

## **VASTLY DIFFERENT LIVES CONVERGED AT ATM AS BOYS FORMED PLOT, MOTHER OF 3 PLANNED BIRTHDAY SURPRISE**

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**Damien (Red) Dorris** , 14, was sitting on a dirty blanket in a filthy apartment in southwest Detroit when he suddenly flashed a .22 caliber revolver to show to the younger boys hanging out with him.

It was a six-shot Colt revolver loaded with five bullets. "It had dents and scars but it was all black, a short barrel," **Dorris** , 14, would tell police later.

The story of the boy, his gun and how Elizabeth Alvarez came to die in a bank parking lot Tuesday afternoon was pieced together through interviews and a review of police reports filed in Wayne County Juvenile Court.

**Dorris** had taken the gun from the attic of a home on Crawford Street where he and his 16-year-old brother, Zikomo, had been set up by a drug dealer in his 20s whom they knew only by his initials -- C.C.

The three other young boys with **Dorris** in the apartment on West Lafayette near Livernois on Tuesday -- ages 11, 9, and 8 -- knew **Dorris** was "rolling" or selling crack cocaine.

And they knew he earned his own money for clothes or to buy food at the local fast-food restaurants.

The boys were a motley lot. All but the 8-year-old had been declared temporary court wards by Wayne County Juvenile Court at one time or another.

About 1 1/2 miles away, Elizabeth Alvarez, 33 and three months pregnant, got up around 10:30 a.m. Tuesday. Her 1984 tan Oldsmobile Delta 88 always seemed to be breaking down, and she planned to get it repaired. She also wondered what special thing she could do for her daughter Melissa whose 14th birthday was Tuesday.

Alvarez drove to the mechanic's garage and he drove her home so she could fix a breakfast of thin Hungarian pancakes for her three kids.

She spent the afternoon supervising the kids playing in the backyard behind her home in the Delray section of southwest Detroit, promising Melissa that she'd take her out for something special after the car was fixed.

Later in the afternoon, **Dorris** grew hungry. So he jammed the gun into his yellow shorts, put on a blue baseball hat with the words "Bull Dog" on the front and left the apartment with his young friends.

They walked toward the National Bank of Detroit's automatic teller machine on West Fort, between Junction and Morrell. The 11-year-old spotted a little girl's bike, pink with a banana seat and different size tires, outside a grocery store on Fort. He stole it and gave it to the 9-year-old to ride.

As they moved on, a plot was formed. The 8-year-old, nicknamed Little Bit, would hide with **Dorris** behind the automatic teller machine. The 9-year-old, called J, would ride around the parking lot on the bike waiting for a victim who looked likely to have money. The 11-year-old would keep a look out for a potential victim and the police.

The wait lasted nearly an hour.

The 11-year-old's parents, who were getting gas at a station across the street from the ATM, spotted him and told him to come along. They were going to a methadone clinic and then out to eat. The boy left with them.

Back at Alvarez's home, she caught a nap. Melissa woke her up late in the afternoon when a woman brought Alvarez's car back from getting repaired. She left Melissa and the kids to take the woman home.

On her way back, Alvarez pulled into the bank parking lot around 5 p.m. J spotted her and yelled, "Let's get her."

She parked her car next to the 24-hour ATM, got out, inserted her card and punched in her identity number. She wanted \$80, enough for Melissa's special day. J was standing with his bike next to Alvarez's car.

As she grabbed her receipt, J waved at **Dorris** who was behind the machine with Little Bit.

"She got some money, She got some money," he said in a stage-whisper.

**Dorris** walked around the machine and put the gun against Alvarez's side. "Give me the money," he said.

"This is all I got," Alvarez said. Red reached for the cash -- four \$20 bills -- and they tugged over the money. The gun, which **Dorris** raised toward Alvarez's head, went off, the small bullet entering her left cheek and passing through her head.

She staggered forward and fell, her head landing under her car. J, fear gripping him, shouted to Alvarez, "Get up." When she didn't, he pedaled off on the bike, soon outdistancing **Dorris** and Little Bit, who were running.

Alvarez was taken to Detroit Receiving Hospital where she later died.

After the shooting, **Dorris** got something to eat with some of the money. He changed his clothes and had a friend cut his hair off until he was nearly bald. He hid the gun under a door mat and he

bragged to a few friends about killing a lady for her money.

Police officers, acting on a tip from **Dorris** ' girlfriend, Nichole, spotted him sitting on the front porch of his apartment on Lafayette and arrested him.

On the way down to police headquarters for questioning, Officer David Huggins, of the 4th Precinct, asked **Dorris** if he knew what was going on.

"Yes," **Dorris** said. "I had to do it because I owed a hit man some money."

**Dorris** was charged Wednesday with first-degree murder, armed robbery, conspiracy and possession of a firearm. On Thursday, police charged Jacob Gonzales, 9, with armed robbery in the attack of Alvarez. The other two boys were picked up but later released without being charged.

**Dorris** and Gonzales are being held at the Wayne County Youth Home.

Gonzales' mother, Bonnie Gonzalez, 40, moved last fall with four of her five children from the 1200 block of Crawford where they had been living last year as squatters. Responding to a complaint, Child Protective Services workers had found the family living in the home with no toilet, no windows and no legal electricity.

Although the Department of Social Services offered to help through its Families First program, Bonnie Gonzales refused to do anything about what DSS said was the underlying cause of the family's problems: her cross-addiction to drugs and alcohol.

Gonzales told a reporter Thursday she moved into another dilapidated flat nearby, the same one from which the **Dorris** brothers were selling crack cocaine. She said she tried to get the brothers to stop selling crack, but their bosses -- C.C. and a man named T or W.T., beat her and her children up.

Last Saturday, Gonzales said, the drug dealers shot up her house because she didn't want them selling drugs there.

**Dorris** also found himself on the wrong side of C.C. and T. His girlfriend, Nichole, had been urging him to stop selling drugs and, he would later say, he tried to stop.

"W.T. said I owed him \$430," **Dorris** told police. "I had to pay him before I could quit. C.C. said my brother Z owes him \$1,000.

"I needed to get the money. I got my gun and decided to walk around and take somebody's wallet."

The three Alvarez children are staying with relatives. A fund for the children has been set in the name of the Elizabeth Alvarez Children's Fund, NBD Bank N.A., 5460 W. Fort, Detroit, 48209.

Visitation for Alvarez will be from noon-2 p.m. today when funeral services will be held at the John Solosy Funeral Home, 8480 South, Detroit. Burial will follow in Woodmere Cemetery.

#### ATM SECURITY TIPS

- \* Drive around the area and look for anyone hiding or loitering. Park close to the machine but avoid parking so that another vehicle can block your exit. Lock your car.
- \* Check out the area before leaving your car or while approaching an ATM on foot. If anything looks suspicious, go to more secure location.
- \* Have your card ready before approaching the machine. Make sure no one can see you punch in your PIN number. Shield the keypad with your body.
- \* Complete paperwork, such as deposit slips, in advance. Don't count your money. Walk away. You can count it later.
- \* At a drive-up ATM, keep doors locked and passenger windows closed.
- \* If you must use an ATM at night, choose a busy and well- lighted site with good visibility from the street. Take someone with you if possible. If the lights in the ATM facility aren't working, don't use the machine.

Caption: Photo Color DAYMON J. HARTLEY

: Jacob Gonzales, 9, and attorney Donald Cook appear before Referee Mary Anne Quinn. \*\*\*

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