



Woman kidnapped teenager by seducing him, prosecutor says

The Associated Press

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NASHUA, New Hampshire: A woman who ran off to Florida with her teenage lover entrapped the 16-year-old with sex, a prosecutor said as her trial on kidnapping charges opened Tuesday.

A national search for the couple ended in June when a worker at a bus depot saw them "making out."

"This case is about a 32-year-old woman enticing, befriending and seducing a 16-year-old boy," Assistant Hillsborough County Attorney Justin Shepherd said.

Jennifer Malone is charged with kidnapping Christopher Cole, whom she met while working as a teacher's assistant at a residential school for troubled teens.

In court Monday, Cole and Malone looked more like mother and son. Malone, who had worn her blonde hair in pigtails and borrowed Cole's T-shirts while on the road, wore a white blouse, dark vest and slacks to court.

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In a black T-shirt and baggy jeans, Cole smoked cigarettes, slouched in the witness box and had to be told to speak up by the judge.

"I thought I loved her," Cole said.

Defense attorney Adam Bernstein argued the relationship was consensual and Cole, now 17, had plenty of chances to

return home. He said Cole was not getting along with his mother and was terrified he would be locked up for violating his probation because he drank and twice tested positive for marijuana.

Cole testified he and Malone began a sexual relationship after he left the school and returned

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home last May. Malone sent him a letter, which soon led to several phone conversations a day, then sex at her home and in her minivan at a commuter parking lot.

They fled in June after learning the state Division of Children, Youth and Families was investigating possible misconduct by Malone.

Malone also took her 8-year-old son Brennan when they ran away to Florida. They slept in her minivan until he lost the key, then they slept on the beach. They pawned Malone's jewelry and her son's video games for cash, and she got a job cleaning rooms at a Florida hotel.

The national search for the trio ended June 26 when a worker at a bus depot recognized Malone and the boys from photos; he said he saw the two "making out" while the 8-year-old watched.

Cole initially told investigators he and Malone did not have sex in Florida, where the age of sexual consent is 18. On Monday, he admitted they had "a lot" but he lied to Florida police because he did not want to get Malone in trouble.

Malone was indicted in August and lived with her mother until September, when she was arrested again and charged with stalking Cole.

She and Rodney Malone divorced in August.

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