

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS – PLYMOUTH DISTRICT
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY



TIMOTHY J. CRUZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

MAIN OFFICE:
32 Belmont Street
Brockton, MA 02301
Tel: (508) 584-8120
Fax: (508) 586-3578

NEWS RELEASE
MARCH 17, 2016

CONTACT: BETH STONE
(508) 584-8120

**DORCHESTER MAN CAPTURED IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC RETURNED TO
BROCKTON TO FACE MURDER CHARGE**

BROCKTON – A Dorchester man who was captured in the Dominican Republic, has been arraigned for the murder of a woman found dead and burned in Bridgewater, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz announced today.

Fernando Owens (DOB: 09/04/72) of Dorchester, pleaded not guilty to one count each of Murder and Aggravated Kidnapping. The Commonwealth requested and Brockton Superior Court Judge C.J. Moriarty ordered Owens held without bail.

The FBI and their Dominican Republic partners arrested Owens in the Dominican Republic on March 8 and he was transported to New York by the U.S. Marshals Service where he was arraigned on a fugitive from justice charge on the Massachusetts Murder warrant on Friday. Owens waived extradition and Massachusetts State Troopers assigned to the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office returned Owens to Brockton today for arraignment.

Bridgewater Police received a 911 call just before midnight on November 3, 2015 for a report of a fire burning beside MBTA train tracks. Police determined it to be a human body on fire and it was later identified as 29-year-old Ashley Bortner of New Jersey. Bortner's body had been burned over 70%, she had been gagged by clothing and her face was wrapped with a towel. Bortner's hands and feet were also bound behind her.

State Police investigators have determined that Owens was acquainted with the victim and believed she somehow played a role in the murder of his son in Suffolk County. State Police seized items from the Dorchester home of Owens that link him to the murder, including an Egyptian cotton towel and electrical cord.

A New Hampshire married couple have also been charged in Bortner's murder. Julian Squires (DOB: 12/08/74) and Shannon Squires (DOB: 07/04/76) and face one count each of Murder and Aggravated Kidnapping. The Squires allegedly were in Bridgewater around the time of the 911 call to Bridgewater Police and assisted Owens in killing and disposing of Bortner's body.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS – PLYMOUTH DISTRICT
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY



TIMOTHY J. CRUZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

MAIN OFFICE:
32 Belmont Street
Brockton, MA 02301
Tel: (508) 584-8120
Fax: (508) 586-3578

Owens is next scheduled to appear in court on July 15 for pretrial conference.

State Police assigned to the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office, the FBI, Bridgewater Police, MBTA Police, Boston Police and the United States Marshals Office, assisted with this investigation. Assistant District Attorneys Jessica Elumba and Brian Fahy are prosecuting the case.

###