

Martin Short's daughter Katherine's dark link to Nick Reiner revealed: Shocking twist after suicide aged 42... and why she CHANGED her name before death

Hollywood is reeling from yet another high-profile death after Martin Short's daughter, Katherine, took her own life on Monday.

But as details emerge of the [depression](#) and mental health struggles the 42-year-old battled over the years, a heartbreaking link has emerged to another recent Tinseltown tragedy - namely, the December murders of Rob and Michele Reiner.

The Daily Mail can exclusively reveal that Katherine Short was childhood friends with Nick Reiner, the troubled son of the famed When Harry Met Sally director who is now charged with killing both his parents. He has pleaded not guilty.

The Reiner and Short families have been close for decades, with Rob and actor Martin, 75, enjoying a particularly close friendship within a tight-knit Hollywood circle that also includes the likes of Billy Crystal, [Steven Spielberg](#), Larry David, Eugene Levy and Conan O'Brien.

Martin and his late wife, actress Nancy Dolman, bought a mansion in the Pacific Palisades neighborhood of [Los Angeles](#) in 1984 and chose it as their base to raise their three adopted children: Katherine; Oliver, now 39; and Henry, 36.

That home is less than 15 minutes from Brentwood, where the Reiners lived and raised their brood: Jake, 34; Nick, 32; and Romy, 28. It is understood that the children all often played together on weekends.

'Martin and Rob were very close. They were in each other's inner circle, and they lived not far from each other,' a source told the Daily Mail.

'There were holidays together, birthday parties, dinner parties and the kids were always around, always in each other's company, they pretty much grew up together.'

The Daily Mail has contacted Short's representative for comment.

Though Nick and Katherine had a 10-year age difference and went to different local high schools - Nick attended Wildwood while Katherine was at Marymount - they, out of all the children, formed a particularly close bond.

'Katherine and Nick bonded over being the children of famous people, it was a connection they had because they both tried to overcome it, they both tried to find their own way in life and it was very challenging. Hollywood kids are often miserable, it's common,' our source said.

'They wanted their own identity, they didn't want to be called so-and-so's kid.'

Indeed, that may be why, in 2012, Katherine filed court documents to have her name changed from to Katherine Hartley.

When asked what her reasoning for the change was, she wrote: 'My father is a public figure. I am a psychiatric social worker. I am concerned about potential harassment from future patients resulting from my association with my father.'

And it may also be why Katherine chose to leave her native Los Angeles and attend college on the East Coast at New York University, before later returning to settle in the Hollywood Hills, a 30 minute drive from the family home.

By contrast, her two brothers chose to remain in the Pacific Palisades as adults.

Both Katherine and Nick spent time in institutions over the years to deal with mental health struggles.

Katherine took time off of work - as a licensed clinical social worker, therapist and charity volunteer - and checked into mental health facilities more than once.

Nick, meanwhile, suffered from severe drug addiction and went to rehab at least 18 times.

On Tuesday, Rande Levine - founder of Karma Rescue, a dog charity on whose board Katherine served - told the Daily Mail that there were several times during the 2010s when Katherine took time off her charity work to check into an inpatient mental health facility when she was at a severe low point.

'She'd say, "I won't be around, I'm going away." She'd go check into some place to boost her up again,' Levine said.

Now our source adds: 'Martin and Rob really looked out for their kids, they were great parents, so the kids could never say they were screwed up because of their parents. That is not easy. There is no one to blame if you are broken. And Katherine and Nick were broken in their own ways.'

When Katherine returned to LA after graduating from NYU, her move to the Hollywood Hills put some distance in her friendship with Nick, who in recent years had been living in the guest house on his parent's Brentwood property.

'Katherine and Nick were not as close in recent years,' our source said.

Then came news last December that Nick was the prime suspect in the double murder of his parents, who were found stabbed to death in bed.

Nick was arrested and charged with two counts of first-degree murder. He has pleaded not guilty.

'Katherine was very upset when Rob and his wife died. It was depressing,

it really got to the whole [friend] group, so dark, so evil and twisted,' said our source. 'She felt repulsed by Nick over the murders. I am sure it weighed on her mental health, it was tough.'

It will no doubt have also been heartbreaking to learn that another close family friend, in the form of Catherine O'Hara, had died on January 30 at age 71.

O'Hara was, of course, co-stars with Short and Reiner's close friend Eugene Levy, who's son Dan was the same age as Katherine.

The late actress was also among several A-list guests who attended Katherine's 40th birthday party in 2023.

Levy, along with Spielberg and actor Kurt Russell, were all pictured at Martin's side on Tuesday evening, supporting their friend in the wake of this unimaginable tragedy.