

# THE MUSWELL HILL MURDERER

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Dennis Andrew Nilsen aka The Kindly Killer was a serial killer, necrophile, and an ephobophile who was active in London between 1978 and 1983. He was also known as The British Jeffrey Dahmer because of the similarities in their victimology and modus operandi.

## **BACKGROUND**

Dennis Nilsen was born on November 23, 1945, in Fraserburgh, Scotland. He had a somewhat difficult childhood. His parents had a troubled marriage and divorced in 1948. As a result, their grandfather took care of the children. As a young child, Nilsen was close to his grandfather who unfortunately died of a heart attack. The loss of his grandfather, and seeing the body before burial, had an effect on Nilsen's personality. He became quiet and reserved.

During puberty, Nilsen realised that he was homosexual, but he was unsure if he was gay or bisexual, because the boys he was attracted to looked suspiciously like his sister. Nilsen was bullied by his brother.



Fig.1: Dennis Andrew Nilsen

At 14, he joined the Army Cadet Force. In Osnabruck, West Germany, he drank high quantities of alcohol to reduce his shyness and socialise. One time, he passed out and woke up at the apartment of a German friend. Though there was no sexual activity, this incident became a source of Nilsen's fantasy about the sex. His fantasies became unambiguously necrophilic after he discovered the painting *The Raft of the Medusa*. He went back to Germany and hired a prostitute to have intercourse with a woman for the first time. He found it "overrated" and "depressing" and concluded that he was homosexual.

His mother voiced concern about Nilsen's lack of interest in female companionship and a few months later, Nilsen and his brother attended a group – watching a documentary on male homosexuality. When everyone spoke about this subject derisively, a fight broke out between Nilsen and his brother, as he defended gay rights. It concluded with his brother telling their mother about Nilsen's homosexuality.

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After he graduated from the Metropolitan Police Academy in London, he began visiting gay pubs. Nilsen had several brief, sentimental relationships that ended in failure and hence believed that he was unfit for long-time relationships.

## **MURDER**

Dennis began to actively seek out sexual encounters but he felt lonely each time his partners left. So he decided to force men to stay by killing them. He found his victim's dead naked bodies fascinating. His first victim was a 14-year-old boy whom he had met at the pub. The boy accompanied him to his apartment and promised to supply alcohol for the night. Eventually, he fell asleep. Fearing that the young boy would leave him if he awoke, Nilsen strangled him with a necktie and drowned him in water. He then washed the boy's body and took him to his bed, where he attempted a sex act and then fell asleep next to the corpse. Eventually, he hid the boy's body underneath the floorboard of his apartment. He would stay there for several months until Nilsen buried him in the backyard. Meanwhile, he continued to seek out new victims.

Some of his victims were homeless or sex workers while the others were tourists who had visited the wrong bar. No matter who they were, Nilsen wanted to keep them with him forever.

He had been hiding his corpses underneath the floorboard, however, the smell eventually became too much to bear so he started burning and burying his victims in the garden. He often saved his victim's skin and bones. He often dressed them up, took them to bed, watched TV, and performed sex acts with them.

## **ARREST AND DEATH**

In 1981, his landlord decided to renovate his apartment and he moved to a new location. He didn't have enough outdoor spaces to burn the body parts and hence he began flushing human remains

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down his toilet. But the building's plumbing was old and eventually, the other residents complained and called in the plumber.

Upon investigation of the apartment building's pipes, the human remains were easily tracked back to Nilsen's apartment. When the police asked him where the rest of the body was, he calmly showed them the garbage bag of body parts he kept in his wardrobe. On further investigation, it was revealed that there were body parts stashed all over Nilsen's apartment. Though he admitted to committing between twelve and fifteen murders, he was formally charged with six counts of murders and two attempted murders.

He was found guilty on all counts in 1983 and sentenced to life imprisonment which he spent translating books to Braille.

In 2018, Dennis Nilsen died in prison at the age of 72 after suffering a ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysm. He spent his final moments laying in his own filth in his prison cell.

## **REFERENCES:**

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