
In Sverdlovsk Region well-known photographer from Yekaterinburg found guilty of his wife's murder



A court has recognized the evidence gathered by the investigating bodies of Sverdlovsk Region Investigative Committee sufficient to convict a well-known photographer of Yekaterinburg Dmitry Loshagin. He was found guilty of a crime under part 1 of article 105 of the RF Penal Code (murder).

The investigators have found that on 22 August 2013, between 7 and 10 PM, Loshagin and his wife, a photo model Yulia Prokopyeva were present at an event dedicated to the presentation of a beauty parlor and an art exhibition in Loshagin's loft and photo studio on the 17th floor of a building in Belinsky street in the city of Yekaterinburg. About 10 PM, Loshagin, Prokopyeva and several of their guests went to the roof of the building to see the nighttime city and were there for only a short period of time. When they were coming back, Loshagin and Prokopyeva had a fight over problems they had had in their family. During the fight drunk Loshagin attacked his wife, kicked her multiple times on her legs, then he grabbed the woman and turned her head with his hands inflicting a mechanical neck

injury. The woman died at the scene.

To hide the crime the defendant put the body in his Audi TT and took it to the woods near the 13th km of Staromoskovsky highway running from Khrustalnaya station to the village of Reshoty in Pervouralsk. To make the body unidentifiable the man poured some combustible liquid on the upper body and head of the woman and set it afire. Then he took off.

It has to be noted that the investigators did a meticulous job to solve the murder and find the killer and prove their guilt. They questioned about 100 witnesses and ran over 50 forensic inquiries. The forensic medical inquiry of the woman's body showed that the woman had died of a broken neck. The commission of experts ruled out the possibility that she might have gotten the injury by falling from any height, including her height as well. This way, the experts confirmed investigators' arguments that the mechanical neck injury had been inflicted deliberately.

In addition, experts of the regional Investigative Committee managed to restore CCTV video records made in Loshagin's loft and which had been deleted later. The records were presented during the trial and they confirm that Prokopyeva had never left the loft that day or later. This evidence counterbalances Loshagin's explanations offered to Prokopyeva's relatives and friends – that she might have gone away with a friend of hers. In addition, investigators found in Loshagin's apartment victim's personal belongings and documents which she usually had taken with her, namely, there were driving license, her foreign passport and other things. An investigatory experiment confirmed that the body might have been taken out in a plastic trunk, carrying which Loshagin can be seen on the restored video records. The second investigatory experiment confirmed that the said plastic container can be easily placed in Loshagin's Audi TT boot. It should be noted that despite quite a long-time absence of his wife and complaints of her relatives, that she had not been in contact, the husband had failed to report his wife missing.

During the investigation Loshagin was offered to get a polygraph test (the so-called lie detector test), however he refused. Moreover, during the whole time of the initial investigation the defendant did not give any explanations about the incident or offer his version of what had happened. On the contrary, the investigators revealed that Loshagin had tried to mislead Prokopyeva's friends and relatives, claiming that she was alive and visited Yekaterinburg from time to time. This way he had placed Prokopyeva's Audi in a service center after the murder. After that he met an acquaintance of his and went with her in her car to a café. Before coming home, he had asked the service center's workers to bring the car near his house on Belinsky street. This way, when Loshagin was at his house, he phoned his mother-in-law and said that her daughter had allegedly been home. Considering a number of circumstances and namely the fact that Loshagin gave contradictory explanations to his wife's relatives about her disappearance, officials of the Investigative Committee decided to ask the court to remand him in custody pending trial, and the court agreed. The defendant was in custody during the whole time of the investigation.

The investigators checked other versions as well. They questioned couple's relatives and friends,

checked their acquaintances. They considered the version that the murder might have been committed by a stranger. But in the end they confirmed that it was Prokopyeva's husband involved in her murder, while none of other versions were found viable. As a result, after a long-time analysis of all circumstances of the crime, they managed to gather enough evidence to send the case with the approved indictment to court to be tried on the merits.

This way, despite all the resistance from Loshagin and his defendants, the investigators in cooperation with the police managed to find the truth and make the defendant answerable for the crime during the initial investigation and the trial.

The court sentenced Loshagin to 10 years to be served in a maximum-security penal colony.

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