

Confessed killer is vague on a key detail - whether he was pushed into it

[STATE Edition]

St. Petersburg Times - St. Petersburg, Fla.
Author: COLLEEN JENKINS,
Date: Sep 15, 2006
Start Page: 3.B
Section: TAMPA / STATE
Text Word Count: 647

Document Text

Joshua Singletary admits outright that he doused Elizabeth Jewell Williams' ex-lover with gasoline on Aug. 10, 2003, and set him fatally ablaze.

Colorado Mountain Retreat
Turning of the Aspens! Centrally located - Pet friendly
www.pikespeakvacationrentals.com

But ambiguity crept in Thursday as he answered whether he did it of his own volition or on Williams' orders.

Online News Archive
Find Old Newspaper Articles & Obituaries. Try It Out For Free!
www.HighBeam.com

Testifying for the state in Williams' murder trial, Singletary said she told him to go after Charles "Chuck" Rock before Rock came after him.

The Fall
New hit movies when you want them Exclusives, Unrated, HD.
Free Trial
www.CinemaNow.com

"Did Beth Williams indicate to you how you could stop Chuck Rock?" prosecutor Jay Pruner asked.

Champaign leaf pickup
Professional tree services & care Full Service Professional Arborists
TedsTreeService.com

"By killing him," Singletary said.

Ads by Google

But Singletary responded equivocally under questioning from Williams' attorney.

Defense attorney Brian Gonzalez: "You didn't go there to hurt anybody, did you?"

Singletary: "Not necessarily, no sir."

Gonzalez: "You didn't go there to kill anybody, did you?"

Singletary: "It wasn't my main intent."

Singletary, 29, told jurors he spent the month leading up to Rock's death working part time for Williams, 40, at her Beverage Castle in Riverview.

The two were friends. Singletary crashed at her house, mooched off her cocaine.

Williams talked at times about Rock, 35, with whom she had a stormy two-year relationship that ended in late 2002. She accused him and his family of stealing from her store and grew upset at seeing him with another woman.

On Aug. 9, 2003, Singletary introduced himself to Rock at a restaurant in Riverview and quickly got into an argument with him. Singletary was thrown out but returned later with Williams.

She refused to go inside because Rock was with his girlfriend. So Singletary said he wrote a note dictated by Williams.

"The Rock, My name is Josh. Please don't ever tell me to haul a—. I was trying to be cool to you so don't act like a hard a—. Cuz that will get you f--- up."

Singletary and Williams returned to her Pinecrest home. They consumed cocaine and alcohol. Singletary said he tried to call Rock to apologize for their run-in, but Rock told him it was too late for apologies.

Night turned to early morning. Williams told Singletary that Rock and his friends would come looking for him, Singletary

said.

Threatening phone calls were exchanged between Singletary, Rock and other men. At one point, Singletary said, Rock told him they should meet up at Williams Park.

Williams decided they needed a gun, Singletary said.

Their search fruitless, Singletary drove Williams' red pickup to a gas station. She filled a jug with gasoline and paid for it.

"This will get his attention," Singletary recalled Williams saying.

They searched Riverview for Rock. Eventually Singletary drove Williams home. They had more cocaine. Then she told him to go find Rock, he said, as "the way I could pay her back."

Singletary drove to Williams Park and pulled in near the boat ramp. A man ran toward the pickup; Singletary said he thought the man had a gun.

It was Rock. Within seconds, Singletary splashed Rock with gasoline and lit him on fire.

Rock died six days later from his injuries. The blazing gasoline also burned 60 percent of Singletary's body, still evident Thursday by the raised scars forking his face.

Singletary avoided the death penalty by testifying against Williams in exchange for a 40-year prison sentence.

Gonzalez argued that the problem that deadly night was between Rock and Singletary, not Williams. Singletary agreed that he threw the gasoline on Rock to protect himself.

Gonzalez asked Circuit Judge J. Rogers Padgett to acquit Williams of first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder, saying the state failed to exclude other reasonable hypotheses for the killing. The judge will rule on that today, when the trial is expected to conclude.

Pruner didn't back off his theory.

"Was your problem the result of someone else's?" he asked Singletary.

"Yes," he said. "Beth Williams."

Colleen Jenkins can be reached at cjenkins@sptimes.com or (813) 226-3337.

Credit: COLLEEN JENKINS, Times Staff WRITER

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction or distribution is prohibited without permission.

Abstract (Document Summary)

On Aug. 9, 2003, [Joshua Singletary] introduced himself to Rock at a restaurant in Riverview and quickly got into an argument with him. Singletary was thrown out but returned later with [Williams].

Singletary and Williams returned to her Pinecrest home. They consumed cocaine and alcohol. Singletary said he tried to call Rock to apologize for their run-in, but Rock told him it was too late for apologies.

[Brian Gonzalez] argued that the problem that deadly night was between Rock and Singletary, not Williams. Singletary agreed that he threw the gasoline on Rock to protect himself.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction or distribution is prohibited without permission.

WV Fall Foliage Tours
WV in Full Fall Bloom! Enjoy
Tours, Festivals-Request Free
Travel Guide
www.WVTraditions.com

Crate & Barrel Candles
Dress Up Your Thanksgiving
Table With Elegant Candles. Buy
Now!
www.CrateandBarrel.com

Ads by Google