

Guard Confessed To Dancer's Murder

Written by Rudi Prinsloo

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A Pretoria security guard told his supervisor and the police that he shot dancer Estee van Rensburg in the head, but then told a court an accomplice did it.

This emerged on Wednesday in the trial of former security guard Aaron Mashishi, 26, of Mamelodi.

Mashishi pleaded guilty and was convicted on charges of robbing the 19-year-old dancer of her bank card, car, electronic goods and an evening dress as well as eleven charges of stealing money from her bank account.

Van Rensburg was found shot in the head at her family home in Faerie Glen, Pretoria, on March 25 last year.

The state started leading evidence on the murder charge this morning.

Superintendent Johan Kemp, who was asked to take Mashishi for a pointing-out shortly after his arrest on April 1 last year, testified that the accused had confessed shooting Van Rensburg in the head, robbing her and withdrawing money from her account on several occasions.

He said Mashishi, who was arrested at the offices of the security company where he worked, took him to the nearby Van Rensburg house, where he said he had jumped over the fence and a woman had opened the door for him.

Mashishi told the policeman he pointed his gun at the woman and told her to give him her bank card and PIN number, after which he shot her in the bedroom.

He later also pointed out Van Rensburg's car, which had false number plates. He said the car belonged to the woman he "had shot in the head".

Mashishi denied making any statement to Kemp.

The police officer, however, testified that the accused had signed and made his thumb print on each page of the confession, which was read back to him and interpreted. Mashishi was also repeatedly warned of his rights.

Mashishi's former supervisor at the security company, Eugene Strydom, testified that he had asked the accused if he had shot the woman, to which he replied: "Yes, Mr Strydom, I did".

When asked where he had shot her, Mashishi answered that he had shot her in the head.

Mashishi was arrested after police deposited more money into Van Rensburg's account and set a trap for him.

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Police obtained photographs of him withdrawing money and pounced after an early morning withdrawal from her account at a bank very close to the victim's house.

An attentive police constable noticed Mashishi, who was dressed in uniform, at the security company's offices and arranged for him to be called in, whereafter he was arrested.

Van Rensburg's bank card and more than R1000 in cash was found in his possession, but he at first told police he had "picked up" the card somewhere.

The Van Rensburgs' domestic worker Irene Molefe testified that she had seen and spoken to Mashishi on the day before the murder.

She first noticed him when he pulled away from the house while she was on her way to work.

Shortly thereafter, he suddenly turned up at their doorstep, even though the gate to the property had been locked.

He wanted to know if they were all right as he claimed to have seen two men in front of the house and then asked her where the owner was, if she worked there all day and at what time she left in the afternoons.

The trial continues.

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