

CRIME & PUBLIC SAFETY

Her 90-year-old father was stabbed 50 times in Buckhead. She wants to know why

Security guard at senior complex charged with murder, accused of killing man in September



Chun-ki Kim, 90, was fatally stabbed inside his Buckhead apartment in September, police said.

By David Aaro

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In March, while still enchanted during her father's 90th birthday week, Eunbii Kim motioned for him to sit down next to her on the floor of his Buckhead apartment. With their backs against his couch, she smiled as they gently placed their hands and feet against each other.

The warm gesture was part of their unspoken bond. Something they'd always done since her childhood, to show how similar they were.

"Dad, look at my feet and look at your feet, they look alike!" she would tell him, before taking a picture. "Oh, yeah," her father replied calmly, squeezing them.

Chun-ki Kim still had a strong grip for a nonagenarian, but Eunbii didn't care. His warmth was more important to her.

Six months later, he was found dead Sept. 25 by his caregiver, just a few feet from where they embraced. He had been stabbed more than 50 times inside his fifth-floor apartment at the complex that serves senior adults and those with disabilities.

The suspect? A building security guard, Janet Williams, who was hired to protect the residents of the Marian Road Highrise. Williams was a friendly face at the complex and was known to socialize with the residents, several told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Now, she is charged with murder.

RELATED Security guard stabbed 90-year-old over 50 times at Buckhead complex, warrant says

Eunbii lives in the Tampa area but had planned to visit her dad again around Thanksgiving. She hoped to include another holiday trip to Atlanta, outside of his normal birthday celebrations. On the typical Thanksgiving, she would call him and ask lovingly, "Did you have turkey today?"

The holiday gathering would have been much like his birthday festivities, which normally include the family mingling with his friends in Atlanta and then leaving with their bellies full of Korean food and their throats sore from the lengthy conversations.

"So, we were going to do all that," she said. "Of course, my dad is not here."



Chun-ki Kim was killed inside his Buckhead apartment. A security guard is charged with his murder.

Before her father's body was found, surveillance footage showed that Williams went to the fifth floor several times, and her clothing appeared torn and stained, according to an arrest warrant. While Eunbii and her family were grieving in the lobby, she said Williams even walked over to tell them how great their father was. Eunbii said Williams acted like everyone else who surrounded them, telling them: "Sorry for your loss."

"But looking back, I could kind of tell that there's like a watchfulness about her," Eunbii said.

After the stabbing, police said Williams staked out the crime scene, asked detectives for information about the case and ventured into a fifth-floor apartment of a resident who had a camera near Kim's place. Police said she even delivered flyers to residents' doors to inform them about the incident.



Janet Williams was arrested in connection with the fatal stabbing in September.

She was eventually arrested and booked into the Fulton County Jail. In early November, Eunbii said law enforcement told her that Williams tried to kill herself by throwing herself off a balcony at the jail. The incident happened Nov. 6, and police reached out the next day, Eunbii said.

The sheriff's office confirmed that Williams tried to harm herself. She spent one day in the hospital and then was returned to the Atlanta City Detention Center, where all female inmates are housed, a spokesperson added.

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Chun-ki's wallet and an Atlanta Braves cap were the only things missing from his apartment after the stabbing, police said. Eunbii said he didn't have much money and had a limp from a work accident. Several months later, detectives said they still don't have a motive for the killing.

Eunbii, who is in her 50s, said finding the truth is not like in the movies, where you see justice within a two-hour run time. She said she wished that police and the district attorney's office were more responsive, and that she often has felt left in the dark. She now routinely ponders how someone could do this to her father, a person who had to overcome so much in his life.

"After my dad passed away, it was very, very difficult," she said. "You know, I'm not saying that I've turned to religion overnight. But I needed some kind of reason why this happened. I just can't imagine what it's like for something like that to happen to you. I can't imagine what it's like for my dad."

Life in Asia

As Chun-ki Kim was growing up in the 1940s, his father was tortured and eventually forced to leave their home in Korea due to the Japanese invasion throughout southeast Asia during World War II, Eunbii said. The family had been fairly wealthy due to having land.

To earn a living as a young man in Korea, Chun-ki started making shoes. In 1981, he moved to the United States with his wife and children.



Chun-ki Kim is seen working inside his shoe shop in Atlanta.

While spending time in her father's shoe shop in Korea, a curious Eunbii would often ask questions. She said he loved to teach and spoil her. She still recalls the distinct smell of that shop, the same one that eventually emanated from the store he opened in Atlanta after moving here in the 1980s.

"Anything that was in the store that I liked, he'll just say, 'Take it,'" she said. "So that's what my dad meant to me. He would give the shirt off his back to me if I tell him I wanted it."

Eunbii clearly remembers him marching into the bedroom she shared with her sister after a long day at work and saying "babies" while holding cookies for them.

That giving nature continued in Buckhead, where Chun-ki was known to hand out food to residents, especially coffee candy, which was his favorite. Eunbii now gives the sweet treats to friends and fellow churchgoers.

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Never truly away

In Korean culture, parental structure and obligations to your children never end, Eunbii said. That was true for the Kim family, even though Chun-ki started his own life away from his kids after moving to Atlanta.

The other family members stayed in Chicago, where Chun-ki visited until the early 1990s. Eunbii eventually reconnected with him in 2001. She made the first trip to Atlanta a year later, when Chun-ki had to convince her to visit Stone Mountain in early February, despite it being freezing outside.

Eunbii broke down in tears thinking about not being able to call him again, or hear him ask how her children are doing. Their relationship grew stronger following the death of her mother in 2017.

"He would always sort of offer me advice and his experiences," Eunbii said. "You know, things like that."

While she is now a U.S. citizen with an American name, Eunbii said she wanted to use her Korean name while speaking to the AJC because "I'm still my dad's daughter."

During his funeral, Eunbii noticed a large bandage that was still covering the right side of his face and asked to turn the casket around so it would face the other direction. She then looked down at one of Chun-ki's typically strong hands that was clasping the other.

Eunbii grabbed it like dozens of times before. It was cold to the touch.

But after her father's death, those who knew and loved him made sure to tell her one thing: "I can see him in you."

"I'm glad," Eunbii said.

About the Author

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