

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE COUNTY OF ST. LOUIS  
TWENTY-FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
STATE OF MISSOURI

GRAHAM HOLLAND,  
PATRICIA HOLLAND, and  
CHRISTOPHER KUHN, as guardian and next  
friend of E.K., K.K., A.K., and G.K.,  
minor children,

Plaintiffs,

Cause No.:

v.

ROBERT DAUS, JR.  
Conway Rd.  
St. Louis, MO 63131,

Div.

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

Defendant.

PETITION FOR DAMAGES

1. On July 22, 2020, Grace Holland died of a gunshot wound to the head.

2. The only living person who knows exactly what happened that night is Defendant

Robert Daus Jr.

3. One of two things occurred that night. Either Robert Daus shot Grace Holland or Grace Holland took her life after years of being subjected to physical and mental abuse by Robert Daus. Either way, Robert Daus Jr. is liable for the wrongful death of Grace Holland.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

4. Plaintiffs Graham Holland and Patricia Holland are the parents of Grace.

5. Plaintiffs E.K., K.K., A.K., and G.K. are the minor children of Grace. Their father, Christopher Kuhn, is representing their interests in this matter.

6. All Plaintiffs reside in St. Louis County, Missouri.

7. Defendant Robert Daus is a resident of St. Louis County.

8. The acts and omissions complained of in this Petition occurred in St. Louis County, Missouri, and venue is therefore proper in the County.

9. Plaintiff seeks damages in excess of this Court's jurisdictional minimum of \$25,000.

10. As the parents and children of the deceased, Plaintiffs are permitted to bring an action for wrongful death pursuant to § 537.080(1), RSMo. [REDACTED]

**FACTS**

11. Prior to her death, Grace had been in a relationship with Daus for four years and had been engaged to him for two years.

12. Their relationship was marred by psychological and physical abuse.

13. Daus pressured Holland to quit her job to work for a company owned by Daus's family. Instead of paying Grace directly, the company paid Daus, who controlled the money.

14. By controlling the money, Daus controlled Grace.

15. Daus and Grace lived together at [REDACTED] Fairways Circle in Creve Coeur.

16. Daus and Grace picked out a new house together at [REDACTED] Conway, where Daus now resides.

17. Even though they planned to move there together, Daus did not put Grace's name on the deed to the house.

18. Nevertheless, Grace spent months renovating the house to prepare it for Daus and Grace to move into.

19. On June 9, 2020, Grace recorded a video that starts with Daus talking about her "making problems with me." Grace responds, "You don't want me to die *so don't say that.*" Daus responded, "I wish you'd just go away but I realize that's not going to happen."

20. In June 2020, Grace reported that Daus pushed, shoved and dragged her down the hall, pulling her clothes off. After this incident, Grace's mother saw bruises on her arms, thighs and spine. Grace took photographs of these bruises.

21. Later in June 2020, Grace called her mother during an episode where Daus was yelling at her and throwing her things in the yard. Patricia Holland urged Grace to call the police and then overheard Daus say, "My brothers in blue are not going to do anything to me. I've already taken care of that. You're the crazy girlfriend, remember?"

22. Patricia Holland urged her daughter to leave the house, but Grace responded that she could not leave the house while Daus was in that state.

23. Grace's children reported to Patricia Holland that Daus was shoving Grace and always yelling at her. Daus scared the children by throwing the phone across the dinner table while they sat there.

24. Her children reported other times when Daus lost his temper over minor issues, such as the couch touching the curtain in the living room and silverware being out of place.

25. In one conversation captured on video, Daus told her went on a rant about being in a "forced marriage" and discussed how he would do anything to "spend as little time with you as possible."

26. Grace responded by calmly telling Daus she loved him. Daus responded by saying, "F yourself. F you... F you. F your mother. Get the f out of my house."

#### Text Exchanges

27. Text messages between the two demonstrate that they had a highly volatile relationship.

28. Repeatedly, Daus offers Grace \$600 to abort their baby that she is carrying.

29. As another example, on July 16, 2020, Grace texted "I love you. Please be safe."

30. Daus responded to this by saying "I do not want to get married. I told you this over and over. All you do is keep pushing... Move on with your life. This is over."

31. A few minutes later, he wrote "Get out of my house. I don't want to be married. I don't want a baby. I don't want to live w your girls."

32. She ended the text conversation by stating "I love you. Have a good first day back, please be safe."

33. Daus responded with "F off."

34. Then, on July 17, 2020, the very next morning, as if that previous conversation had not even occurred Daus asked if Grace wanted to meet up with two friends of theirs. They then had a benign conversation, discussing house furnishings and carpentry. This conversation ended with Daus saying "I absolutely cannot b w you... I'm not marrying you... You and your kids. F [y]ou."

35. On July 19, 2020, he texted her that "I've asked you to leave. Several times. I don't want you there." Later, he texted, "I don't want you or your kids. I want away. I've asked you to leave. Take your Jeep, your things, and leave. I'm done."

36. And yet, later that day, they had a text discussion about faucets to buy for the new house.

37. Only July 20, 2020, Daus turned again, stating that "I want you out of [my] life." and "You did nothing but ruin my first night staying at Conway." He then stated "The thought of you sleeping in that house makes me want to vomit. That's how much I hate you."

38. Two days later, Grace was dead.

39. The text exchanges show that Daus was erratic, wildly swinging from calmly discussing house furnishings to unleashing a string of hateful epithets at Grace.

### **Suspicious Death**

40. Little is known about the hours before her death. What is known raises serious doubts regarding the suicide narrative adopted by Daus.

41. On the evening of July 21, 2022, at approximately 10 p.m., Grace took selfies of herself and Daus in bed at the Conway house. Grace is smiling in the photographs.

42. Approximately seven hours later, Grace was dead at the Fairways house.

43. Daus has never given any explanation regarding what happened the night of Grace's death, much less explained how Grace went from being in bed at the Conway house to dead in the Fairways house seven hours later.

44. The gunshot wound is to her left temple. Grace is right-handed. When she trained in using firearms, she used only her right hand. A self-inflicted gunshot wound to the left temple is inconsistent with being right-handed. A gunshot wound to the left temple is consistent with someone standing opposite her shooting with his right hand.

45. After her death, Daus gave statements regarding the circumstances of her death that are either contradictory or demonstrably untrue.

46. The shooting occurred at approximately 5:00 am on July 22, 2020.

47. Creve Coeur police officers arrived at the scene a few minutes later.

48. Creve Coeur detectives did not arrive until approximately 7:00 am.

49. According to the medical examiner, at 7:25 am on July 22, 2020, a detective contacted their office and reported the facts as follows:

Holland came to the living room to give Robert a hug and she went back into the bedroom without speaking with him. Shortly after, Robert heard a single gunshot

and located Holland in the bedroom with a gun and apparently blood beneath her head.

50. The only person who could have provided this narrative description to the detective was Daus.

51. Later, on July 22, 2020, Daus came into the Creve Coeur Police Department accompanied by a lawyer. At that time, he gave a statement to the police that included an entirely different narrative:

Daus stated he got up for work and was standing at his closet stacking clothing in his arms.

Daus stated Grace left the bedroom and returned.

Daus stated Grace approached him and hugged him. Daus stated he attempted to hug Grace but his arms were full.

Daus stated He told Grace that he needed to leave for work.

Daus stated Grace moved to his right side and hugged him by pulling his face toward hers.

Daus stated Grace said, "Goodbye" at which time he heard a gunshot.

Daus stated Grace fell to the ground and he saw a gun and blood coming from her head.

52. In 2021, Creve Coeur police interviewed Daus about Grace's missing engagement ring that was worth \$20,000 along with other expensive jewelry that went missing after her death.

53. During the interview, Daus claimed that Grace gave the ring back to him.

54. Text messages between Daus and Grace indicate that Daus subsequently gave the ring back to Grace.

55. During the interview, Daus also fabricated a narrative that Grace, along with her father, moved out of the house a week before her death, taking most of her belongings. This simply did not happen.

56. Daus then claimed that the ring was lost and that he filed an insurance claim on the ring.

57. When asked why the engagement ring appeared in crime scene photographs, Daus claimed that this was a fake ring made for traveling. Daus did not provide to the police any documentation to prove that they ever made a fake ring or insurance claim information, despite repeated requests from Creve Coeur Police Department.

**COUNT I  
WRONGFUL DEATH**

58. Plaintiffs incorporate all paragraphs of this Petition as if fully set forth herein.

59. Taken together, the photographs of a smiling Grace Holland hours before her death, the numerous times that Daus demanded she leave the house and bemoaning that he did not think she would leave, and the omissions, contradictions, and outright fabrications in Daus's narrative of her death, lead to the reasonable inference that Daus shot Grace.

60. Alternatively, Defendant Daus had the intent to aid or encourage Grace to commit self-harm in that his cruelty, including psychological and physical abuse, certainly contributed to and caused her to do so, and Daus knew or should have known that his abuse could lead to Grace's suicide. Moreover, according to a text message, Daus told Grace that she should kill herself. Additionally, the June 9 suggests that Daus expressed, in someway, that he desired Grace dead.

61. Defendant Daus's actions caused injuries and death to Grace.

62. Defendant Daus had no justification to encourage Grace to commit self-harm.

63. But for Daus's actions Grace would likely be alive today.

64. Plaintiffs suffered injuries because of Defendant's actions or failures to act. Additionally, Defendant knew, or had reason to know, that there was a high degree of probability that the actions above would result in injury and death.

65. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's conduct, Plaintiffs have suffered and will continue to suffer significant injuries and damages, including but not limited to physical

pain, emotional distress, pain and suffering, economic damages, loss of enjoyment of life, loss of personal sense of security, loss of companionship, and other psychological and emotional injuries.

66. Plaintiffs incurred medical, hospital, and burial expenses as a result of the wrongful injury and death.

67. Plaintiff Graham Holland is the duly appointed, qualified, and acting personal representative of the estate of Grace Holland.

68. WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs demand judgment against Defendant for damages, together with interest and costs of suit.

**COUNT II  
WRONGFUL DEATH - NEGLIGENCE PER SE**

69. Plaintiffs incorporate all paragraphs of this Petition as if fully set forth herein.

70. Defendant Daus committed a violation of Missouri Criminal Statutes §§ 565.020-565.027 by causing the death of Plaintiffs. Alternatively, Daus committed a violation of Missouri Criminal Statutes §§ 565.020-565.027 in that he knowingly assisted Grace in the commission of self-murder.

71. Grace was a member of the class that Missouri Criminal Statutes §§ 565.020-565.027 were intended to protect.

72. Death is the type of injury that Missouri Criminal Statutes §§ 565.020-565.027 were designed to prevent.

73. Defendant Daus's violation of Missouri Criminal Statutes §§ 565.020-565.027 was the proximate cause of Grace's death.

74. WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs demand judgment against Defendant for damages, together with interest and costs of suit.



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**JURY DEMAND**

75. Plaintiffs demand a trial by jury on all issues triable in this case.

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Respectfully submitted,

/s/ James R. Wyrsh  
**KHAZAELI WYRSCH LLC**  
James R. Wyrsh, 53197MO

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*Attorneys for Plaintiffs*

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