

Hickman guilty of girl's murder

Sentencing set for April 26

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JONESBORO — Caffian Hyatt said she felt her daughter was smiling down from Heaven when Marshae O'Brian Hickman was convicted of her murder Friday.

A jury convicted Hickman, 21, of 12 counts including malice murder, felony murder, involuntary manslaughter, battery, false imprisonment, criminal attempt and multiple counts of aggravated assault and concealing a death. Hickman killed Candice Parchment, 15, in 2010 out of fear that he would go to jail for trying to rape her.

Parchment's dismembered remains were not found until 10 months later under a mattress in a wooded area. The verdict was for charges stemming from the rape and the murder.

"I'm glad he won't be able to do this to another person," Hyatt said. "She's in a better place. I can say that with certainty. I know if she had a face and a mouth that she would be smiling down on us today."

Hickman is set to be sentenced April 26 at 8:30 a.m. in Clayton County Superior Court Judge Deborah Benefield's courtroom. Senior Assistant District Attorney Michael Thurston said he could receive a maximum sentence of life without parole plus roughly another 90 years in prison.

Thurston said the District Attorney's office hasn't decided what sentence it will recommend.

Hyatt said she wants the maximum sentence.

"Throw the book, the Bible, everything at him and then some," she said. "I want him to sit and stew in jail for the rest of his life. Let him think about what he did. My daughter didn't get a future, she's not going to have a future ... Let's see him not know what his future holds either."

Thurston and Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney Bill Dixon credited the efforts of Clayton County police with playing a large role in their being able to convince jurors to return a guilty verdict.

"They were absolutely determined to solve this case and it was," Thurston said.

The breakthrough in the case came when Hyatt found her daughter's diary during a move in 2011. The diary contained information about the attempted rape by Hickman and Jermaine Christopher Robinson, and lead police to them.

Robinson plead guilty to aggravated assault in the attempted rape case and is awaiting sentencing, said Thurston. He was not charged in the murder.

Prosecutors said Hickman confessed to Parchment's murder during an interview with police in October 2011.

"The bones of the victim were discovered months after the murder and it was literally just her bones, but the police were able to come up with suspects and get one of them to confess," Dixon said.

— Clayton News Daily reporter Kathy Jefcoats contributed to this report.