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**SUBWAY ATTACKER SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR ROBBERY  
AND ASSAULT CONVICTION IN 2022 HAMMER ATTACK ON WOMAN IN QUEENS  
PLAZA SUBWAY STATION**

*Defendant Kicked Victim Down Station Stairs and Struck Her on Head with Hammer 13 Times*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that William Blount was sentenced to 25 years to life in prison for an unprovoked attack on a commuter as she entered the Queens Plaza subway station in Long Island City in 2022. Blount approached the 57-year-old woman from behind, kicked her down the stairs and repeatedly hit her in the head with a hammer before fleeing with the victim's tote bag.

District Attorney Katz said: "This was an unprovoked attack that caught the attention of the entire country. A 57-year-old woman was blindsided as she entered the New York City subway system and kicked down the stairs by William Blount. The defendant then repeatedly struck her in the head with a hammer and stole the woman's tote bag. I thank the survivor for testifying during this trial and bravely facing her attacker in court. Our transit system must be safe for everyone and this conviction sends a strong message that those who cause mayhem on our subways will be brought to justice."

Blount, 61, whose last known address was on William Street in Manhattan, was convicted after a jury trial in April of two counts of assault in the first degree, two counts of robbery in the first degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the fourth degree. The defendant was acquitted of attempted murder charges.

Queens Supreme Court Justice John Zoll, who presided at trial, sentenced him today to 25 years to life in prison.

District Attorney Katz said that, according to the charges and trial testimony, at approximately 11:20 p.m. on February 24, 2022, 57-year-old Nina Rothschild was walking down the stairs to the Queens Plaza subway station as the defendant, who was walking with a black cane, approached her from behind. Blount kicked Rothschild down the stairs, struck her on the head 13 times with a hammer and grabbed the victim's multi-colored tote bag before fleeing the scene.

The victim was transported to a hospital where she was treated for multiple skull fractures and underwent emergency surgery to remove the damaged portions of her skull and replace them with titanium mesh. She also sustained a broken finger and other injuries.

Investigators tracked the perpetrator's movements using video surveillance, which showed Blount carrying Rothschild's bag as he walked from the subway station toward a relative's house on 12<sup>th</sup> Street in Long Island City.

Blount was arrested on February 27, 2022. On February 28, 2022, a search warrant was executed on the house on 12<sup>th</sup> Street and police recovered a hammer, a black cane and the victim's tote bag from the location. Further testing revealed a mixture of the defendant's and the victim's DNA on the hammer, and a mixture of contributors of DNA including the defendant's, on the black cane.

Assistant District Attorney Lauren D. Reilly of the District Attorney's Career Criminal Major Crimes Bureau prosecuted the case with the assistance of Assistant District Attorney Skerdjan Bana of the District Attorney's Felony Trial Bureau I, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Michael Whitney, Bureau Chief of the Career Criminal Major Crimes Bureau, Roni Piplani, Deputy Chief, and Rosemary Chao, Bureau Chief of Felony Trial Bureau I, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Shawn Clark.

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