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CUYAHOGA COUNTY PROSECUTOR

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Guilty Verdict in Robbery-Turned-Murder

CLEVELAND – Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael C. O'Malley announced that Shawn Ladson was found guilty of twelve charges including Aggravated Murder, Murder, Aggravated Robbery, and Kidnapping stemming from an incident that left one person dead.

A jury heard four days of testimony in the robbery-turned-murder of 22-year-old Joshua Freeman that occurred on July 20, 2015.

Freeman posted a photo on Instagram of a large sum of money he received for selling his car. Michael Townsend, Jr. saw the post and recruited the Ladson and Roscoe Simmons III to commit the robbery.

The trio entered the apartment on Wheelock Road with two firearms and a crowbar. They held three adults and a 3-year-old child at gunpoint and demanded the money. During the robbery the weapons exchanged hands and a firearm was discharged, striking Freeman in the abdomen. It was never determined who pulled the trigger.

On May 6, 2016, co-defendants Townsend, 28, and Simmons, 36, pled guilty to Involuntary Manslaughter, Aggravated Burglary, Aggravated Robbery, and Felonious Assault. They face up to 30 years in prison.

Ladson, 25, went to trial on April 17. The jury deliberated for nearly eight hours before returning the guilty verdict.

Sentencing for all three defendants is scheduled for May 5.

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