# Driver Gets 24 Years Prison for Crash that Killed Mother and Daughter

* **Difficulty: High**

Cameron Herrin gets sentenced to 24 years in prison

Almost 3 years after the incident, a judge sentenced Cameron Herrin, aged 21, to 24 years in a state prison. Cameron sped along Bayshore Boulevard and crashed into a mother and daughter, killing both.

Judge Christopher Nash’s decision came at the end of a long day of testimonies. These testimonies were from family members taking the witness stand to talk about Cameron’s character. The victims' family members then had an opportunity to voice their heartbreak and rage at the damage that the accident had done to their lives.

Cameron appeared wide-eyed as the judge announced his sentence. When the deputy cuffed him, members of his family began to cry.

Cameron’s mom, Cheryl, said that while he was still at the scene of the accident, he called her and told her that he had been in an accident. She testified that Cameron had been crying while talking to her.

He said, “Mom. I've killed someone.” She replied, “No Cameron, you’re mistaken.”

She drove to the scene of the accident, staying on the phone with Cameron all the time. She saw the Ford Mustang, a gift from her and her husband when Cameron graduated from High School two days prior to the accident. When she arrived at the scene, Cameron was on his hands and knees on the grassy median.

Last year Cameron pleaded guilty to two counts of vehicular homicide for the deaths of Jessica Reisinger-Raubenolt and her 1-year-old daughter, Lillia.

Cameron’s mother said she felt responsible for the accident, and, if it were possible, she would accept his sentence.

That afternoon, after the judge had heard Cameron’s family’s testimonies, the victims’ family was called to the stand. Pamela Reisinger said that the Herrin family could comfort and hug their children, but all her family could do is look at photos. She says she goes to the closet and smells an item of their clothing for comfort.

Jessica’s brother-in-law asked Cameron, “Do you know what it is like to whisper into a dying toddler’s ear “I promise I will always take care of your dad?” .... You did this to us, Cameron. You killed them.”

On the morning of May 23, 2018, Cameron and his friend, John Barrineau, drove to the local gym to work out. His older brother, Tristan, went with him as a passenger in the Mustang. John drove in his own car, a gold Nissan.

They stopped at a traffic light then sped north on Bayshore Boulevard. Drivers and bystanders later told the police that it appeared as if the two cars were having a race. The two cars were sometimes parallel to each other as they shifted between the two lanes.

That fateful morning, Jessica, who was pushing Lillia in her stroller, was walking along Bayshore Boulevard to a relative’s home. At the intersection she started to cross the roadway.

According to a witness, John in his Nissan, swerved to avoid Jessica and Lillia. Cameron, in his Mustang, swerved to avoid the Nissan and crashed into Jessica and Lillia.

Assistant State Attorney Aaron Hubbard, presented to the court data from the Mustang’s navigation system. It showed multiple speeding incidents in the days before the accident. On May 18, a speed of 100 mph was recorded. On May 22, the data showed that he had been speeding at 84 mph along Bayshore Boulevard. The speed limit at the time of the accident on Bayshore Boulevard was 45 mph.

On May 23, data showed that the Mustang was driving at 100 mph moments before crashing into Jessica and Lillia. A Tampa police detective testified that the car was moving between 30 and 40 mph at impact.

David Raubenolt, Jessica’s husband and Lillia’s father, spoke for about an hour. He told the court of the loss he has endured. He also said that as he was driving towards the house where they were staying, he saw the traffic backed up. He prayed that it was a stranger and not somebody he knew.

He spoke about his wife, who loved children and had natural parenting skills. She was the kind of person who would give notes to the other passengers on an aeroplane, apologising if Lillia was to cry. She had studied nutrition at college and believed that a good diet is important to the family’s health.

He said that the loss of his wife and daughter was a loss to the community, where candlelight vigils were held in their honour.

The victim’s family said they all wanted Cameron to get the maximum sentence.

Cheryl said her family suffered as well. She said, “Both my sons see the accident play over and over and over.” They both have anxiety attacks and panic attacks, and that she hears screams from both boys at night.

Cameron has lost weight and has sleepless nights. He also went to a therapist for help.

Tampa, the city in which they live, was captivated by the tragedy in a way local crimes seldom do. The stretch of road where the accident happened is regarded as symbolic of the city itself, with million-dollar mansions on one side, and the ocean on the other. Bayshore Boulevard is popular for its walkers, runners, cyclists, and skaters.

Many people on social media showed unreasonable support for Cameron because of his appearance, which has caused some controversy online and in social media. Find out more in part two, coming soon.

