



TIMOTHY J. CRUZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
PLYMOUTH DISTRICT

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

MAIN OFFICE:
166 MAIN STREET
BROCKTON, MA 02301
TEL: (508) 584-8120

NEWS RELEASE
DECEMBER 4, 2023

CONTACT: BETH STONE
(508) 584-8120

**NEW HAMPSHIRE WOMAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR ROLE IN MURDER OF
WOMAN FOUND DEAD AND BURNED**

PLYMOUTH – A New Hampshire woman has been sentenced to prison time for her role in the 2015 murder of a woman found dead and burned in Bridgewater, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz and Bridgewater Police Chief Christopher D. Delmonte have jointly announced.

Today, in Plymouth Superior Court, Shannon Squires, 47, pleaded guilty to one count each of Manslaughter and Kidnapping, in the 2015 murder of 29 year-old Ashley Bortner. Judge William Sullivan sentenced Squires to serve 8-10 years in state prison, to be followed by five years of probation.

On November 3, 2015, Bridgewater Police received a 911 call just before midnight for a report of a fire burning alongside MBTA train tracks. Police determined it to be a human body on fire and it was later identified as Bortner, who was from New Jersey. Bortner's body had been burned over 70%, she had been gagged, and her face was wrapped with a towel. Bortner's hands and feet were also bound behind her.

Through their investigation, Massachusetts State Police determined that Fernando Owens, 51, was acquainted with Bortner and believed she somehow played a role in the Suffolk County murder of Owens's son. As part of the investigation, Massachusetts State Police seized an electrical cord and a cotton towel from the home of Owens that linked him to the murder.

Shortly after the murder, Owens fled the United States to the Dominican Republic, but was captured by authorities there. In June, 2023, a jury convicted Owens for Bortner's murder, and he was sentenced to life in prison.

Co-defendant Julian Squires, 48, was additionally charged for his role in Bortner's murder. Julian and Shannon Squires were in Bridgewater around the time of the 911 call to Bridgewater Police, and assisted Owens in killing and disposing of Bortner's body. Julian Squires is currently serving a sentence of life in prison.

Shannon Squires has been incarcerated since November, 2015.

Assistant District Attorney Cailin Campbell prosecuted the case, which was investigated by Massachusetts State Police, Boston Police, Bridgewater Police, and the MBTA Transit Police.