

Editorial

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We still weep for Kassidy: There is nothing so brutal as the murder of a child

Amanda Bortner spent Christmas in jail. It is only the beginning of what she deserves.

Bortner was convicted last month of failing to prevent the abuse that led to the death of her toddler, Kassidy Caitlyn Bortner, at the hands of her boyfriend, Chad Evans, in November 2000. Last year, Evans was convicted of second-degree murder and multiple assault charges and sentenced to 28 years to life in prison — a relatively light sentence considering the enormity of the crimes. Evans is behind bars at New Hampshire State Prison. His conviction is being appealed.

A jury found Bortner guilty on two misdemeanor counts of endangering the welfare of a child for failing to protect her defenseless daughter. She was released on bail pending her sentencing on Jan. 3. Repeated violations of the terms of her bail put her where she belongs.

One of the terms of Bortner's release on bail was that she was to have no direct or indirect contact with Evans.

Recorded telephone calls between Bortner and Evans revealed almost three hours of conversation between the two while Bortner was free on bail. The recording of prisoners' telephone conversations is permitted by law.

The state was right to petition for revocation of bail. The court was right to grant the petition.

A man who so abuses a 21-month-old child as to cause her death is little more than a monster. A woman who does not do all she can to protect her child from such abuse is something less than a mother.

Amanda Bortner's illicit telephone conversations with Evans between Aug. 6 and Dec. 12 are inexplicable. Where is there even a hint of reason?

Just before Superior Court Judge Tina Nadeau revoked her bail, Bortner read a statement apologizing to the court for violating its bail order.

"Kassidy was gone. Chad was gone. My family was gone," Bortner told the court, adding when she talked to Evans "he gave me a sense of peace."

Chad Evans gave Amanda Bortner "a sense of peace." The man convicted of such terrible crimes as causing her baby's death gave her "a sense of peace."

What form of people are these two? Is it possible justice has gone so awry as to give them any visage of credibility? Juries have said no. What reason is there for

anyone else to believe otherwise?

Look as hard as you will for some way to mitigate the horrible offenses committed against Cassidy Bortner. The monstrous nature of the crimes permit no compassion — allow no sense of grief for anyone other than the weak and unprotected Cassidy.

Some people weep for Amanda Bortner. We do not. Our tears this holiday season are for little Cassidy, a defenseless child who was not allowed the joy of the meaning of Christmas.