

Bortner convicted of child endangerment

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DOVER, N.H. (AP) — A woman accused of failing to protect her 21-month-old daughter from a fatal beating was convicted on two counts of child endangerment Monday.

Amanda Bortner, 20, faces up to two years in prison on the misdemeanor charges. Sentencing will take place in January.

Prosecutors said she failed to protect her daughter, Cassidy, from months of abuse by her live-in boyfriend, Chad Evans. They also said she failed to take Cassidy to a doctor after Evans beat the toddler badly on Nov. 9, 2000.



Amanda Bortner

Instead, Bortner drove Cassidy from their Rochester home to her sister's apartment in Kittery, Maine, and asked her sister's boyfriend to babysit while she went to work. Cassidy died in a hospital later that day, after the boyfriend, James Marshall, noticed she was having trouble breathing and called 911.

"The things that the defendant watched were the price she was willing to pay for living in comfort, the price she was willing to pay to be with a man she thought was Mr. Perfect," Assistant Attorney General David Ruoff said in closing arguments Monday morning.

But Bortner's lawyer said Bortner was unaware that Evans was abusing her daughter.

"Yes, she should have seen what was happening. Yes, she should have reacted. But she didn't. She had no idea," argued Patricia Wiberg.

Evans, 31, is serving 28 years to life after being convicted last year of second-degree murder.

Bortner did not testify in her own defense, and her lawyer called just one witness, Travis Hunt, who lived with Evans, Bortner and the toddler at the time of Cassidy's death.

According to prosecutors, Hunt told police that Bortner asked Marshall to babysit that day because daycare workers would have noticed the multiple bruises from the beating.

But on the stand Monday, Hunt denied ever saying that. Instead, he implicated Marshall.

Hunt said a few months before Cassidy's death, he asked Marshall about the bruising on the girl's bottom. He said Marshall answered, "She was being a little bit

I beat her ass.

During the weeklong trial, police investigators recounted interviews with Bortner in the days and weeks after Cassidy's death. They said Bortner initially claimed to have no idea how or why Cassidy died. She told investigators the bruising on Cassidy's face the day she died came from an accident with a plastic baseball bat and she claimed to be unaware of the other bruises on Cassidy's body.

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