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LOVESICK TEEN DEATH LEAP

NYU FRESHMAN PLUNGES EIGHT FLOORS

By LARRY CELONA and ERIC LENKOWITZ

September 24, 2007 – He was a tortured soul in search of his own identity, the young heir of a prominent family storied in politics and riches who in the end became simply a victim of love, taking his life to end the pain.

Allan Oakley Hunter III - the grandson of a war-hero, Republican congressman and the son of a dot-com multimillionaire - came to New York from California to get a fresh start and pursue a career in the arts at NYU.

As part of that process, he and high-school sweetheart Michelle Ann Tofia, a Princeton freshman, agreed in August to end their 11/2-year relationship so they could start college with a clean slate.

Hunter, 18, "was enjoying his first month at school" and life in the Big Apple, said Eric Scullin, his best friend from upscale Corona del Mar HS in Newport Beach.

Just before the weekend, "he seemed totally fine," Scullin said.

The trouble began Friday night, when Tofia, who had come to town for a visit, fell asleep in his apartment, and Hunter started searching her cellphone, sources said.

One text message, in particular, addressed to another guy and saying she wanted to be with him, set off a fight that ended with Hunter storming out.

Tofia fell back asleep, and Hunter went to the roof, setting off a building alarm at 5 a.m. Police believe he jumped shortly after. His body was found five hours later on a landing eight floors below.

In a handwritten note addressed to his parents and younger siblings - including a baby sister who had been born just 10 hours earlier - Hunter cited tragic rocker Kurt Cobain's suicide note and offered a simple goodbye and apology.

Tofia did not return a call seeking comment.

Hunter's troubles extended beyond Tofia, a close friend at NYU said, noting that he was tormented by family issues - including the fact that he "wasn't like" the Allan Oakley Hunters for whom he is named. The first Allan Oakley Hunter, his grandfather, was a lawyer from Fresno, Calif., who became an FBI agent in 1941 and served in an Army counterintelligence unit in Germany in 1944.

He was later a Republican congressman from the San Francisco area in the 1950s.

He died in 1995.

Arthur Oakley Hunter Jr., co-founded rent.com, the largest apartment search engine on the Internet.

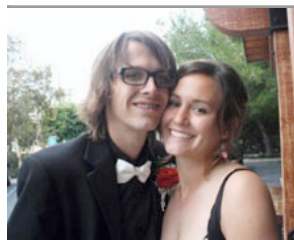
The company was sold to eBay for \$415 million in 1999, and Hunter Jr. remains active in the West Coast real-estate market. The well-known vintner recently gave \$2,100 to Mitt Romney's presidential campaign.

"He highly respected his grandfather and father," Scullin said of his pal. Still, Hunter III was an apple that fell far from the family tree.

A self-described libertarian who went by the moniker Trey, the NYU student rarely spoke about the successes of the two previous Allen Oakley Hunters, said his friends and a former teacher.

He "was fascinated with morbidity" and was pursuing a career as a screenwriter, said high-school pal Caitlin Adams.

On his Facebook page, Hunter III wrote: "I have hair, skin, flesh and muscle, liqaments



BROKEN HEART: Allan Oakley "Trey" Hunter III poses with his gal pal, Michelle Ann Tofia, in a picture on his Facebook page. He jumped to his death after a spat with her.

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His sudden suicide has shattered his close circle of friends, who were left searching for answers as to why the young man they all called a "genius" would give up on such a promising life.

"He was probably the most brilliant person I will ever know," said Adams, 18.

Additional reporting by Jamie Schram, Jana Winter and David K. Li

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