

*Vanda Perri*

**ACTIVITY:** Swimming

**CASE:** 1951.08.17.a

**DATE:** Friday August 17, 1951

**LOCATION:** The attack took place in the Ionian Sea off the Royal Residence at Corfu (Kérkira), the most northerly of the Ionian Islands. It is situated only one nautical mile off the coast of Albania and the Greek region of Epirus.

**NAME:** Vanda Perri .

**DESCRIPTION:** She was a 16-year-old female, the daughter of the director of the National Bank in Kérkira.

#### **BACKGROUND**

**MOON PHASE:** Full Moon, August 17, 1951

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 150 yards

**DEPTH OF WATER:** Six to seven metres

**TIME:** 12h00

**NARRATIVE:** See press clippings.

**INJURY:** The girl's body was not recovered.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** The shark was seen by onlookers and thought to be a white shark.

**CASE INVESTIGATOR:** Chris Moore, Global Shark Accident File



**BATHERS SEE TRAGEDY**  
**CORFU, Greece, Aug. 20 (Reuters).** — Horror-stricken bathers watched a shark kill Vanda Perri, 16, and wound her boy companion 150 yards off the shore here. A Greek navy patrol ship was unable to fire on the shark for fear of wounding other bathers.

*The Leader-Post, August 20, 1951, page 9*

## ΤΟ ΤΡΑΓΙΚΟΝ ΔΥΣΤΥΧΗΜΑ ΤΗΣ ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑΣ

ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑ, 20 Αυγούστου. (Τοῦ ἀνταποκριτοῦ μας). — Τό δράμα τῆς θαλάσσης ἐξακολουθεῖ νά κρατῆ εἰς συγκίνησιν τὴν Κέρκυραν μέχρι τοῦ σημείου ὥστε ἡ προσοχὴ τῆς κοινῆς γνώμης νά στρέφεται κατὰ πρότερον λόγον πρὸς αὐτὰ παρά τὴν ἐναρξιν τῆς προεκλογικῆς περιόδου. Ἡδὴ ἐγνώσθησαν καὶ ἄλλαι λεπτομέρειαι τοῦ τραγικοῦ θανάτου τῆς νεαρᾶς Βάντας Πιέρρη, τὴν ὁποίαν κατεσπάρραξεν ὁ καρχαρίας. Ὅπως ἀφηγείται ὁ Γεώργιος Ἀθανάσαινας, ὁ νέος ὁ ὁποῖος ἐκαλύφθη μαζί της εἰς ἀπόστασιν 200—250 μέτρων ἀπὸ τῆς ἀκτῆς καὶ διέφυγε τὸν θάνατον, ἡ Βάντα δὲν εἶχεν ἀντιληφθῆ ἀρχικῶς τὸν καρχαρίαν καὶ ὅταν εἶδε τὸν συνοδὸν της νὰ γίνεταί κάτωχρος, διότι ἀντιλήφθη τὸν κίνδυνον, τὸν ἠρώτησε:

— Τί ἔχεις;

— Δὲν εἶναι τίποτε, τῆς ἀπήντησε ὁ κείνος διὰ νὰ μὴ τρομάξῃ. Εἶναι ἓνα δελφίνι...

Ἐν τῷ μεταξύ ὁ τεράστιος καρχαρίας, ἀφοῦ προσπύρασε ὀλίγον τὸ ζεῦγος τῶν κολυμβητῶν δεξιὰ διήλθε κάτω ἀπὸ τὴν Βάνταν καὶ ἔμεινε πίσω εἰς μικρὰν ἀπόστασιν 7—8 μέτρων. Τότε ἐξυγίσθη καὶ ὤρμησε κατὰ τῆς νέας. Ὁ συνοδὸς τῆς μόλις ἐπρόφθασε νὰ ἰδῇ τὰ πόδια τῆς ἐπάνω ἀπὸ τὴν θάλασσαν, εἰς ἓνα σύμπλεγμα ἀγωνιώδες μὲ τὸ θαλάσσιον θηρίον, καὶ ὅταν ὁ καρχαρίας ἐξηφανίσθη



Ἡ Βάντα Πιέρρη

ὑπὸ τὰ ὕδατα, εἶδε τὴν θάλασσαν εἰς τὸ μέρος ὅπου ἐκαλύφθη ἡ Βάντα νὰ γίνεταί κόκκινη.

### THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT IN CORFU

Kerkyra (Corfu), 20 August. (From our correspondent).—The tragedy of the sea continues holding the island of Corfu in shock, to the point that people's minds are shifting towards this happening than towards the upcoming national election. More details are now known with regards to that fatal day which resulted in the tragic death of Vanda Pierri, devoured by a shark. According to Georgios Athanasainas, the young man swimming with her at 200-350m from shore and escaped death, Vanda initially hadn't noticed the shark and when she saw her friend's face turning white because he became aware of the danger she asked "What's wrong with you?". "Nothing", he answered, "I think there's a dolphin there..."

In the meantime the huge shark, after passing two swimmers, dove and surfaced under Vanda, almost 7-8 metres behind her. Then he waited shortly before savagely attacking the young woman. Her friend only had time to see her legs disappearing underwater, in a hopeless struggle against the sea monster, and when the shark disappeared, he watched as the sea slowly turned red where Vanda swam just a minute before.

*Ionian Islands Newspaper, translation by Nancy Papathanasopoulou and Manolis Bardanis*

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GREECE	
1948. 22nd September. 4 p.m.	DEMETRIOS PARASAKOS. Draptachona (seaside resort at Piraeus). Fatal. Attacked whilst swimming 60 yards from the shore by a shark "seven yards long".
1950. Summer.	SWIMMER. Piraeus, Athens. Fatal.
1951. July.	VANDA PIERRIS, 16 years. Corfu. Fatal. Attacked while swimming. Man injured at same time. Victim's body not recovered. Shark seen by onlookers.

Victor M. Copleson (1958), page 259

### SEA MONSTER DEVoured A SWIMMER IN CORFU

According to the telegram of the harbor master of Corfu which was sent to the Ministry of Mercantile Marine, a sea monster within a distance of 800 metres from the island's coast, close to the location of Mon Repo, devoured Vanda Pierra, an 18-year-old girl, and slightly injured George Athanasena, a student of the Military Medical School.

**ΘΑΛΑΣΣΙΟΝ ΚΗΤΟΣ  
ΚΑΤΕΣΠΑΡΑΣΕ ΛΟΥΟΜΕΝΟΝ  
ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑΝ**

Κατὰ τηλεγράφημα τοῦ λιμενάρχου Κερκύρας πρὸς τὸ ὑπουργεῖον Ἐμπορικῆς Ναυτιλίας θαλάσσιον κήτος κατεσπαρᾶεν εἰς ἀπόστασιν 800 μέτρων ἀπὸ τῆς ἀκτῆς τῆς νήσου καὶ πρὸς τὴν θέσιν Μὸν Ρεπό τὸν ἠλικίαν Πιέρρην ἡλικίας 18 ἐτῶν καὶ ἑτραυμάτισεν ελαφρῶς τὸν Γεωργίον Ἀθανάσιον μαθητὴν τῆς Στρατιωτικῆς Ἰατρικῆς Σχολῆς.

ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΙΑ  
August 18, 1951, page 4

Translations by  
Nancy Papathanasopoulou and  
Manolis Bardanis

In a telegram of harbor master of Corfu to the Ministry of Mercantile Marine, a huge sea monster devoured near Mon Repos the 18 years old teen Vanda Pierri and seriously wounded student of the Medical School of University, G. Athanasainas.

**ΘΑΛΑΣΣΙΟΝ ΚΗΤΟΣ  
ΚΑΤΕΣΠΑΡΑΣΕ ΝΕΟΝ**

Κατὰ τηλεγράφημα τοῦ λιμενάρχου Κερκύρας πρὸς τὸ ὑπουργεῖον Ἐμπορικῆς Ναυτιλίας, τεράστιον θαλάσσιον κήτος κατεσπαρᾶς πρὸς τὸ Μὸν Ρεπό τὸν 18-ετῆ Βαντῆν Πιέρρη καὶ ἑτραυμάτισε σοβαρῶς τὸν μαθητὴν τῆς Ἰατρικῆς σχολῆς Γ. Ἀθανάσιον.





### A disaster in Corfu beach

Corfu, 18, (a.a.) — (Reuter): A bloody disaster has happened in Corfu beach. A giant shark going at sea surface at 150 metre away from beach, chopped a young girl named Vanda Pierri and also hurt her accompanying boyfriend.

During this incident, though a Greek patrol boat saw the monster but she has not fired on it for not injuring any other swimmer.

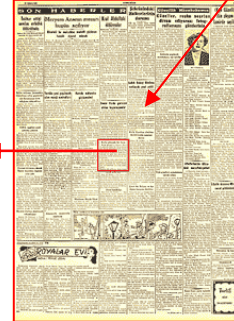
Cumhuriyet  
August 19, 1951, page 3

Translation by Mehmet Emin Ari

### Korfu plājında bir facia

Korfu, 18 (a.a.) — (Reuter): Korfu plājında kanlı bir facia olmuştur. Suyun kothından giden muazzam bir köpekbalığı kumsaldan 150 metre açıkta 16 yaşında Vanda Perri isminde bir genç kıızı parçalamış, yanındaki erkek arkadaşını da yaralamıştır.

Bu esnada vaka mahallinde bulunan bir Yunan devriye gemisi canavarı görmüşse de, başka kimseleri yaralamamak için ateş açmamıştır.



### Shark Sightings Following Vanda Pierri Attack

### ΕΝΑ ΘΑΛΑΣΣΙΟΝ ΚΗΤΟΣ ΤΕΡΑΣΤΙΩΝ ΔΙΑΣΤΑΣΕΩΝ ΕΓΓΥΣ ΤΗΣ ΛΕΥΚΑΔΟΣ

Τηλεγράφημα του λιμανέρηκου Λευκάδος πρὸς τὸ ὑπουργεῖον Ἐμπορικῆς Ναυτιλίας ἀναφέρει ὅτι θαλάσσιον κήτος 15 περίπου μέτρων τὸ ὅποιον ὑποτιθέται ὅτι καταδρόχθισεν εἰς Κέρκυραν τὴν νεανίδα Βάντα Πιέρρη, ἐξασθὴ εἰς ἀπόστασιν 700 μέτρων ἰξῶδι τοῦ λιμένος Λευκάδος. Κατόπις τούτου, ἀπηγορεύθη ἡ εἰσις λιμένων εἰς τὸν λιμένας καὶ τὰ θαλάσσια λουτρά.  
Ἐξ ἰθακῆς ἀναφέρθη ἐπίσης ὅτι παρὰ τῆς νησιῶδα Κοσίου ἐθεσθὴ ὑπὸ ἄλιων καὶ ἄλλα θαλάσσιον κήτος τεραστίων διαστάσεων.

### A SEA MONSTER OF HUGE DIMENSIONS CLOSE TO LEFKADA

A telegram that was sent to the Ministry of Mercantile Marine by Lefkada's harbor master reports that a sea monster of about 15 metres long, which was probably also the one that devoured in Corfu the young girl Vanda Perri, was seen within 700 metres from Lefkada's port. After the incident the port was closed for boats and swimmers.

From that island Ithaki it was also reported that a sea monster of huge dimensions was seen by fishermen close to the island Kosio.

Translations by Nancy Papathanasopoulou and Manolis Bardanis

...The case of Martha Hatagouei reminds a similar tragedy, which took place a few years ago in Corfu, in front of many people's eyes who were petrified with horror.

The daughter of the bank manager of the area's National Bank branch was swimming not too far away from the beach of Mon Repo where she was accompanied by her fiancé, when a shark attached them and devoured the poor girl in the blink of an eye. The shark then immediately turned to the fiancé, who was hardly rescued by fishermen that were nearby and went with their boats to the rescue. The young man did not react to the corsair of the seas, unlike Martha's fiancé, who attacked the shark by punching and kicking it. Since then, the Mon Repo's beach area, along the homonym palace has been fenced with wire...

Extract of the Newspaper "Ethos", January 31, 1963



### 1. Vanda (29.12.35—17.8.51) and George.

Blissful swimming

In Corfu seas.

A secret love-tyst.

Just her luck

To meet a straying shark.

(Witnessed by Naki Tsepeti, from Mon Repos Jetty, 12 noon 17 August, 1951.)

### 2. Vanda's Mother

All the shutters

Of the house

Stayed closed.

She couldn't bear

To see the sea.

By British Poet Jim Potts

Public Greek Television Channel called NET  
Release date July 7, 2014



Translation by  
Nancy Papathanasopoulou  
and Manolis Bardanis

The shark was 7-8m in length ...stayed balanced its body and then attacked Vanda, eating half her body, head to hips. Her friend saw only her legs above the surface. After this attack they put an underwater net out in the bay to protect swimmers from sharks.





*Mon Repos, Corfu*



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*Mon Repos, Corfu*

