

## [Transcript] Sword and Scale Nightmares / Nice Shot

From iHeart Podcast, Supreme, the Battle for Roe, tells the story of the unlikely champions behind the landmark case Roe V. Wade, starring Maya Hawke as 26-year-old lead attorney Sarah Weddington for challenging the Texas abortion laws in federal court, and Academy Award nominee William H. Macy as Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackman. Time is not the most important factor. Getting it right is. Listen to the podcast, Supreme, the Battle for Roe on the iHeart radio app or wherever you get your podcasts.

On October 7th, 2003, Mary Catherine Gibson walked out the front door of her office to check the mail.

That's how she started every morning at work. It was a gloomy and cool fall day.

She hoped it would warm up outside by the afternoon.

The chilly 50-degree air didn't really agree with her.

As she looked up at the cloudy sky, she wondered if her hopes would be dashed.

Her thoughts were interrupted as she reached the company's mailbox.

Across the street at the Slide Lock Tool Company, she heard an eruption of gunfire.

She froze in her tracks, and her attention snapped to the figure of a man falling to the floor.

She could only see part of the man between two cars, but she could tell that he had been shot.

The blood soaking into a shirt was evident, even from a distance.

Then, she heard screaming, and her eyes darted to the source.

A woman sitting in her car was yelling at the man on the ground, berating him.

The woman in the car yelled at the top of the lungs,

you son of a bitch. Suddenly, Mary Catherine could move again.

She forgot about the morning mail and rushed back to her office.

She swung the door open in a hurry and bound for the phone.

She put the receiver to her ear and called 911. The operator picked up, but as soon as they asked the nature of her emergency, Mary Catherine heard another burst of gunfire.

In utter shock at what she witnessed, she watched stunned as the shooter got back into the car, shut the door, stopped at the stop sign, signaled that they were turning, and then calmly drove away.

Welcome to Sword and Scale Nightmares, true crime for bedtime, where nightmare begins now.

The End

Several months earlier in Alcoa, Tennessee,

Kimberly Cunningham was having trouble with her daughter. She used to be a bubbly, happy little girl, but now not so much. Amanda used to be outgoing and active, but recently she'd come home from school distraught. As soon as she crossed the threshold, she would fall apart and start crying. And if it wasn't crying, she was throwing fits and bouts of anger. Born in South Knoxville, Kim met and married her husband at the young age of 15. But despite this unusually young union, they both worked hard, bought a house, and raised three beautiful children.

Now, the life she envisioned and striped for was falling apart. She knew something was bothering her daughter, but didn't know what it was. She couldn't understand why she had such a drastic personality change. She was asking, pestering Amanda for months, why are you acting like this? It seems far worse than just your usual teenage girl behavior.

The more she cried, the more their relationship broke down. They began bitterly fighting over

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just about any little thing. Kim was living on pins and needles, expecting an argument to flare up around every corner. Eventually, Kim would have enough and sit her 15-year-old daughter down in the backseat of her car and tell her she was going to the juvenile detention center.

Why are you acting like this? She pleaded. Then, she had a thought on a new way to approach the issue. She asked a new question. Who is bothering you? Amanda sat quietly in the backseat, not making

eye contact with her mother. Kim was undeterred and began listing names of all the people she could think of that her daughter knew or had some relationship with. She listed Amanda's friends and their parents. She listed the neighbors and her teachers. One by one, she ticked off name after name. Then, she got to Amanda's cousins. When Kim said the name of her eldest cousin, she noticed a reaction in Amanda. Is he bothering you? Why? Kim tried to clarify. Amanda looked up from her lap with tears in her eyes and told her mother why her cousin was bothering her.

Her voice broke as she uttered the words. He's been molesting me.

She shared with her mother what she had never shared with anyone before.

Ever since she was nine, he had been molesting her almost every time they were left alone together.

Tears in her eyes streamed down her cheeks. Kim sat back in the seat and as the enormity of what her daughter just said sunk in, she began to sob. She cried out loud that it wasn't Amanda's fault and she blamed herself. She should have been there for her baby. Kim was in shock. How could her nephew, the son of her sister, do such a thing to such a young girl? She had always trusted her sister and her common law husband. They'd been together since Kim was 13. They had two kids of their own, but how could this happen in their home? How could she ever trust them again?

Kim kicked herself for letting this happen. Her shock waned and guilt, hatred, and disgust took its place. Then she had a horrifying thought. What if Amanda wasn't the only one?

The following day, she took her son Shane to McDonald's. She knew she had to raise the question delicately. Over a hamburger, fries, and a Coke, she asked the young boy if his cousin had ever

touched him inappropriately. In a solemn tone, Shane told his mother that he too was molested by his oldest cousin ever since he was six and most recently on his 11th birthday.

He never said anything because he was embarrassed and he was afraid of how his cousin would react. Kim once again broke into tears. She couldn't stop crying. Her heart ached for what her children went through, but she knew what she had to do.

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it's made with titanium and the Pro camera is epic. Just got it at T-Mobile. Nice. Yeah, and I got their Go 5G Next plan, so now I have the freedom to upgrade my phone every year. I gotta get to T-Mobile. Take charge of your upgrades at T-Mobile.com. Phone now via 24-monthly bill credits plus tax for well-qualified customers. Contact us before cancelling a count to continue bill credits or credit stop and balance on a required finance agreement, too. One year upgrade requires financing, qualifying device and upgrading in good condition after six months with half paid off. After finding out that her children were being molested by their oldest cousin, Kim reported it to the Knox County Sheriff's Department and an investigation began.

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She took Amanda and Shane to Child Help, a child advocacy center to talk with professionals about what happened. Shane found it hard to talk to a female counselor out of embarrassment, but he did confide in a male counselor. Kim also took Amanda to the hospital to be treated for depression. After her brief hospital stay, she was welcomed home by her parents with an all-new bedroom set. Then she confronted her sister, Rhonda, about what her children said her eldest son did. She explained that she was angry and hurt, but if there was any truth to it all, she wanted her nephew to get help to seek treatment. Koi Hundley, the boy's father, didn't believe it and adamantly denied it. He encouraged his longtime sister-in-law to just drop it, but when Kim pressured the issue, having a genuine concern for the health of her nephew, Koi turned ugly. He said, it's going to come out of your ass if you don't drop it. Now, I don't know what that means, but it might be some kind of threat from a southern gentleman. Anyway, he followed it up with a pretty creepy look, staring Kim in the eyes and telling her that he would burn her house down with her children inside if she didn't let it go. That's one way to deal with it, I guess. Kim was suddenly afraid of her sister's husband, a man who had been with her sister for the better part of two decades. As time went on, Koi's friends took up his cause, telling Kim on Koi's behalf that they would never find her body. Then, one day, while Kim was visiting her mother, Koi's son, her nephew, the accused child molester, pulled into the driveway, but he didn't get out. After a moment, he began laying on the horn and revving his engine while staring at the front of the house. Kim was filled with rage, as you would be. She felt like this kid was throwing what he did in her face. She raced outside as he peeled away in a loud cloud of smoke. She grabbed a stick from the ground and heaved it at his car and bounced off the window, but really didn't do any damage. With all of this, the sheriff's department still had not filed charges in this case. Kim felt helpless and angry, so when she saw her nephew's car parked and empty one day, she pulled into the same lot. She parked her car, got out, and calmly smashed every single window of his car. Shards of glass littered the ground as she drove away. When she called Koi at work to tell him what she'd done to his son's car, he said that they were even now. Rape, I guess, is equal in his mind to a couple of smashed windows. In Kim's mind, however, it was practically an admission that the allegations were true. Kim wasn't going to let some intimidation stop her from seeking justice for her children. This all happened in July and by August, Kim was armed. She went out and bought a small 38 caliber five shot revolver. She took lessons at a firing range, so she knew how to load, fire, and reload the weapon. Something all of you listening right now should probably do as well. She filled out the paperwork and got a permit to carry it. She bought a small black purse dedicated to carrying the gun and a box of ammo. Over the next month, things didn't really get much better for Kim though. After her stay at the hospital and being welcomed home with a freshly decorated bedroom, Amanda continued to act strange. She still had problems. Kim kept asking her what's bothering her or if she wanted to talk. This almost always ended in some sort of little dispute between Kim and Amanda. Kim though never backed down. She was overly determined to help her daughter. Amanda would just try to avoid thinking about it and wouldn't talk. She would exclaim, Mama, you just don't know everything before slamming the door to her room. Day after day, week after week, Kim tried to get to the bottom of her daughter's despair

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and tried to seek justice for what she knew her nephew had done. But it seemed like an impossible battle. The Sheriff's Department couldn't press charges because it was too hard to prove. The kids said it happened and Kim was convinced but the Hunleys denied everything. And with the abuse being from months earlier, what evidence were the authorities supposed to collect? If she couldn't seek justice, she could focus on Amanda and Shane. Finally, after weeks of prying and pestering, Amanda shared her feelings with her mother. Something had been bothering her. During the night as she slept, she was haunted by dreams of her cousin and the abuse. Kim wanted to know more so she asked about the dreams. Where are you in this dream? What are the two of you doing? But Amanda shut down. Sharing that little bit was all that Kim was going to get. This one time, she wasn't going to press the subject. She sat in Amanda's room as she fell asleep. She listened to the rhythm of her breath and remembered the day she was born. A perfect innocence of a newborn baby. Then she thought about that innocence lost when her nephew took it away. Kim stayed in Amanda's room all night that night. When Amanda opened her eyes the next morning, she found her mother staring at her. Kim greets her daughter with a sweet smile and asks how she slept. She waits for Amanda to quit rubbing her eyes and answer. Amanda stops, lowers her arms to her side and tells her that there is more she doesn't know. Kim doesn't move. She doesn't utter a word. She just listens as her daughter describes a time when she was nine and went to spend the night at her cousin's house. She describes her uncle Koi hosting a bonfire for his buddies. Everyone was outside. The kids ran and played as the adults sat around the fire and talked. But at some point Amanda got tired and went inside to watch TV alone. After a while, she said uncle Koi came inside and asked her to come to his room. Amanda got up and followed her uncle to his room. He then asked her to get undressed. Amanda refused. She didn't understand why he asked her that or what was going on. After that, Amanda said he pulled her pants off and her underwear down to her ankles. Her voice quivered as she remembered that he left her purple little mermaid shirt on. She said he molested her with his hands and fingers. Amanda told her mother that after that she never wanted to go there again. She blamed herself for what happened and was scared to even go back there. But then her aunt Rhonda called and wanted both Amanda and Shane to come over for her youngest son's birthday. So she went. While she was there, her aunt laughed and took Shane and the birthday boy to the store with her. Amanda found herself alone and went to play video games in her cousin's room. After a while, uncle Koi came into the room and removed all her clothes except for her socks. He molested her with his hands and fingers like the time before, but this time he went further. He made Amanda perform oral sex and then he performed it on her. The only reason uncle Koi stopped was because her older cousin walked in. Amanda told her mother that after that day is when her cousin began touching her. But it was her uncle who raped her. When Shane woke up that morning for school, he noticed an uneasy feeling in the house. It was unusually quiet that morning. Normally, Amanda blared music from her bedroom as she got ready, but today it was silent. His mother, who was normally constantly talking, reminding the children of the time so they wouldn't be late, was instead hardly speaking. During the ride to school, she sat in silence. Shane missed how she normally played with the radio and told jokes.

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He wondered what had changed. When Shane told his mother goodbye and got out of the car, Kim sat there for a moment. She was in shock. Her heart ached with what her daughter had told her. She couldn't stop imagining Koi raping Amanda as she cried. She knew she needed to confront him about this new allegation. Ulyss Williams worked at Slide Lock Tools with Koi Hunley. He was outside in the parking lot when Kim pulled in. She greeted him and asked if he could tell Koi to come outside. He agreed. When inside, and a few moments later, Koi emerged. He slowly approached

Kim's driver-side window. As soon as he was in earshot, he told Kim he didn't want her bringing this shit to his job. Kim didn't waste a second and just blurted out, Amanda is now saying that you raped her. Koi stepped back and laughed. He looked at Kim and said, what are you going to do about it? It was this moment, this particular point in time, that Kim completely lost it. The kind and compassionate mother that always had everything under control ceased to exist. Kim reached into her little black purse without even realizing it. She grabbed her loaded revolver and pointed it at Koi. He instantly recognized that something had snapped in Kim. He had already started to run. He begged, don't do this. As Kim pulled the trigger once, twice, all five times. As she fired, her practice at the gun range took over like a reflex. She hit Koi four out of the five times. She got him once in the upper chest before he had a chance to run. In his retreat, she caught him in the forearm, shoulder, and upper back. Koi took a few steps, but in the barrage of bullets, he didn't get very far. He collapsed beside a truck, bleeding and unable to go any further. Across the street, Mary Catherine watched in horror. In her car, Kim flipped open the cylinder and dumped the spent shell casings in her passenger seat. He reached into her little black purse and fished out five new rounds and one by one, carefully reloaded each chamber. She wasn't quite done. The thought of what he did to a nine-year-old little girl who couldn't have weighed more than 40 pounds, filled her with murderous

rage. She got out of the car and screamed, I told you, you son of a bitch, I'd kill you.

She stood over Koi and, without hesitation, fired four more shots, all into his head.

Then she walked back to her car, got in, closed the door, and calmly drove away.

Is that the new iPhone 15 Pro? Oh yeah, it's made with titanium and the pro camera is epic.

Just got it at T-Mobile. Nice. Yeah, and I got their Go 5G Next plan, so now I have the freedom to upgrade my phone every year. I gotta get to T-Mobile. Take charge of your upgrades at T-Mobile.com.

Phone now via 24-monthly bill credits plus tax for well-qualified customers. Contact us before cancelling a account to continue bill credits or credit stop and balance on a required finance agreement, too. One-year upgrade requires financing, qualifying device, and upgrading in good condition after six months with half paid off. I used to be ashamed of my toenails. I thought I was destined to wear socks and tennis shoes through the heat of the summer and hide my toes in the sand at the beach, but then I heard about Nonex Nail Gel. It tackles the problem of unsightly nails by clearing out yellowing keratin debris buildup. With regular use, Nonex Gel breaks down and removes this debris, so nails look clear. I confess I was skeptical in the beginning, but I stuck with it, using Nonex Gel twice daily. Actually, I was surprised how generously sized the bottle is and how long it lasts. A while ago, you could look at my nails and, well, glance away, but not anymore. Now my toenails look better than ever, and I'm wearing sandals again, thanks to a simple, natural gel. If your toenails are an

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embarrassment, try Nonex Nail Gel. It's available in the foot care aisle of your drugstore, mass retailer, or supercenter.

Kim walked into the Knox County Sheriff's Office and walked up to the receptionist.

She leaned slightly forward to talk through the little slits in the glass.

I was involved in a shooting, she said, distractedly. The receptionist was surprised, but took the claim seriously. Lieutenant Grissom would ask her for her identification and for permission to search her purse. Inside, he found the nickel-plated revolver.

Kim cooperated, but she didn't seem like she was all there. Her mind seemed to drift off even during mid-conversation. She stared blankly at nothing at all, lost in her own thoughts.

Deputies called the neighboring county and learned of the shooting at Slide Lock Tools.

Kim was led to an interview room. As the door shut on the elevator, and Lieutenant Grissom pressed the button for the next floor, Kim burst into tears. She cried that her heart

because he raped her baby. He tried to talk to her, but she acted like

she either didn't hear him or was so lost in her anguish that she couldn't understand him.

Kim would later say at her trial that when Koi laughed and provoked her with the question of what she was going to do about it, she lost herself. She claimed she didn't remember the shooting at all. She only remembered the sounds of gunshots and screaming, but didn't understand

that it was her doing it. The next thing she remembered was arriving at the sheriff's office

in Knox County. She had an appointment with the investigator in charge of the abuse

investigation that day at 1 p.m. During the trial in 2005, Amanda took the stand and pleaded

for her mother's case. She went on to say that she wished she had never told her mother

about the abuse in light of her possible imprisonment. Kim's first trial would end up

with a hung jury. A single juror disagreed with the other 11 on second-degree murder.

In her second trial, the jury would deliberate and come to the decision

that Kim was guilty of only voluntary manslaughter. Jurors had to ask themselves

what they would do in her situation. They had to take a real good, solemn, sober look at themselves.

And really, wonder, what would you do? One juror said if she hadn't reloaded the gun,

he would have let her walk. She murdered Coy in the heat of the moment under extreme

stress and still in shock from the news that her daughter was raped, but she still committed murder.

Vigilantism could not go unpunished. In the end, Kim was sentenced to four years in prison,

but got that reduced in appeal. She only really served about six months,

and the remaining three and a half years on probation with 120 hours of community service.

She rejoined her family, but it was short-lived. Kim died of unrelated causes in 2010.

She was 38, the same age Coy was when she shot him.

No charges were ever filed against Coy's son because in that molested her children.

Kim did finally drop it, and I'm sure he never looked at another child the same way again.

You can always count on a mother to protect her kids.

The Cunningham kids are all grown up now, hopefully with families of their own.

Maybe their nightmarish experience will drive them to protect their own kids with the same fervor that Kimberly Cunningham exhibited when her children were abused. Unfortunately,

she's no longer around to protect them. But wherever you are, Kimberly, I say to you sincerely,

nice shot. If you enjoyed the show, please consider joining Plus at swordandscale.com

slash plus. But if you can't, consider leaving us a positive review on your preferred listening

platform. Sweet dreams and good night.

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Holland America's best deal of the year is ending soon for your vacation next summer to Alaska, Europe and beyond. This incredible offer is your last chance to enjoy 60% off-top amenities, plan your cruise today, and receive specialty dining, shore excursions, a low-price guarantee, and free prepaid crew appreciation. Plus, get free upgrades to premium Wi-Fi and the elite beverage package included in your fare when you book by September 30th. Visit [HollandAmerica.com](http://HollandAmerica.com) for more details or to plan your next trip.