



## CASE REPORT

# A complex suicide by vehicle assisted ligature strangulation and wrist-cutting

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## KEYWORDS

Complex suicide;  
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Crime scene

**Abstract** *Background:* Complex suicide defines the type of suicide involving using more than one suicide methods to lead to death. Second method is used to escape from pain or to prevent failure of the first method. Here we present a case of unusual complex suicide case by vehicle assisted ligature strangulation and wrist-cutting.

*Case:* A 38 year-old male was found dead in his automobile at roadside out of his hometown. At crime scene investigation, driver side window was open and a ligature surrounding the victim's neck was attached to a tree 8 m behind the car. The victim's shirt and trousers were blood soaked due to bleeding from wrist cuts. There was a suicide note on the front panel of the car. At external examination there was a ligature mark, 1 cm in width, gently sloping upward toward the notch at left side of occipital region. Additionally, multiple wrist-cuts of approximately 5 cm in length were noticed on anterior side of both wrists. There was no injury of thyroid cartilage or hyoid bone, in internal examination. There was a soft tissue hemorrhage with 0.5 cm diameter around left greater horn of the thyroid cartilage. There was no injury of ulnar or radial vessels. No traces of alcohol or drugs were detected in toxicological analyses. Death was attributed to vehicle assisted ligature strangulation.

*Conclusion:* A complete forensic investigation revealed the case was an unusual complex suicide by vehicle assisted ligature strangulation and wrist-cutting. The case was interesting in terms of involving car assisted ligature strangulation.

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## 1. Introduction

The term “complex suicide” is described as the type of suicide involving more than one method to complete suicide.<sup>1–4</sup> Purpose of the use of a second method is to get a safeguard in the case of fail in “primary complex suicides”, and to get over the pain caused by the first method and accelerate death in “secondary complex suicides”.<sup>1,3,4</sup>

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The combination of consumption of medications, hypnotics in particular, with hanging, drowning, and suffocation, and combination of firearms with drowning and hanging are among the most commonly reported complex suicide combinations in the literature.<sup>1,4-7</sup> On the other hand, there are less common combinations such as hanging and electric shock, wrist-cutting and firearms, medication overdose and use of sharp instrument, medication overdose and LPG inhalation, firearms and self-immolation, and hanging and burning.<sup>1,2,4,7,8</sup>

Here we present a case of unusual complex suicide case by vehicle assisted ligature strangulation and wrist-cutting.

## 2. Case

A 38 year old male was found dead in his automobile at roadside out of his hometown. At death scene investigation, driver side window was open and a ligature surrounding the victim's neck was attached to a tree 8 m behind the car (Fig. 1a-d). The

car engine was stopped. There were tire marks/traces on ground, which were compatible with tires of the victim's car. The victim's shirt and trouser were blood soaked due to bleeding from wrist cuts (Fig. 2a and b). There was a suicide note and a pen on the front panel of the car (Fig. 2a and b). The suicide note was addressed to the victim's family and it expresses that he has lied to them, he has insufficient money to buy a house, and the note was ending with request of forgiveness. The identity card of the victim was in his shirt's pocket. Death scene investigation did not reveal findings related to struggling or existence of a second person at the scene. Notes indicating thoughts about meaninglessness of life were noticed in social media accounts of the victim.

At external examination there was a ligature mark, with 1 cm width, gently sloping upward toward the notch at left side of occipital region (Fig. 3a and b). Additionally, multiple wrist-cuts of approximately 5 cm in length were noticed on anterior side of both wrists (Fig. 4a and b). The wrist cuts were



**Figure 1** (a-d) Scene of death.



**Figure 2** (a and b) Blood on shirt and trousers, and suicide note (arrows).

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