Beat: News

Louis Coleman III Convicted by Federal Jury of Kidnapping Resulting in Death

Kidnapping and killing Jassy Correia

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USPA NEWS - Louis D. Coleman III was found guilty today by a federal jury of kidnapping and killing Jassy Correia.

Coleman, 35, of Providence, R.I., was convicted following a jury trial of the federal charge of kidnapping resulting in death. U.S. Chief District Court Judge F. Dennis Saylor IV scheduled sentencing for Sept. 22, 2022. Coleman was arrested and charged in March 2019 and was subsequently indicted by a federal grand jury in April 2019.

“Justice was done today in this courthouse,” said First Assistant United States Attorney Joshua S. Levy. “The victim in this case, Jassy Correia, was a vibrant young woman, a mother, a daughter, a sister and a friend. And the defendant, Louis Coleman, was a predator. He tricked Ms. Correia into believing he would give her a ride and instead he held her against her will, sexually assaulted her, murdered her and engaged in a massive cover up. Although this conviction cannot bring Ms. Correia back, today’s guilty verdict brings some measure of justice for her and her loving family who feel this devastating void every single day. This case is the result of incredibly collaborative law enforcement effort between local, state and federal agencies across three states – Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Delaware. Thanks to their investigative work, the tireless efforts of the trial team and the bravery of Ms. Correia’s family and friends, Louis Coleman has been held accountable and will remain in prison for the rest of his life.”

“This crime was senseless and horrific, and there is no question today’s verdict is just. No excuse can justify the savagery committed by this man who will face life behind bars,” said Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division. “Together with the Boston and Providence Police Departments, the FBI worked tirelessly to seek justice for Jassy—a beloved mother, daughter, sister, and friend. The lasting impact and trauma this man has inflicted on her family can never be erased. Our hearts are with them today.”

In the early morning hours of Feb. 24, 2019, Ms. Correia, the victim, went out with friends to a nightclub in downtown Boston to celebrate her upcoming birthday. Just after 2 a.m., Ms. Correia became separated from her friends and tried to get a ride home from an Uber XL driver who was idling out front of the nightclub. The driver was waiting for a larger group and pushed Ms. Correia out of the car, and she stumbled onto the sidewalk. Seconds later, video surveillance captured Coleman approach the victim – who was alone, intoxicated, barefoot, and without a winter coat – and take both of her hands. Coleman offered Ms. Correia a ride back to her friend’s apartment.

After getting into the vehicle with Ms. Correia, video surveillance showed Coleman make a series of short turns before pulling over, just a few blocks from where he had originally parked, for approximately 12 minutes. Coleman then began driving south to his apartment in Providence.

Surveillance footage from Coleman’s Providence apartment building showed Coleman, at about 4:15 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 24, 2019, parking and exiting the vehicle, and then returning a short time later carrying a blanket. He then walked from the car to the front of the building carrying the victim’s body slung over his shoulder. Once he entered the building, surveillance video showed Coleman dropping the victim on the floor and dragging her towards the elevator, and subsequently towards his apartment.

In the days that followed, Coleman visited two car washes and his internet search history reveled he Googled things such as “how to pull a tooth out that’s not loose;” “can a person fit inside a suitcase;” “buy dumpster;” “oil barrel;” “how to clean for embalming;” “turkey baster;” and “target sanitizing bleach.” In addition, Coleman purchased a $150 air purifier, three 12-lb bags of baking soda, duct tape, 50-gallon trash bags, personal protective equipment including full-body coveralls, an odor respirator, protective masks, safety goggles, a 600-lb rated dolly, three Tyvek suits and a large suitcase.

At 1:15 a.m., on Feb. 28, 2019, Coleman wheeled a suitcase containing the victim’s body out of his apartment and into the parking lot where his vehicle was parked. Coleman appeared to have difficulty lifting the suitcase into the trunk of his car, before driving away at 4 a.m.

On the afternoon of Feb. 28, 2019, Coleman's vehicle was stopped by Delaware authorities on I-95 South near Wilmington, Del. Officers ordered Coleman out of the vehicle and asked him if anyone else was in the vehicle with him, to which Coleman said, "She's in the trunk."

Officers discovered the victim's body in the trunk of Coleman's vehicle, bound with duct tape and in the fetal position inside a sofa cushion cover, which was inside of a black trash bag, stuffed inside the suitcase Coleman was seen bringing into his apartment on Feb. 27, 2019. A duffle bag, a pair of new long-handled loppers, plastic garbage bags, clothing, a red plastic gas container, a green butane lighter, black gloves, charcoal air purifiers, air fresheners, tinted safety glasses, plastic Walmart bags, work towels, cloth work-gloves, a new set of DeWalt pliers, a laptop, the computer hard-drive/tower he used to conduct his Google searches and disinfectant wipes were also recovered in Coleman's vehicle. Two large cracks in the windshield on the passenger side were found to contain both Coleman and Ms. Correia's DNA.

The victim had significant bruising, a bloodied face, was bound with gray duct tape and was covered in baking soda. The medical examiner determined cause of death to be strangulation and found evidence consistent with a sexual assault.

The charge of kidnapping resulting in death provides for a sentence of death or life in prison. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

First Assistant U.S. Attorney Levy; FBI Boston SAC Bonavolonta; Boston Police Acting Commissioner Gregory Long; Douglas Bartlett, Acting U.S. Marshal for the District of Massachusetts; Suffolk County District Attorney Kevin Hayden; Colonel Melissa A. Zebley, Delaware State Police; and Colonel Hugh T. Clements Jr., Chief of Police, Providence Police Department made the announcement today. The U.S. Attorney's Office would also like to acknowledge the cooperation and assistance of the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Delaware and the Massachusetts State Police. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kenneth G. Shine, Robert Richardson and Elianna Nuzum of the Major Crimes Unit are prosecuting the case.

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