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Girl killed after 'Romeo' moment

A father has described how he spent a moment "like Romeo and Juliet" with his three-year-old daughter before suffocating her, a court has heard.



Amelia died two days before her fourth birthday

Hospital radiographer Gavin Hall, 33, killed Amelia as her mother and sister slept upstairs in their Northants home.

Mr Hall, of Irchester, denies murder but admits manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility.

"It seemed very Romeo and Juliet, we were distraught, we were distressed," Mr Hall told Northampton Crown Court.

The court heard how Mr Hall sat and cuddled his daughter Amelia in the early hours of 29 November last year.

He drugged her with antidepressant pills and smothered her with chloroform in revenge for his wife's affair with a married judge she met over the internet, the court heard.

'Talked about heaven'

Giving evidence on Tuesday, Mr Hall said he remembered nothing of the incident in which he also tried to kill himself with drugs and by using a scalpel to cut himself.

He said he had talked with his daughter about the break-up in their marriage, and she had said she wanted to stay with him.

"At the time it must have been clear. We talked about heaven and we talked about no more crying, no more sadness," he said.

In letters written on the night, he told his wife, Joanne, that he was taking their two children to a place where they would be loved, but he said in court that he had made no plans beforehand to kill anyone except himself.

He said: "There was no conscious decision made to take Millie (Amelia), just like there was no conscious decision made not to take Lucy."

In the letters, he wrote: "I only took them because they would be loved, cherished and adored.

"Be happy in the knowledge the kids are safe and happy."

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