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BOYFRIEND OF WOMAN KILLED AND STUFFED IN CAR TRUNK
INDICTED BY QUEENS GRAND JURY ON MURDER CHARGES

Victim Last Seen Alive in November 2020;

Victim's Remains Discovered in Abandoned Vehicle in March 2021;

Defendant Extradited from Florida; Faces Up to 25 Years-to-Life in Prison if Convicted

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Kareem Flake, 30, has been indicted by a Queens County grand jury and arraigned in Supreme Court on charges of murder, kidnapping and other crimes following his extradition from Florida. The defendant is accused of killing a 26-year-old mother of two from Troy, NY in November 2020. The victim's remains were discovered four months later in the trunk of an abandoned vehicle allegedly belonging to the defendant in South Jamaica, Queens.

District Attorney Katz said, "On the run for more than year, this defendant is now in custody and charged with the brutal murder of his girlfriend, who was also the mother of his two young children. This is the worst possible outcome for any individual experiencing intimate partner violence, and we express our condolences to the victim's family. The defendant will be held to account for his alleged criminal actions."

Flake, of Troy, New York, was arraigned today before Queens Supreme Court Justice Donna Golia on a seven-count indictment. The defendant is charged with two counts of murder in the second degree, kidnapping in the first degree, two counts of criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree and two counts of tampering with physical evidence. Justice Golia set the defendant's return date for August 11, 2022. Flake faces up to 25 years-to-life in prison, if convicted.

According to the charges, the 26-year-old victim, Destini Smothers, was last seen in a car with Flake after leaving an outing with friends at a bowling alley in Queens on November 3, 2020. As alleged, the defendant was with Ms. Smothers during that outing. On November 8, 2020, the victim was reported missing in her hometown by the family.

Continuing, DA Katz said on March 10, 2021, a Toyota Camry which had been abandoned at the intersection of 134th Avenue and 151st Place in South Jamaica, Queens, was in the process of being towed when the tow truck operator observed a flat tire on the vehicle. The operator proceeded to pull over and opened the trunk to look for a spare. Inside the trunk of the Toyota Camry, he observed the decomposing remains of the victim and immediately notified authorities. During the course of the subsequent investigation, it was determined that the vehicle belonged to the defendant.

Furthermore, DA Katz said an autopsy performed by the City Medical Examiner indicated that the victim died from a gunshot wound to the head.

The defendant, who was being sought as a suspect in the death of Ms. Smothers, was apprehended by authorities on April 9, 2022, in Osceola County, Florida. He was extradited to New York earlier today.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Justin Hughes of the 101st Precinct Detective Squad and Detective Michael Naus of the Queens South Homicide Squad.

Assistant District Attorney Mary Kate Quinn, Deputy Bureau Chief of the District Attorney's Domestic Violence Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Kenneth Appelbaum, Bureau Chief and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel A. Saunders.

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

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