

Foster Mother Calls Slain Children Beautiful

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"Dear Lord of these — three things I pray"

"To know thee more clearly;
To love thee more dearly and to
serve thee more nearly."

Those are the words of Kyllia Person Trait, 9, one of four children of Mrs. Gail Trait who were found murdered in a flat at 122 Montana Ave late Sunday night.

3rd Grade Student

Kyllia, a 3rd-grade student at School 8, Masten and E. Utica, wrote the poem as a school project while she was living with her foster mother from May 17 to July 7.

The foster mother, who asked that her name not be published, said Mrs. Trait voluntarily placed the four children in her home. They remained with her until they were returned to the mother, through the Erie County Department of Social Services — eight days before they were found murdered.

The foster mother described the four children as "beautiful and well mannered."

She said Amina, 6, a kindergarten student, Inez, 4, a prekindergarten student and Kyllia all were good students in school. They attended School 8. The youngest child, Demario, 2, did not attend school.

The foster mother said Kyllia and Amina attended School 61, at 433 Leroy Ave., before they were put into her custody about a month before school ended. She registered Inez in school for the first time after she came to live with her.

Among the school papers of Amina was a greeting card that the foster mother said the girl made to give to her father on Father's day.

It stated "Love is the sweetest thing of all."

Meanwhile Mrs. Dorothy Pratcher of 26 Victoria Ave., a former neighbor to Mrs. Trait and her children, described the children's mother as "very concerned about their welfare."

"They were always dressed nicely. Their hair was always combed and they always were clean."

"When the mother would go someplace, she would always take all four of her children with her. Each Sunday morning, the children were sent to church with a minister who picked them up in his automobile."

Mrs. Pratcher also said Mrs. Trait went to bingo with her a few times "but she always seemed unconcerned about whether she won or lost. She appeared to be just passing away time."

"The whole thing seems like a bad dream. She never bothered anybody. Many times she would just sit on her porch (29 Victoria Ave.) and read, while watching her children play outside," Mrs. Pratcher added.

Mrs. Pratcher's husband, John, said Mrs. Trait "appeared to be a loner. She never really talked to any of the neighbors even though she stayed across the street for about three years. She just stayed to herself."

Played With Other Children

Miss Sandra Johnson of 132 Montana Ave., said Mrs. Trait allowed her four children to play with other children on Montana Avenue — the neighborhood where their grandmother lives and where they were found murdered late Sunday night.

Mr. Tina Faircloth of 103 Montana Ave., said the four Trait children played with her most of Sunday afternoon.