

ACCUSED KILLER RETURNED TO CARD GAME, JURY TOLD

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Author: JOE SWICKARD Free Press Staff Writer

Victor Malone, accused of the July 1984 strangulation murder of a Detroit prostitute, was portrayed by the prosecution Tuesday as a brazen **killer** who calmly returned to a card game at the after-hours club where he had met his alleged victim earlier that night.

Malone, 38, on trial before Recorder's Court Judge Edward Thomas on a first-degree murder charge, is accused of the slaying of Anita Willis, a nude dancer and prostitute.

Malone, who is awaiting trial for two other murders, is a suspect in at least 10 other slayings in the Detroit area over the past 12 years.

Assistant Prosecutor Robert Agacinski said in his opening statement that Malone lured Willis into his van with an offer to drive her to a party during a break at an after-hours club where she danced. Then, Agacinski said, Malone strangled her and tossed her nude body into the street. A resident of the 2400 block of McLean discovered Willis' body.

"Miss Willis never got back to the club, but Mr. Malone did make it back," Agacinski said. "He was playing cards. That was kind of bold, wasn't it?"

AGACINSKI SAID the testimony would provide a window on the seamy world of drugs, prostitution, after-hours clubs and brutal murder.

The imagery of the prosecution's opening statement -- including the contention that Malone had earlier leapt onstage at the club and performed sexual acts on Willis while she was dancing -- was in sharp contrast with the neatly barbered and immaculately tailored Malone.

Malone previously has been painted in paradoxical terms by authorities, his family and friends. Although suspected by some police investigators of being a **serial killer**, Malone has been described by associates as a bright, caring man. Malone has previous convictions for bank robbery, armed robbery, assault and narcotics violations.

Malone also has a master's degree in social work from the University of **Michigan**. Despite his academic achievements, he has been found by some mental examiners to be only in the "dull normal" intelligence range, with a "psychotic, schizophrenic and sociopathic" personality.

In his opening statement, defense attorney Glen Warn told the jurors they were not empaneled "to judge the morality of Mr. Malone or his lifestyle," but to weigh the evidence of first-degree murder.

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