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BRONX MAN INDICTED FOR ATTEMPTED MURDER
IN NEAR FATAL BEATING OF WOMAN
REPEATEDLY STRUCK WITH NAIL-RIDDLED WOODEN PLANK

*Victim Lost an Eye, Had Teeth Knocked Out and Her Face Permanently Disfigured in Attack;
Defendant Faces Up to 25 Years in Prison If Convicted*

Queens District Melinda Katz announced today that a Queens County grand jury has indicted James Fitzgerald, 53, for attempted murder and other crimes for nearly killing his estranged companion. The defendant allegedly kicked and punched the woman then used a wooden beam embedded with nails to continue the beating. The victim barely survived the vicious assault on a Jamaica, Queens street on May 16, 2020.

District Attorney Katz said, “This was a brutal crime. The victim was defenseless on the ground when witnesses saw the defendant allegedly repeatedly strike her with his feet and fists. But that wasn’t enough. This man is alleged to have continued the attack using a nail-riddled wooden plank. It is remarkable that she survived. Domestic violence is a horrible scourge in our society and we must do everything possible to stop it.”

Fitzgerald, of Walton Avenue in the Bronx, is charged in a 6-count indictment with attempted murder in the second degree, two counts of assault in the first and third degree, criminal possession of a weapon in the third degree and harassment in the second degree. In addition to the May 2020 incident, Fitzgerald is also charged in this indictment with an alleged assault on April 17, 2020. At that time, the defendant is charged with punching the same victim in the head and face causing her to sustain a laceration and bleeding to her lip and near her eye. Fitzgerald was arraigned this morning before Acting Queens Supreme Court Justice Stephanie Zaro, who remanded the defendant and set his return date for November 12, 2020. If convicted, the defendant faces up to 25 years in prison.

According to the indictment, just before 6 p.m. on May 16, 2020, Fitzgerald stood over his 35-year-old girlfriend, who was sprawled on the ground in front of a fish market on 150th Street in Jamaica, Queens, and attacked her. The defendant allegedly pummeled the woman’s body with blows. Witnesses nearby yelled for the man to stop, and for a moment Fitzgerald walked away. Then, he picked up a wooden plank, went back to his girlfriend and slammed the beam into her face over and over again.

DA Katz said, the witnesses called 911 and police arrived on the scene just as the defendant was walking away from the bloodied and bruised woman. When officers ordered Fitzgerald to stop, he broke into a run and was apprehended after a short foot chase.

As outlined in the charges, the victim was unconscious when she was rushed to a nearby hospital. The woman, who lives in South Ozone Park, needed at least three surgeries, but lost vision in her right eye. Her orbital bone was crushed and her face is permanently disfigured.

At the scene, DA Katz said, police recovered the bloody wooden plank with several nails protruding from it. Officers also recovered the victim's teeth that broke off and scattered on the sidewalk during the attack.

Assistant District Attorney Jacqueline Iaquina, of the District Attorney's Career Criminal and Major Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Shawn Clark, Bureau Chief, Michael Whitney, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel Saunders.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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