'possibility of explosiveness is certainly evident', Kemper worked so hard at presenting an intelligent image that they eventually recommended his release.

He was returned to the care of the California Youth Authority in 1969, and placed in a halfway house. He stayed there for three months, attending college and achieving high marks.

Mother trouble

The doctors at Atascadero had recommended that Kemper be kept apart from his mother, who was, as far as they were concerned, the wellspring of all his



◀ *Ed Kemper often visited the Jury Room, a bar in Santa Cruz where he mixed with off-duty police officers. They used to call him Big Ed and considered him to be a decent sort of fellow.*

the break-up, in 1963, she returned to California, to the coastal city of Santa Cruz – 124km (77 miles) southeast of San Francisco – where she got a job at the local campus of the University of California, and a house in the nearby town of Aptos.

Giant outsider

Kemper found it harder that ever to fit into the outside world. He had grown to be a true giant, over 2m (6ft 9in) tall. He weighed more than 127kg (20 stone), though his weight was well distributed over his massive frame, and there was an incongruous grace and delicacy in his movements.

The social revolution of the 1960s had passed him by. He was disgusted by hippies, whom he considered lower class. He continued to wear his light brown hair and moustache short and tidy, dressed conservatively and viewed the world through a pair of round metal-framed spectacles.

Even at home, Kemper did not fit. He

In focus

FINAL MEETING

In the summer of 1971, Kemper made a determined effort to re-establish contact with his father, Edmund Emil Kemper II. He found his address through the Los Angeles chapter of the Electricians' Union, and phoned to arrange a meeting.

His father would not allow him to come to his home – he still remembered the unsettling effect Ed's strange behaviour had had on his wife and stepson seven or eight years before – but agreed to see him in a restaurant.

Ed's memory of the meal was that the two men had a lot of fun, drinking and pretending to argue with each other. He remembered: 'We solved all the psychic goodies, about the grandparents and how he had forgiven me and everything.' Ed then picked up the bill for the meal as his father 'never had any bread'. It was their last meeting.

THE ROOM-MATES



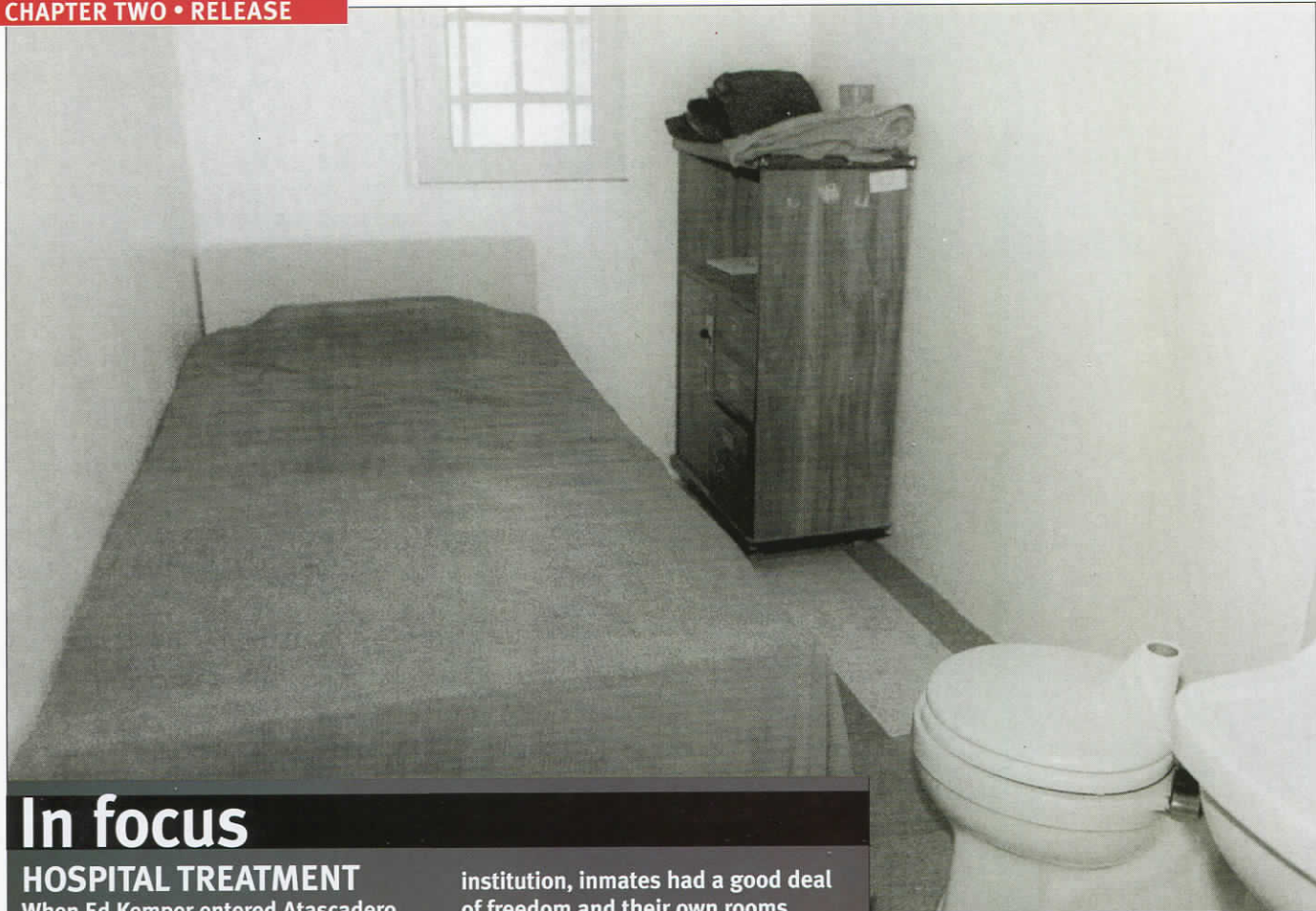
MARY ANN PESCE was one of five children of an affluent family from southern California. She had spent seven years between 1964 and 1971 living with her family in Wiesbaden, Germany, and had been to school in Switzerland where she honed her skiing skills sufficiently to consider competing at a professional level.



ANITA LUCHESSA was much less experienced than her college roommate, Mary Ann Pesce. She had lived all her life on her parents' farm in the Sierra Nevada; her trip to Berkeley with Mary Ann – to visit friends – was the first time in her life she had ever hitchhiked. Her brother Fred also attended Fresno State College.

problems. Somehow or other, though, this advice was missed or ignored by the parole board, and at the end of the year he was released into her care.

The Youth Authority was unable to contact Kemper's father, as he had cut himself off completely, moving house and having an ex-directory telephone number. While Kemper was at Atascadero, his mother had married and divorced (a man named Strandberg) for the third time. After



MASTERSEARCH/Robert Oliver

In focus

HOSPITAL TREATMENT

When Ed Kemper entered Atascadero State Hospital in 1964, it had a reputation for advanced methods in treating sex offenders and the criminally insane. The emphasis was on treatment rather than punishment. Although it was a maximum security

institution, inmates had a good deal of freedom and their own rooms (such as the one seen above). Some patients were given supervised access to the outside world; Kemper, for instance, attended meetings of the local Junior Chamber of Commerce while he was a patient there.

and his mother argued constantly from the moment he arrived. 'I've never been in such a vicious verbal battle with anyone,' he said of one row. 'It would go to fists with a man, but this was my mother.'

He took refuge in nearby bars, especially the Jury Room in Santa Cruz, just across from the local courthouse, where the police would congregate when off duty. He found like-minded, conservative buddies there, where he was known as Big Ed, and where no one enquired too hard into his past.

Some of the arguments with his mother were about self-improvement. She was no less ambitious for him than she had been for his father, and urged him to complete his studies and get a place at a university. Though Kemper would have been able to hold his own academically, he shied away from committing himself.

He did, however, apply to join the police force. With his great love of all-American film star John Wayne, Kemper would easily see himself in the role of a firm but gentle lawman. His application was rejected because he was too tall. Depressed, he sought menial work.

Kemper then found himself a job with

the California Division of Highways, working as a flagman, warning approaching motorists of road works. He earned enough money to buy a motorcycle, though he had to abandon it after two crashes left him with head injuries and a broken left arm. His insurance payout bought him a second-hand car, a yellow and black Ford Galaxie.

Kemper began to assemble a collection of knives, and a borrowed gun or two, secreting this weapons hoard in the boot of his car. His new job meant he could move away from his mother. He rented a room in a friend's flat in Alameda, an island city on San Francisco Bay.

Highway cruiser

In 1970 and 1971, Kemper spent much of his leisure time cruising the freeways of California. On his release from Atascadero, he had been fascinated by the number of young women hitchhiking, and he now made a point of stopping to pick them up.

He practised chatting to them, gaining confidence. He knew that his size and 'straight' looks put many of them off getting into the car, and so he learnt how to make himself appear harmless.



Between times, he would fantasize about murder, slowly evolving a detailed campaign against the world. He persuaded his mother to get him a University of California permit for his car, giving him access to all the many campuses up and down the state. By the spring of 1972, he was ready to strike.

On Sunday, 7 May, Kemper was in Berkeley, cruising the access roads to the freeways, looking for the right girl to pick up. He had selected special clothing for the occasion, a light brown check shirt, dark jeans and a buckskin jacket.

Mary Ann Pesce and Anita Luchessa were both 18, first-year students and room-mates at Fresno State College. They had come to Berkeley to see friends and were hitchhiking to Stanford University,

▼ After his release from the Atascadero State Hospital, Kemper got a job with the Division of Highways, warning oncoming motorists of road works, such as seen here. He thus earned a small, but steady income.

across San Francisco Bay, to visit another friend. At 4pm, Kemper's Ford Galaxie pulled up as they stood near the Eastshore Freeway, and they got in the back seat.

Using well-rehearsed lines, Kemper found out that neither of the girls knew the area. Instead of heading south, then across the Bay Bridge to Stanford, he drove

up so they could see it, and said, 'You know what I want.'

While Anita sat cowed in her seat, Mary Ann tried to reason with Kemper, keeping cool and sympathetic as she tried to get him to see her as a person rather than a victim. Kemper felt some sympathy for the girl, but from his days at Atascadero he

“My mother and I started right in on horrendous battles, just horrible battles, violent and vicious... She insisted on it, and just over stupid things.”

Ed Kemper

round the freeway system for a while, then headed east, into the rural hinterland. When he suddenly pulled off down a side road, the girls realized that they were in big trouble. One of them asked him, 'What do you want?'

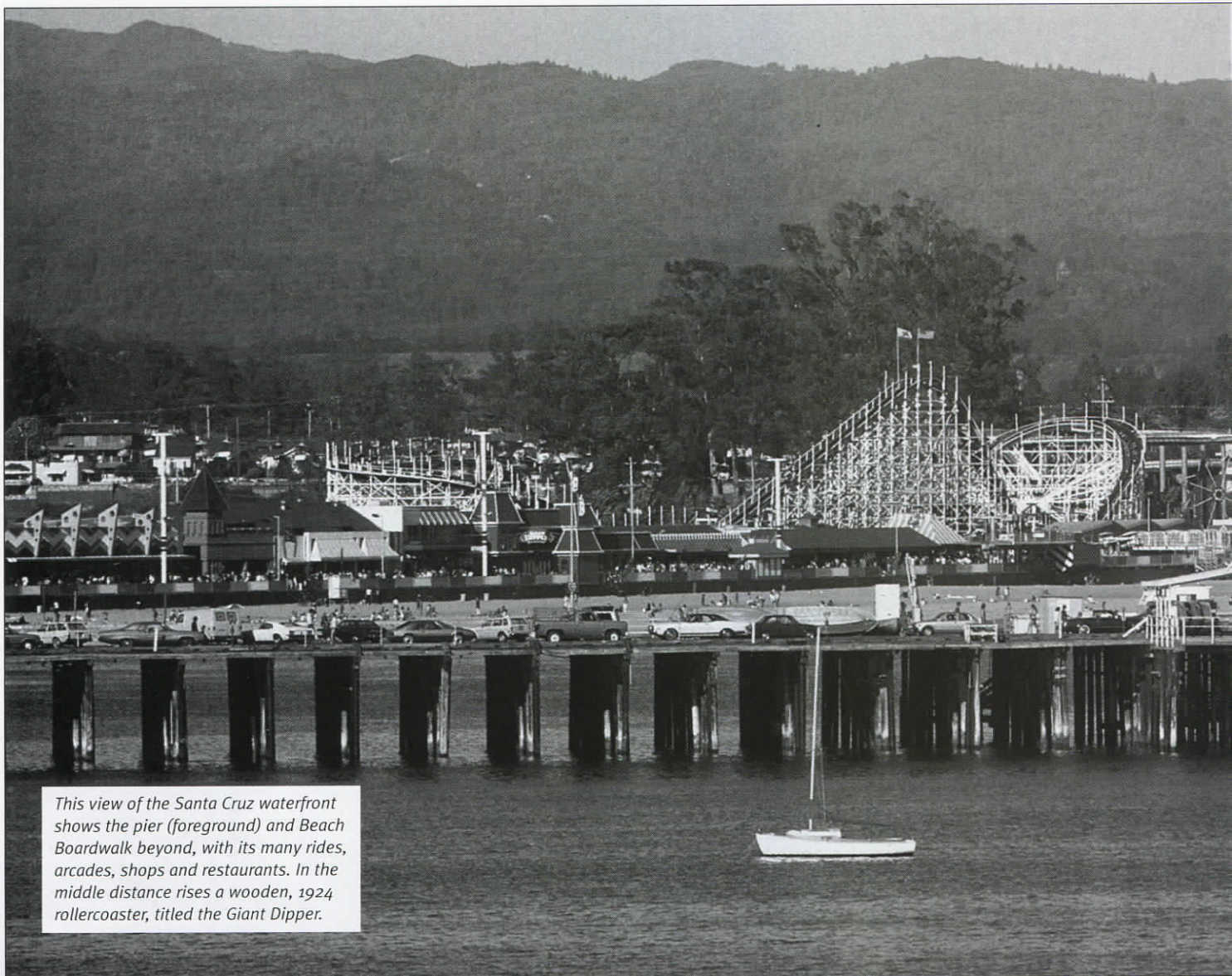
In reply, Kemper reached under his seat for a 9mm Browning pistol he had borrowed from a workmate. He lifted it

recognized what she was doing and fought the temptation to give up his plan.

Finally, he found somewhere off the beaten track where he could park. He told the girls that he was going to lock one of them in the boot of the car and hide the other in the back seat, and that he was going to take them both back to his apartment.

Douglas Cole





This view of the Santa Cruz waterfront shows the pier (foreground) and Beach Boardwalk beyond, with its many rides, arcades, shops and restaurants. In the middle distance rises a wooden, 1924 rollercoaster, titled the Giant Dipper.

Background

SANTA CRUZ

The small coastal city of Santa Cruz – where Kemper's mother worked as a secretary at the University of California campus – lies on the north side of Monterey Bay, about 130km (80 miles) south of San Francisco.

Santa Cruz has long been a retirement haven and tourist centre for the people of San Francisco and Oakland. Then, in the 1960s, the University of California opened up its new campus on a high, wooded area just out of town and overlooking Monterey Bay.

The attractions of fine beaches, elegant 19th-century buildings and a beautiful rural hinterland proved an irresistible lure to commuters from San Francisco, as well as to hippies, and the town grew apace. But the influx of young students also made the area popular with drug dealers – and even a small group of Satanists who settled in the region.

Kemper then handcuffed Mary Ann to the seat-belt support, while he put the meekly unresisting Anita in the boot. He was not taking either of them anywhere.

Back in the car, he handcuffed Mary Ann behind her back. As he did so, the back of his hand brushed against her breast, and he apologized. Then he put a plastic bag over her head, and tried to strangle her with the belt from a dressing gown he had brought for the purpose.

Desperate fight

Mary Ann fought for her life. She bit a hole in the plastic bag, and manoeuvred her head so that the ligature went into her mouth rather than round her neck. Frustrated, Kemper took out a knife and stabbed her twice in the back.

She moaned, and he told her to shut up, but she would not. He kept on stabbing, and she kept on moaning. She struggled, turning over on the seat and shaking the bag from her head, and he stabbed her again.

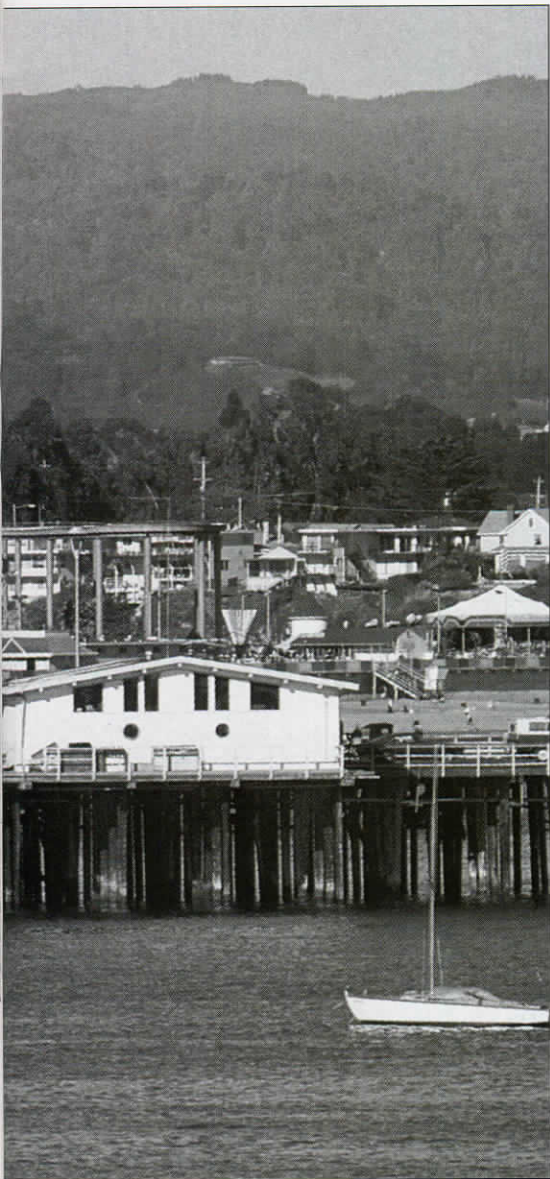
Still she refused to die, but kept on

trying to talk. In desperation, he grabbed her by the chin and cut her throat. She was finally quiet. Kemper got out and went to the boot. He knew the other girl would have heard the struggle; he knew he would have to kill her quickly.

When he opened the boot, she saw his bloody hands. He had broken Mary Ann's nose, he explained, because she had talked back. Now he needed her help. As Anita climbed out of the boot, Kemper grabbed another of his knives, a longer one. He lunged at her with it, but it did not even go through her heavy denim dungarees.

She began to scream and fight as he stabbed at her again and again, in a frenzy, cutting his own hand in the process. A part of his mind remained detached, drinking in every detail, and he was aware of distant voices floating in the air.

Finally, the girl's resistance ended and she fell back into the boot. He tossed the knife after her, and slammed it shut. Pausing only to push Mary Ann Pesce's body on to the floor and cover it with a



Popperfoto

coat, he drove off.

Not far away, Kemper passed a couple looking around a house that was for sale. He was sure they must have noticed the screams but, assuming the most nonchalant expression he could, he kept on going. It was about 6pm.

Gruesome work

He returned to Alameda, but discovered people in the garage. So he parked nearby, went in to wash his hands of blood, and then drove around for a while. Eventually, the coast was clear. Wrapping the bodies in a blanket, Kemper carried them into his flat. He then undressed, dissected and beheaded them, photographing each stage of his handiwork with a Polaroid camera.

► A missing persons file lists the names of Mary Ann Pesce and Anita Luchessa, with a description of their clothes. Pesce's father reported their disappearance to the police, who thought that they were runaways.

He went through the bags the girls had been carrying, keeping what little money – about \$8 – they had between them, and poring over their personal papers. He copied down the information from their ID cards, then destroyed everything. When he was finished, he took the bodies back to the car and buried them in the wild mountainous country behind Santa Cruz.

At first, Kemper kept the heads in his room, partly for their symbolic value as trophies, and partly to delay identification (he knew the girls would otherwise be traced through dental records). After a while, he drove into the hills and threw

them into a ravine.

Now that he had disposed of the bodies, he felt safe. While the girls were still just on a missing list, he knew there would not be much of an investigation. Indeed, the police had not yet even started an investigation. Though both girls' parents tried to register their daughters as missing persons, the fact that so many California girls left home for a boy or for the excitement of San Francisco meant that the police often failed to take such disappearances seriously. As far as they were concerned, the girls were just another pair of runaways.

“I jumped in the car and was sweating very heavily and there was blood splattered here and there and on my hands, which I had to keep concealed.”

Kemper after the Pesce and Luchessa murders

1. CLASSIFICATION Missing Person/SB009 (Adult)		SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT SANTA BARBARA COUNTY		2. CASE NUMBER (SECTION 4.2) 4-72-0602
4. DAY AND TIME OCCURRED OR ARRESTED 7-72 1600 hrs Sunday		5. ADDRESS OR LOCATION DESCRIBE PREMISES OR VEHICLE Box 80 & Ashby St., S.F.		3. <input type="checkbox"/> ON VIEW <input type="checkbox"/> WARRANT <input type="checkbox"/> CITIZEN'S <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER 6. DAY AND TIME REPORTED 5-11-72 1900 hrs Thursday
7. VICTIM'S NAME (FIRM NAME IF BUSINESS) OR COMPLAINT'S NAME Mary Ann PESCE		8. PERSON REPORTING OFFENSE Gabriel Vincent PESCE		9. PERSON WHO DISCOVERED CRIME Same as above
10. PRINCIPALS Anita LUCHESSA		11. VEHICLE INVOLVED <input type="checkbox"/> LICENSE NO. STATE YEAR MAKE MODEL COLOR <input type="checkbox"/> SUSPECT VEHICLE <input type="checkbox"/> ID NUMBER DNA		12. EXACT LOCATION OF PROPERTY OR VICTIM AT TIME OF OFFENSE Box 80 & Ashby St., S.F.
13. POINT OF ENTRY OR APPROACH DNA		14. OCCUPANTS (OR VICTIMS) ACTIVITY AT TIME OF OFFENSE DNA		15. METHOD OR INDUCEMENT USED TO GAIN ENTRANCE DNA
16. INSTRUMENT USED (DESCRIBE) OR WEAPON, FORCE OR MEANS USED DNA		17. APPARENT MOTIVE PROPERTY TAKEN (OR ACT COMMITTED) Unknown		18. TRADEMARK OF SUSPECT(S) ACTION (OR EXACT WORDS USED) Visiting friends
19. TELETYPE SENT BY Unknown		20. EVIDENCE TAG NO. S. Unknown		21. SUSPECTS AND/OR PERSONS ARRESTED: NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE Unknown
22. LIST CONTINUATIONS. (A) FURTHER DESCRIPTION OF SUSPECTS OR PERSONS INVOLVED (B) SUMMARIZE DETAILS OF OCCURRENCE OR ARREST (C) DESCRIBE PHYSICAL EVIDENCE, LOCATION FOUND, AND GIVE DISPOSITION (D) SUMMARIZE OTHER DETAILS RELATING TO THE CRIME (E) TIME AND LOCATION WHERE VICTIM WITNESSES CAN BE CONTACTED BY DAY INVESTIGATORS, IF NO AVAILABLE PHONE NUMBERS (F) ITEMIZE AND DESCRIBE PROPERTY LISTING ALL SERIAL NUMBERS AND OTHER MARKS OF IDENTIFICATION, (G) IF JUVENILE, LIST NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER AND RELATIONSHIP OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN, WHETHER NOTIFIED, AND IF SO, HOW AND BY WHOM.		23. RECORDS USE ONLY YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
<p>A. Subject PESCE last seen wearing blue levis, purple sweater, purple felt hat, brown hiking boots. Subject LUCHESSA last seen wearing striped grey & white overalls with red tee shirt, blue scarf. Between the two they were carrying a overnight backpack and a sleeping bag</p> <p>B. Assigned deputies were requested to contact Mr. PESCE at Flying Flags Campground regarding missing persons report.</p> <p>C. DNA</p> <p>D. At approximately 1600 hours, 5-7-72, subject's Mary Ann PESCE and Anita LUCHESSA were visiting friends at S.F. State College and dropped off at Box 80 and Ashby St. with the apparent intention of hiking to (continued)</p>				
24. DATE AND TIME REPORT WRITTEN 5-11-72 2100 hrs		25. ESTIMATED TOTAL VALUE 1900		26. TYPED BY: DATE 1915
27. REPORTING OFFICER A. A. in 530		28. BY: DATE 5-11-72		29. BY: DATE 5-11-72
30. BY: DATE 5-11-72		31. BY: DATE 5-11-72		32. BY: DATE 5-11-72