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Evans sentenced to 12 consecutive life prison terms for sex trafficking of minor girl

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Andre Evans

An East Waco man was sentenced to 12 consecutive life prison terms Thursday after he was found guilty of harboring a 15-year-old runaway and charging a string of men to have sex with her.

A jury in Waco's 19th State District Court deliberated about 40 minutes during the punishment phase before recommending 12 life sentences for 51-year-old Andre Renor Evans.

Jurors took about an hour Thursday morning to find Evans guilty of three counts of human trafficking and nine counts of sexual assault of a child.

Judge Ralph Strother stacked the 12 life sentences, ordering Evans to serve the terms consecutively. He also stacked those 12 terms onto a 20-year term for retaliation for which Evans currently is on parole.

Barring reversal of his convictions, Evans, who had five previous felony convictions and 17 misdemeanor convictions, will spend the rest of his life in prison.

Longtime courthouse officials said they think Evans' consecutive sentences add up to the longest handed out in McLennan County history.

The girl, now 16, testified Wednesday that Evans supplied her with drugs and charged men to have sex with her at his Preston Street home in January and February 2015.

The girl testified that Evans considered her a prize and kept her high on drugs while collecting money from a parade of men who showed up at his East Waco home to have sex with her.

"It was like he had a trophy," the girl Evans called Summer or Star testified. "Like, 'I have this white girl, and she is young and pretty.' "

After the jury returned its verdict, the girl stood in front of the panel and thanked them.

"I have been through a lot in my life and I may not have made all the right decisions," she said. "But I'm 16, and at least I'm not going to prison like he is. I've learned not to let people mess with me anymore. I did that my whole childhood."

At least one woman on the jury wiped away a tear after the girl spoke.

In an interview later, the girl referred to testimony from an East Waco woman who quoted Evans as saying that the girl got what she deserved after he shot her with heroin and allowed men to have sex with her for a fee.

"He said I got what I deserved," she said. "I did get what I deserved. I got my justice, and this is right."

Sam Martinez, who represented Evans, declined comment after the trial.

System failures

Prosecutors Gabrielle Massey, Hilary LaBorde and Evan O'Donnell told jurors that the system failed the girl, who was removed from her mother when she was 6 and abandoned by her adoptive family seven years later after her erratic behavior intensified. Back in state custody, the girl bounced from foster homes to placement centers to mental health hospitals to juvenile facilities and was sexually assaulted in Austin and Waco before she wound up at Evans' house.

The girl said she ran away from many of the centers, including a shelter in Waco.

Massey referred to the system failure in her closing arguments but also said the system failed again by allowing Evans to parole from a 20-year prison term with four previous felony convictions and his long history of criminal behavior.

“This defendant could have seen her as a broken girl,” Massey said. “But instead, what he saw was an object that he could profit and benefit from.”

The girl called Evans’ Preston Street home, which sits across the street from a church and a half-block from a park, a “trap house,” describing it as a place where people paid Evans to take drugs and have sex. She said Evans had sex with her on numerous occasions when she was 15, and other men who came to the house paid Evans to have sex with her.

She told the jury about one day last year when she said she didn’t even bother to get dressed because Evans allowed a steady flow of men to come into a bedroom there to have sex with her.

A woman she met helped her escape from Evans’ home, and the two lived together for a time, she said. She prostituted herself to get money to survive and to feed her crack cocaine habit, she said.

After that, she was sent back to juvenile detention and later to a drug rehabilitation center in Florida, she said.

“All I have ever wanted since I was a little kid was to be with a family,” she said Wednesday. “I would give up drugs in a heartbeat to have a family.”