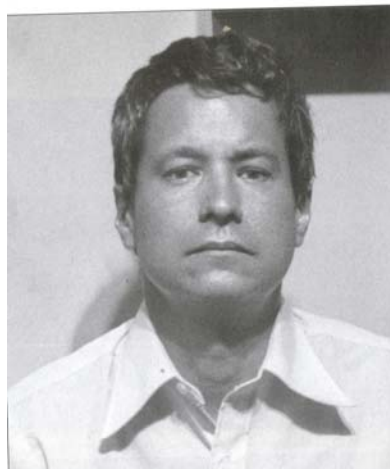


**Robert Joseph Zani**



Information researched and summarized by

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Life Event</b>
02/26/1944	0	Born in Tulsa, Oklahoma.
1944		Zani's mother and father get divorced.
09/21/1962	18	Enrolled in the University of Texas.
05/26/1965	21	Is hired as a clerical assistant in the main library at the University of Texas.
Sept, 1966		Is promoted to library assistant
1966		Ran for student-body president and received 924 votes, finishing third.
07/23/1966	22	Zani purchases a .357 Ruger Blackhawk from Oshman's Sporting Goods in Austin.
06/01/1967		Is promoted to translator in the archives section of the UT library.
06/28/1967	23	Married Irma Serrano Reyes in Mexico City. He adopted her two children and they later had two children of their own.
07/05/1967	23	Joined the U.S. Marine's officer training program.
07/23/1967	23	Used a .357 Ruger to kill his first victim, George Vizard at his convenience store job in Austin, Texas.
09/15/1967	23	Backed out of his commitment to the Marines and receives an honorably discharge.
July, 1974		Murdered his mother in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Body never found.
03/25/1975	31	Zani bought a house in south Texas.
08/06/1976	32	Moved to Buffalo, Missouri. Neighbors called the police several times regarding Zani's erratic behavior.
02/04/1979	35	Wrote threatening letters to President Carter and his daughter Amy.
February, 1979		Sold his house in Buffalo at a loss and left town
07/07/1979	35	Killed his mother in her Tulsa home.
09/30/1979	35	Began living in a motel in San Antonio with his family for two months.
12/04/1979	35	Zani killed Julius Alfred Dess in Corpus Christi, Texas.
03/03/1980	36	He was arrested in Acapulco, Mexico for aggravated robbery and assault on his mother in-law.
03/14/1980	36	He bought a .25 caliber handgun in Texas.

03/28/1980	36	He was arrested for credit card theft in Austin, Texas.
06/30/1980	36	He was convicted of credit card theft.
07/21/1980	36	He was indicted by a grand jury for the murder of Julius Dess.
03/09/1981	37	Trial for the murder of George Vizard begins.
04/15/1981	37	Convicted of the murder of George Vizard and sentenced to 99 years in prison.
12/14/1981	37	He was convicted of second-degree murder of his mother.
12/07/1982	38	Jury selection begins in the retrial of his conviction for murdering his mother.
12/16/1982	38	Jury convicts Zani of second-degree murder of his mother. Zani receives a sentence of 99 years.
12/28/1982	38	Zani is returned to Texas to serve his prison sentence for the murder of George Vizard.
03/31/1986	42	The murder conviction of his mother was overturned in Tulsa, Oklahoma

### General Information

Sex	Male
Race	White
Number of victims	6 suspected, convicted of two.
Country where killing occurred	United States
States where killing occurred	Oklahoma and Texas
Cities where killing occurred	Tulsa, Corpus Christi, and Dallas
Type of killer	Robbery – Random street
Height	6'2"

### Childhood Information

Date of birth	2/26/1944
Location	Tulsa, Oklahoma
Birth order	1 <sup>st</sup>
Number of siblings	0
XYY?	Unknown
Raised by	Mother
Birth category	Only child
Parent's marital status	Married
Did serial killer spend time in an orphanage?	No
Did serial killer spend time in a foster home?	No
Was serial killer ever raised by a relative?	No
Did serial killer live with a step-parent?	No
Family event	Divorce
Age of family event	Less than 1 year old
Problems in school?	No
Teased while in school?	Unknown
Physically attractive?	Yes
Physical defect?	No
Speech defect?	No
Head injury?	None
Physically abused?	No
Psychologically abused?	Yes, his mother used to talk sexually to him
Sexually abused?	Yes, his mother sexually abused him as a teenager
Father's occupation	He was in the army
Age of first sexual experience	Unknown
Age when first had intercourse	Unknown
Mother's occupation	Receptionist for a gas company
Father abused drugs/alcohol	Unknown
Mother abused drugs/alcohol	No

### Cognitive Ability

Highest grade in school	12
Highest degree	Diploma
Grades in school	He made A's and B's
IQ	Unknown
Source of IQ information	
<b>Work History</b>	
Served in the military?	Yes, he enlisted but never made it to boot camp.
Branch	Marines
Type of discharge	Honorable
Saw combat duty	No
Killed enemy during service?	No
Applied for job as a cop?	No
Worked in law enforcement?	No
Fired from jobs?	No
Types of jobs worked	While in college, he briefly worked at convenience store. He also worked at the UT Library for a few years.
Employment status during series	Unemployed
<b>Relationships</b>	
Sexual preference	Heterosexual
Marital status	Married
Number of children	2
Lives with his children	Yes
Living with	Spouse
<b>Triad</b>	
Animal torture	No
Fire setting	No
Bed wetting	No
<b>Killer Psychological Information</b>	
Abused drugs?	Unknown
Abused alcohol?	Unknown
Been to a psychologist (prior to killing)?	No
Time in forensic hospital (prior to killing)?	No
Diagnosis	N/A
<b>Killer Criminal History</b>	
Committed previous crimes?	No
Spend time in jail?	No
Spend time in prison?	No
Killed prior to series? Age?	No
<b>Serial Killing</b>	
Number of victims	3
Victim type	Mother, coworker, real estate agent
Killer age at start of series	23
Date of first kill in series	7/23/1967
Date of final kill in series	7/07/1979
Gender of victims	Both female and male
Race of victims	White
Age of victims	23, 53, 56
Method of killing	Shooting and bludgeoning
Weapon	Killer brought with him
Was gun used?	Yes

Type	Handgun, .357
Did killer have a partner?	Yes, his wife who was an unwilling partner.
Name of partner	Irma Reyes
Sex of partner	Female
Relationship of partner	Spouse
Type of serial killer	Organized - robbery
How close did killer live?	Drove to crime, often many miles.
Location of first contact	Victim's job
Location of killing	Victim's convenience store job
Killing occurred in home of victim?	Yes, his mother was killed in her home.
Killing occurred in home of killer?	No
Victim abducted or killed at contact?	Killed at contact
<b>Behavior During Crimes</b>	
Rape?	No
Tortured victims?	No
Stalked victims?	No
Overkill?	No
Quick & efficient?	Yes
Used blindfold?	No
Bound the victims?	No
<b>After Death Behavior</b>	
Sex with the body?	No
Mutilated body?	Yes, but only his mother.
Ate part of the body?	No
Drank victim's blood?	No
Posed the body?	No
Took totem – body part	No
Took totem – personal item	No
Robbed victim or location	Yes, he robbed George Vizard and Julius Dess.
<b>Disposal of Body</b>	
Left at scene, no attempt to hide	He attempted to hide all 3 victims
Left at scene, hidden	No
Left at scene, buried	Yes, he buried his mother and Julius Dess
Moved, no attempt to hide	Yes, he moved George Vizard into the cooler of the convenience store, but he was still visible.
Moved, buried	Yes, he buried part of his mother on her rural property several miles from her home. He drove the body of Julius Dess several miles away and buried him on a remote seashore.
Cut-up and disposed of	Yes, but only his mother.
<b>Sentencing</b>	
Date killer arrested	3/28/1980
Date convicted	3/18/1981 he was convicted of George Vizard's murder 12/14/1981 he was convicted of his mother's murder
Sentence	Life
Killer executed?	No
Did killer plead NGRI?	No
Was the NGRI plea successful?	No
Did serial killer confess?	No, he never confessed.
Name and state of prison	Texas
Killer committed suicide?	No
Killer killed in prison?	No
Date of death	Still alive

### **References**

Fero, K. (1990). *The Zani Murders*. Austin: Texas Monthly Press.