

Accomplice: Victim 'better say his prayers' before being set ablaze in Brandon trash bin

By [Jessica Vander Velde](#), Times Staff Writer
In Print: Wednesday, October 6, 2010

TAMPA — As Robert Brewer lay bleeding in the bathtub, one of his accused killers chatted about his tough childhood.

When Brewer asked for a cigarette, the young man lit one and placed it between Brewer's lips, court records show.

But the butcher knives had already been selected. Brewer had been told to say his prayers.

And as he lay in the tub, men in the Brandon apartment worked on a plan to dispose of his body, said David Link, 19.

Link's sworn statements, recently added to court records, give a glimpse into what could come up in the first-degree murder trials of Brendan Terry and Kasey Ackerman. The state is seeking the death penalty.

Officials say that Terry, 20, and Ackerman, 21, repeatedly stabbed Brewer, 26, threw in him in a trash bin and set him on fire. They say Link and his mother, Rosanna DiMauro, 35, helped clean up after the May 3 murder.

Deputies made another arrest last weekend, charging the fifth and final roommate, Randy Morris, 34, with first-degree murder in Brewer's death.

Deputies say new evidence shows Morris took part in the killing, but neither the Sheriff's Office nor the State Attorney's Office would elaborate. Link told authorities he never saw Morris with a knife.

Link recently pleaded guilty to accessory after the fact to first-degree murder. As part of the deal, he will spend nearly three years in prison and testify in his co-defendants' trials.

For Link, the events that evening started about 7 p.m. when he came home from registering at Hillsborough Community College.

Brewer, a new acquaintance, was outside the apartment at 201 Brandon Manor Court. The five roommates and Brewer talked, drank beers, smoked marijuana and ate Hamburger Helper stroganoff, Link said. Brewer shared candy with DiMauro's 3-year-old son.

The adults took Xanax and seemed to be getting along, Link said. Brewer eventually fell asleep on the couch near the toddler, who was watching cartoons.

Then, seemingly without reason, Ackerman came out of his bedroom, saying, "I'm gonna get him. I'm gonna get him," Link said.

Ackerman talked to Terry and Morris and then went to the kitchen and pulled out several big knives, Link said. The men dragged a recliner from the living room into Ackerman's room, and Ackerman woke Brewer and told him to go sleep there.

Ackerman instructed Link and DiMauro to go to the living room, and then went back to his bedroom.

Within minutes, a neighbor downstairs started yelling from outside. She said it sounded like a circus in the apartment, Link said. Ackerman went outside and apologized, and Link turned down a blaring radio.

Then Morris, Terry and Ackerman went back into the bedroom. A few minutes later, the three men brought Brewer to the bathroom — naked, bleeding and wrapped in a blanket, Link said.

They put Brewer in the tub and Link said he heard Terry say, "He better say his prayers."

Terry talked to Brewer while Ackerman sent Link to help Morris look for a bucket to put Brewer's body in, Link said.

They found a bucket, and Link recalled Ackerman saying he would make Brewer fit, even if he had to cut up his body.

Ackerman instructed Link and Morris to go to a gas station to buy \$3 worth of gas, the records show.

When they got back, Ackerman was outside, suffering from an allergic reaction to bleach that had just been used, Link said.

"He almost killed me," Ackerman yelled before grabbing a knife and a razor blade, Link recalled.

Both Terry and Ackerman started slicing and stabbing at Brewer's throat and chest, Link said. With Morris' help, they stuffed Brewer into a duffle bag instead of the bucket.

The four men took Brewer downstairs and tossed him into a trash bin. Ackerman dumped gas on top, and Terry lit some paper on fire and threw it in the bin, Link said. They all ran.

Inside the apartment, Terry washed the knives, Morris cleaned the tub and DiMauro and Ackerman worked on cleaning the bedroom, Link said. Link said he laid on the couch and cried himself to sleep.

When he woke up, a deputy was standing over him.

Jessica Vander Velde can be reached at jvandervelde@sptimes.com or (813) 226-3433.

[Last modified: Oct 05, 2010 11:43 PM]



[Click here for reuse options!](#)

Copyright 2010 St. Petersburg Times