



Accused Killer Drops Hints On The Crimes

by Sanford Schmidt
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EDWARDSVILLE - Accused killer Brady Witcher admitted to an investigator that he owned a .45-caliber black and silver handgun similar to that which showed up at the scene of violent crimes in Birmingham, Ala., Clarksville, Tenn., and Bethalto.

Witcher, 43, of Birmingham, Ala., said he thought about a shoot-out with police when they broke into the St. Louis County room where he and co-defendant Brittany McMillian were staying after the Dec. 19, 2019, murders of Shari Yates, 60; her son, Andrew Brooks, 30; and John McMillian, 32.

The interrogation was shown in a video shown Wednesday to the jury in Witcher's murder trial in which he is accused of killing three victims, execution-style, in Bethalto.

During the interrogation, Witcher gulped water, fidgeted, and answered some, but not all, of the questions.

He agreed that he was given his Miranda rights but refused to sign a form verifying that he had been advised. He refused to say how he obtained Yates' blue Ford Fusion, which he is accused of stealing the day of the murders. "You already know," he said.

He claimed he would not answer many of the questions put to him because he was trying to protect McMillian, not because he was worried about his own case. "My life is over; it's a wrap; It's not about me; it's about her," he said. "I've been through this," he said.

He asked, "how are Illinois prisons?" He also said he wanted a lawyer. "I want to see if I can work out a deal to go back to Alabama," he said. He also said, "I was wondering how you found me so fast."

In Alabama, he is accused of killing a man connected to a "business enterprise" in which he and McMillian were involved. He is also accused of assaulting and torturing two people in Clarksville, Tenn., where the suspects stopped before heading to Bethalto.

The prosecutor showed copies of Google maps between Clarksville and Bethalto, found in Witcher's cell phone.

Prosecutors also introduced several items, the property of the victims in Clarksville and Bethalto in the car they stole from Yates and the truck they stole in Clarksville. They show pictures of suspected blood on a truck they are accused of stealing from the Clarksville victims.

Witcher has been convicted of being a felon in possession of a firearm, assault, two counts of burglary, robbery and two counts of attempted murder, which was also listed as "youthful offender," a term used in the Alabama legal system.

In other testimony Wednesday, forensic pathologist Dr. Gershom Norfleet testified that an autopsy revealed each victim had been shot in the face. The bullets were retrieved from the brains of the victims in each case. Norfleet declared by cause of death as gunshot wounds to the head and the manner of death, homicide.

The state showed pictures of the victims as they were removed from body bags. As Norfleet described the wounds, some family members ran out of the courtroom, crying. A juror fainted but was revived by Edwardsville medics.