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## Cold Case Closed: Jury Finds Apple Valley Man Guilty of Murdering his 11-Month-Old Son

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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, Calif. – On Friday April 1, 2022, a San Bernardino County jury found Lucas Dingman (37) of Apple Valley guilty of 2<sup>nd</sup> degree murder in the death of his 11-month-old son, Bradley Dingman.

On May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011, Apple Valley Fire Department was dispatched to the apartment that Lucas Dingman, his girlfriend, and their 11-month-old son lived in. Also staying with them temporarily that night was another adult female and her 2-year-old son.

A neighbor observed smoke coming out of the second bedroom, which unbeknownst to him was the baby's nursery. The neighbor then low-crawled upstairs into the baby's room and seeing the fire was originating from inside the crib, proceeded to discharge the extinguisher to suppress the flames. The infant's mother at that point ran in, grabbed the baby, and jumped in another neighbor's car who drove them to the hospital.

The infant arrived at St. Mary's hospital in critical condition, with 80% of his body covered in 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns. Medical staff airlifted him first to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, and then transferred him to Providence St. Josephs for further treatment. St. Joseph's hospital staff decided to airlift him to a burn unit in San Francisco, but unfortunately the infant went into cardiac arrest mid-flight and did not survive.

When interviewed about the circumstances surrounding the fire that led to his son's death, Dingman displayed little emotion, and attempted to say the 2-year-old staying with them must have started it. However, arson and police investigators found that given the age, level of dexterity of the toddler, and the fact there were several points of attempted ignition by a lighter on the crib sheets, the toddler could not have started it.

While most crib bedding is fire resistant, the smoldering flames ignited a knit blanket that was inside the crib with the baby. In addition to Dingman making very little attempt at saving the life of his son, it is alleged he started the fire in order to blame the toddler, whom he disliked living with.

After almost 11 years, with the help of San Bernardino County Sheriff's Homicide Division, and Sheriff's Bomb and Arson Detail, San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office prosecutors were able to find justice for baby Bradley Dingman when a jury convicted Lucas Dingman of second-degree murder, which has a sentencing exposure of 15 years to life.

Bradley Dingman would've been twelve years old in June 2022.

Lucas Dingman is scheduled to be sentenced May 6, 2022 at Victorville Superior Court department V2.

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