

Court Hears Of Gifts After PTA Murder

Written by Rudi Prinsloo
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A domestic worker accused of plotting to kill and rob her employer dished out seemingly expensive jewellery after the murder, the Pretoria High Court heard on Thursday.

This was the testimony of Tiny Mpela in the trial of domestic worker Don Mashadi Maloka, 46, and her son Samuel Maloka, 24.

The two pleaded not guilty to charges of murdering and robbing Maloka's employer, retired estate agent Susan Vermaak, at her Clark Street home in Brooklyn, Pretoria, in December 2006.

The State alleges Maloka had asked her son to get people to help them rob the Vermaaks.

She allegedly let their accomplices into the house that day . They overpowered Susan Vermaak when she arrived home from gym.

She was forced to give the intruders the key to the safe, where her attackers removed R75,000 in cash. The house was also ransacked and several cellphones, electronic goods and jewellery taken.

Vermaak's hands were tied behind her back; a plastic bag was pulled over her head and tied with a rope around her neck. She was also stabbed in the heart with a knife.

Her husband, Henry Vermaak, discovered her body when he returned home later that afternoon. He found Maleka loosely tied up.

Mpela testified that she had visited her brother Abraham and his girlfriend Sheila (Maloka) a few days after Christmas 2006.

Maloka gave her a gold ring, earrings and a broach, which she said were given to her by her madam.

She also wanted to give Mpela a thick chain with a cross, but Mpela refused the gift because it was too large for her.

When her brother asked Maloka why she was producing the jewellery, she did not reply.

Mpela gave the ring to a friend because it was too big for her, but later retrieved it and handed it and the other jewellery to the police.

Inspector Andre Pienaar, who was called out to the murder scene that night, testified that he was "bothered" by Maloka's relaxed behaviour.

He said she even smiled while she was making a statement to a police constable, which struck him as odd under the circumstances.

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The trial continues on Friday.

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