



COUNTY OF FAIRFAX
4110 CHAIN BRIDGE ROAD, ROOM 114
FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030-4047

STEVE DESCANO
COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY

3/15/24

Contact: Laura Birnbaum, PIO
571-396-1179

**COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY STEVE DESCANO ANNOUNCES
RICHARD MONTANO RECEIVES 2 LIFE SENTENCES FOR 2022 MURDER**

Fairfax County, VA — Commonwealth's Attorney Steve Descano announced today that Richard Montano, 48, received two consecutive life sentences for the 2022 killing of Silvia "Kelly" Vaca Abacay, 40. Montano was convicted by a jury of first-degree murder and arson of an occupied dwelling in October 2023.

On the afternoon of August 10, 2022, Montano was lying in wait in the apartment of Fatima Via Rojas, his ex-girlfriend, when her friend, Silvia "Kelly" Vaca Abacay, came through the door instead. Ms. Vaca Abacay and her husband were staying in Fatima's apartment at the time, and when she encountered Montano, he killed her and set her body on fire in an attempt to conceal the murder. The apartment was located on Willston Place in the Seven Corners neighborhood of Falls Church.

Evidence presented at trial showed that Montano had entered the apartment that afternoon, likely intending to kill Via Rojas, after she had formally ended their eight-year off-and-on relationship at the end of July. A neighbor's Ring camera footage captured Montano entering the apartment without Ms. Via Rojas' knowledge multiple times in the preceding month, including his last entry just 10 days before the murder occurred. The same neighbor called 911 four times the afternoon of August 10 after hearing screaming and banging from across the hall. The medical examiner determined that Ms. Vaca Abacay died from multiple sharp- and blunt force wounds before her body was set on fire.

"The extreme level of violence and complete disregard for human life demonstrated by Richard Montano is of a level rarely seen in Fairfax County," said CA Descano. "The loss to Ms. Vaca Abacay's family and loved ones is unimaginable. There is nothing that can undo her needless, senseless death, but as of today, the defendant will not be able to harm anyone else in our community."

###