

Brothers face trial in sexual assault on girl, 10

By John Hogan
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For several days, the 10-year-old girl delighted in catching an occasional glimpse of the "strange men" wearing lipstick and women's clothing in their Southeast Side apartment building.

"I laughed when me and my little sister ran past the window," the girl testified Tuesday in Grand Rapids District Court. "I told my sister I was going to get a camera and take pictures."

But childhood curiosity quickly turned to terror the man in lipstick — identified as Daniel Arthur Turner — dragged her into his apartment July 7 and sexually assaulted her with help from his younger brother Stephen Turner.

The girl was fondled, forced to perform oral sex, wear women's clothing and play a strip video poker game, she testified Tuesday during a preliminary examination for her alleged attackers.

Before being released, she was told to hold a butter knife to the throat of Stephen Turner while his brother took a photo.

They told her if she reported the sexual assaults, they would use the picture to prove they were victimized by the knife-wielding girl, said Helen Brinkman, assistant Kent County prosecutor.

Daniel Turner, 35, was ordered Tuesday to stand trial in Kent County Circuit Court on charges of child enticement and first-degree criminal sexual conduct.

Stephen Turner, 30, was bound over to Circuit Court on charges of first- and second-degree criminal sexual conduct. Police say he aided and abetted his brother's sexual attack, and also fondled the girl.

Grand Rapids District Judge Joel Hoekstra ordered the men held without bond in the Kent County Jail pending trial.

The young victim was the only witness to testify. She cried while describing the sexual assaults, and her father at one point left the courtroom.

She told the court that she was playing with sticks and rubber bands outside her apartment near 44th Street and Kalamazoo Avenue SE when Daniel Turner

grabbed her and dragged her into the apartment. "He took me to the room and takes off my clothes in his apartment," she testified.

After the sexual assault, Stephen Turner took the girl into another room, she testified. He held the girl down and fondled her chest, the girl told the court.

She then was forced to play a video strip poker game and told to try on women's clothing, she testified.

Before she was set free, the men posed her for the picture with a butter knife, and threatened to kill her if she told anyone, she testified.

The girl told her mother of the assault, and the woman confronted the men while her husband searched for a crowbar, court records show.

"When she asked him why he raped her daughter, Daniel put his hands up and stated: 'I don't know why,'" according to a search warrant affidavit.

Police were alerted to the assault when the victim's father tried to attack the suspect with a crowbar.



Stephen Turner, front, and Daniel Turner, hear testimony against them.