

# KILLER'S STEPDAD REVEALS OBSESSIVE WORLD



Brutal... Daniel watched Corrie killing

EXCLUSIVE by BEN GRIFFITHS and GARETH MORGAN

ben.griffiths@sundaymirror.co.uk

**SMILING sweetly with a flower on his chest and a smart new wedding haircut, Daniel Bartlam stands with his parents on their big day.**

This happy family photo of the three-year-old boy with his mum Jacqui and dad Adrian gives no hint of the horror that was to unfold 11 years later.

But by Easter Monday last year the innocent little lad had turned into a savage teenage killer, bludgeoning Jacqui to death with a hammer and setting her body on fire.

Then he fled the burning family home, saving his younger brother and dog.

During his trial it was revealed how Daniel was obsessed with horror films and violent video games... but that his inspiration for what he thought would be a perfect murder came from a storyline in Coronation Street.

Today, a year on from the killing as Bartlam begins a minimum 16-year jail sentence, Jacqui's partner Simon Matters reveals how she doted on her son, giving him everything he wanted.

Simon, 45, said: "What Daniel did to his mum was an act of cowardice that has destroyed a whole family's lives.

"Jacqui would do anything, buy anything and go anywhere for him. She loved him so much.

"But Daniel got far too carried away with a fantasy world where killers and video games are normal and seemed to have forgotten about reality."

## FANTASY

Simon says Bartlam's behaviour had begun to spiral out of control before the attack on registrar Jacqui, 47, at their home in Redhill, Notts.

Spoilt by his parents after they split up five years after their wedding in 2000, the public schoolboy spent his time alone writing shockingly graphic stories and playing violent computer games. He had also stolen some of his mother's underwear.

Simon, a commercial manager who met Jacqui while working for the Land Registry in May 2008, says Bartlam, then 11, was the "polar opposite" of the teenager who hung his head sulkily in the dock on Monday as the judge sent him to prison. He recalled: "I was round at Jacqui's house one afternoon and Daniel turned up. He just looked like a normal friendly kid. He looked like butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. We got on quite well.

"He had a nice smile and was engaging when he wanted to be. He was not a sulky kid to start with."

Simon first got a hint of Bartlam's warped mindset when he helped him clear out his room for a house move in February 2009.

He said: "There were bags of Jacqui's underwear that Daniel had taken. I don't know why. There was also a washing-up bowl full of Star Wars figures which had been mutilated and urinated on. It was



Numb... Jacqui's partner Simon

all a bit strange but we just laughed it off because we thought it was just one of the weird things kids do.

"It was then that I noticed the amount of horror films he had on his shelves. There was the Halloween Trilogy and Saw among the films and DVDs. I confronted

Jacqui about my concerns but she just laughed it off. I didn't want to push it too much

because he was not my son, but I was worried."

On one occasion Simon was changing in his bedroom when he caught Bartlam filming him with his video camera.

Simon said: "I asked him what he was playing at but he just shrunk away. It seemed like an odd thing to be doing but because of his young age I thought it was relatively harmless."

Bartlam first showed his reclusive tendencies at 12. When he was not studying at Dagfa House school in Beeston, Notts, he was in his room, surrounded by posters from horror films.

He played violent computer games such as Call of Duty and Grand Theft Auto, watched disturbing movies or worked on his six laptops and Apple Mac computer. He would often stash cans of Red Bull energy drinks under his bed to drink so he could stay up.

Simon said: "He had little interest in anything other than being in his room. He was not really into sport or music."

Detectives later found Bartlam had been compiling film montages of violent scenes from films such as Saw, which features torture and killings, and murders from TV soaps such as EastEnders and Coronation Street.

One clip, which he uploaded to the internet, was the climax of the 2010 Corrie plot when John Stape killed Charlotte Hoyle with a hammer.

Simon said: "I was aware that Daniel liked his soaps like Corrie but I had no idea he was enjoying the violent scenes so much."

As well as his interest in fictional violence, the teenager's own behaviour became more violent.

Simon said: "In 2010, there were a few incidents with Daniel that showed

a bit of erratic behaviour. On one occasion he trashed the garden shed, then he walked paint through the house and he even destroyed some plants I put in the garden.

"Jacqui would shout 'Daniel' in an exasperated way but he wouldn't listen. He had also started hitting his younger brother a bit too. Giving him a sly dig here and there. There was a bit of a change in his behaviour."

Simon recalls another occasion when Bartlam became enraged with his mother after she refused to let him have pizza for his dinner.

He ended up standing toe-to-toe with her, shouting with his clenched fists held up to her face. Simon said: "He just lost it and was bellowing at his mum.

# Posing happily on his mum's wedding day.. the angelic boy who would grow up to brutally batter her to death like a killer from Corrie