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BRONX MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ATTEMPTED MURDER
FOR BEATING WOMAN WITH NAIL-RIDDLED WOODEN PLANK

*Victim Lost an Eye and was Permanently Disfigured by Violent Attack in 2020;
Defendant Faces 19 Years in Prison at Sentencing*

Queens District Melinda Katz announced today that James Fitzgerald, 55, has pleaded guilty to attempted murder for nearly killing his estranged girlfriend. The defendant attacked the woman in front of a Jamaica fish market, kicking and punching her then using a wooden beam embedded with nails to continue the beating on May 16, 2020.

District Attorney Katz said, “In pleading guilty, the defendant has taken responsibility for a brutal attack on his estranged girlfriend - a defenseless victim he repeatedly attacked with his feet and fists before moving on to using a nail-riddled wooden plank. The victim thankfully survived but faces years of recovery, both physical and mental. The defendant has displayed a clear disregard for her safety and will now be sentenced to prison for his crimes.”

Fitzgerald, of Walton Avenue in the Bronx, pleaded guilty yesterday to attempted murder in the second degree before Queens Supreme Court Justice Toni Cimino. Sentencing was set for July 1, 2022, at which time Justice Cimino indicated she will order Fitzgerald to prison for 19 years, to be followed by five years’ post release supervision. A full order of protection will also be issued on behalf of the victim.

According to Court records, just before 6 p.m. on May 16, 2020, Fitzgerald physically abused his estranged 35-year-old girlfriend in front of a fish market on 150th Street in Jamaica, Queens. The defendant knocked the woman to the ground and relentlessly beat the victim with fists and also kicked her several times. The defendant ignored on-lookers yelling for him to stop, but briefly walked away from the woman only to return a moment later with a wooden plank studded with nails. Fitzgerald then used the blunt object to slam the victim in the face repeatedly.

DA Katz said, police arrived on the scene just as the defendant was walking away from the nearly dead woman. When officers ordered Fitzgerald to halt, he ran but was apprehended following a short foot chase.

The victim was rushed to a nearby hospital. The woman suffered permanent loss of vision in her right eye and her face was permanently disfigured due to a crushed orbital bone and several severe facial fractures.

DA Katz said, police recovered the bloody wooden plank with several nails protruding from it from the scene of the attack as well as the victim's broken teeth that were scattered on the sidewalk.

Assistant District Attorney Nicole Rella, of the District Attorney's Career Criminal and Major Crimes Bureau, prosecuted 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.

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