

For Immediate Release

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Chattanooga Man Convicted of Burglary

May 14th, 2024 – Ringgold, GA – On Tuesday, March 26, 2024, a Catoosa County jury convicted Ruben Santos, a 40-year-old man from Chattanooga, of Burglary in the First Degree. Evidence presented over the course of a two-day trial showed that Santos was a long-time family friend of the victim, a 25-year-old woman. Santos befriended the victim when they were coworkers and also became a friend of the victim’s father. Santos repeatedly expressed interest in engaging in a romantic relationship with the victim over the course of several years but was rejected. Santos became more brash in his attempts to kindle a relationship with the victim, to the point where the victim avoided being at the home she shared with her parents when Santos would visit.

In July 2023, Santos, unbeknownst to the family of the victim, stole a housekey from the victim’s mother. After the housekey went missing, the victim and her family noticed items missing from the residence. After returning home from work in the evenings, the victim noticed that items of clothing in her bedroom were out of place.

The victim became suspicious that someone was entering the family home while she and her parents were at work during the day, and she installed a surveillance camera in her bedroom. The day following the installation of the camera, as soon as the victim arrived at work, the camera system alerted her that motion was detected in her bedroom. The victim accessed the camera feed and observed Santos entering her bedroom and rummaging through her laundry hamper and selecting multiple pairs of underwear. Santos placed the underwear on his face and in his mouth. Santos then laid on the victim’s bed and began to masturbate using the victim’s underwear. Before leaving the bedroom, Santos placed two pairs of the victim’s underwear in his pocket.

At the trial, presided over by Superior Court Judge Chris Arnt, the victim provided emotional testimony as to how Santos had destroyed her sense of security in her own home. The jury was able to view the videos depicting Santos’ conduct in the victim’s bedroom. Santos was sentenced to twenty years with the first fifteen years to be served in the Georgia Department of Corrections. Santos will be banished from the Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit on release and will be required to comply with sex offender conditions of probation.

The State of Georgia was represented by Assistant District Attorney Deanna Reisman. Victim Advocate Shelby Bradshaw assisted the victim through difficult and highly emotional testimony throughout the course of the prosecution. The case was investigated by Catoosa County Sheriff’s Office Detective Josh Moore.

“The home should be a sanctuary from the outside world,” said District Attorney Clayton M. Fuller. “This creeper violated that sanctity in the most vile of ways, and ADA Reisman and her team have found him a new home to spend time in—prison.”

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