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Texas Career Criminal Sentenced to 6 years in Prison after Brutal Assault and Strangulation of Two Women in Highlands Ranch

Castle Rock, CO –40-year-old Zebadiah Joseph Scales will spend six years in the Department of Corrections after a violent attack on two women inside a Highlands Ranch home.

In January, a jury found Scales guilty of two counts of felony strangulation and two counts of assault “knowing and recklessly causing injury.”

On November 2, 2024, Scales, a Texas resident, was inside the home of a woman he had been dating. The woman was taking a bath and speaking to a female friend also in the bathroom, when Scales barged in and accused her of “cheating on him.” Scales left, and returned, then tried to drag the woman out of the bathtub.

When the friend intervened, Scales violently threw the friend to the ground, causing her head to strike the bathroom floor. Scales then violently grabbed both women around the throat and attempted to strangle them. One of the victims was able to call 9-1-1.

A Douglas County Sheriff's deputy arrived on scene and noticed deep bruising on the friend's neck consistent with finger marks from strangulation. Scales told the deputy he didn't know what had happened and had been asleep at the time of the assault.

Scales has an extensive criminal history including prior convictions for assault, assault with a deadly weapon and multiple drug offenses. While awaiting trial in this case, Scales fled to Texas but was later apprehended and extradited back to Douglas County.

Douglas County Sheriff Darren Weekly said Scales' sentence should send a clear message. "This outcome is a direct result of the meticulous work of our deputies who first arrived on the scene and the relentless dedication of our detectives who followed every lead to uncover the truth," said Weekly. "I also want to extend my sincere gratitude to the District Attorney's Office for their expert prosecution. Together we have secured justice for the victims and ensured a dangerous individual is held accountable for the trauma they inflicted."

Deputy District Attorney Lindsay Tucker agreed. "The sentence proves that violence against women will not be tolerated in our community," said Tucker. "Thanks to the judge and the brave victims who came forward, this defendant will be held fully accountable for his actions."

District Attorney George Brauchler said the case demonstrates his office's commitment to protecting victims and pursuing violent offenders. "Add Scales to the growing list of criminals who think they can come here to victimize us and then flee their earned justice, only to find themselves in a Douglas County courthouse before heading to prison," said Brauchler. "Courageous victims, relentless law enforcement, and prosecutors and courts who still believe in right and wrong, and good and evil- each of these makes our community safe and special."

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