



# Killer gets life in prison in shooting of elderly man in wheelchair

By **Laura C. Morel**

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From a phone inside state prison, Bianca Spera told her boyfriend about something she heard from another prisoner.

"It's about money. A lot of money," Spera told him. "It's in Clearwater. An old guy and a wheelchair .??. he lives in an old trailer, very easy."

The boyfriend passed along that information to Spera's half brother, Gaetano Spera of Spring Hill. According to police, he enlisted three other men from Hernando County and concocted a plan to break into 82-year-old Allen Usher's mobile home inside the South Gate Mobile Home Park, 20000 U.S. 19 N, south of Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard.

The men believed Usher had a safe that contained \$50,000. But after breaking into the home on Jan. 9, 2015, and fatally shooting Usher in the head, police said, they learned that the safe and a briefcase they also stole contained only papers and medications.

A jury found Gaetano Spera guilty of first-degree murder on Friday evening after deliberating for about an hour. He was sentenced to life in prison.

His co-defendants — Jonathan Nelson, Alex Richardson and Excel Lawson — also face murder charges and are awaiting trial. Spera's sister, Bianca, pleaded guilty this week to solicitation to commit armed burglary and was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

During closing arguments, prosecutors reminded the jury of the evidence against Spera.

Usher's briefcase and safe were found in a vacant lot less than a mile from Spera's home in Spring Hill. Jurors also heard the jail calls this week of Bianca Spera talking about Usher in detail, how he was in a wheelchair, had suffered a stroke, and frequented strip clubs in the area. Cellphone tower records also placed Gaetano Spera near Usher's home that night.

"These guys weren't smart," said Assistant State Attorney Michael Marr. "This defendant specifically took his cellphone and was tracked."

The jurors also heard testimony from Richardson himself about what happened the night of the burglary. They also heard from Usher's ex-girlfriend, Stacey Zagursky, who was in prison at the time of his murder for stealing from him and told Bianca Spera that he had money.

Defense attorney Daniel Hernandez raised questions about some of the physical evidence that wasn't tested, as well as the credibility of Richardson's testimony.

"Clearly he has something to gain by testifying for the state in this case," Hernandez said. "The state has the ultimate ability to drop the charge against Richardson or they can reduce the charge to a lesser charge."

The trials of Nelson and Lawson are scheduled for July.

Source:

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