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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

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Clayton teen found guilty of murdering ex-girlfriend

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By Marcus K. Garner

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

An Ellenwood teenager was convicted of murder Friday for the shooting death of his 16-year-old former girlfriend.

A Clayton County jury found Kevin Kosturi guilty of murder, aggravated assault, felony murder — causing a person's death during the commission of a felony — tampering with evidence, giving false statements to police, possession of a gun during the commission of a felony and gun possession by a minor for the death of Angel Hope Freeman.

Kosturi was 15 on Feb. 21, 2011, the day of the shooting. He now faces multiple life terms in state prison.

While his attorneys argued that the shooting was accidental — the result of two lovers playing around with a loaded weapon — prosecutors said the killing was a murder-suicide gone wrong.

"The murder worked, but the suicide failed," Clayton County assistant district attorney Bill Dixon said Thursday in his closing statement, an surprise element he and co-counsel Michael Thurston built throughout the proceedings to spring at the very end of the trial.

On that day, Kosturi invited Freeman to a fort in the woods near his home. The couple had just ended a seemingly tumultuous relationship, and evidence prosecutors laid out during the trial suggested that Kosturi was obsessing over her.

"He said, 'if I can't have you, nobody can.'" Morrow High School classmate Charles Williams said of Kosturi from the witness stand on Tuesday. "I just knew they were arguing and were on the verge of breaking up."

Another friend, Casey Bartlett, told the jury that after witnessing an argument between Freeman and Kosturi, Kosturi was emphatic in his pledge to kill his then-girlfriend.

"I said, 'Kevin, don't say that,'" Bartlett told the jury. "He said, 'no, really. I'm going to kill her.'"

A GBI forensic gun expert testified on Wednesday that the five-shot, .38-caliber revolver that killed Freeman misfired on the final shot ... after Kosturi had already fired off three rounds earlier that day.

And after the shooting, he admitted to hiding the gun and lying twice to investigators about what happened.

"You saw the hammer (of the revolver) hit the silver bullet, but it didn't fire," Dixon said. "He panicked, and went out and threw the gun into the pond."


Sentencing will be held at an as yet undetermined date.

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