



LAWYER 'LURED' TO DOOM TRIO BUSTED IN LONG ISLAND MURDER

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Author: KIERAN CROWLEY; SELIM ALGAR; LEONARD GREENE

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A shady mortgage broker hired a stripper and her boyfriend to rob his business partner, who was murdered in broad daylight in the parking lot of a Long Island restaurant, police said yesterday.

Suffolk County cops arrested the three people and charged each with second-degree murder in the death of a real-estate lawyer who was lured to a bogus business meeting last month and shot in the head.

A motorist found James DiMartino, 44, shot in the head between two cars outside Sil La Joung, a Korean restaurant on Veteran's Highway in Commack, on Oct. 20.

DiMartino died several hours later at St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center.

DiMartino, a married father of four girls, had been lured to the site by his business partner, Ronald Thornton, 37, who told two associates that DiMartino would be carrying "tens of thousands of dollars," according to a source.

Thornton was DiMartino's partner in the relatively new Hauppauge-based JMB Funding mortgage company, and he lives in DiMartino's Nesconset neighborhood.

Officials said Thornton, looking to ease his own money problems, had hatched a plan to rob DiMartino.

Cops said he enlisted the help of a topless dancer, Monique Randall, he knew from a strip club he frequented. Officials said Randall drew her boyfriend into the scheme.

"They agreed to split the proceeds," said Jack Fitzpatrick, the Suffolk department's homicide chief.

Thornton set up the meeting with DiMartino at the restaurant, which was closed, because it was an easy place to meet, cops said.

Cops said DiMartino arrived some time that afternoon before 3 p.m.

It was unclear whether any money was actually stolen.

A source said Thornton had supplied his associates with an unregistered gun.

Cops also arrested Donovan Raysor, 20, of St. Albans, and Randall, 19, of Queens Village.

“We planned the robbery, and one of my guys had a gun and shot him in the head during the robbery,” Randall said, according to court papers.

Raysor’s lawyer, Michael Brown, said his client was “a minor participant in this incident.”

The three suspects were arraigned and held without bail in 1st District Court in Central Islip. Sources said there may be a fourth suspect.

Workers at a financial company with offices next to JMB Funding said that they saw the two men occasionally and that there were no signs of trouble between them.

One employee of the financial company recalled Thornton saying he was supposed to meet DiMartino the day of the shooting.

The employee said that Thornton seemed “unmoved” by his partner’s death and that he complained about being unable to get any work done because investigators had impounded the mortgage company’s computers.

DiMartino’s widow, Diane, declined to comment through a family friend.

“Jimmy had no idea who he was dealing with,” the friend said. Thornton “is a criminal. He’s a thug, a loser. He’s trash. Diane suspected him.”

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