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THE SUPREME COURT OF

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

SCC22612269

THE KING

and

RESHONA MILLS

(Sentence)

BURNS J

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

AT ALICE SPRINGS ON TUESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2026

Transcribed by:
EPIQ

HIS HONOUR: Reshona Mills, you have today entered a plea of guilty to a charge of aggravated robbery. That offence occurred on 18 December 2024, so nearly two years ago in Alice Springs. At that time I am told you were in Alice Springs having travelled here from your remote community in order to participate in birthday celebrations. You accept that you were consuming alcohol and that the offence occurred in the context of you having consumed alcohol.

I will not now recite the statement of facts because that has only been read just a few moments ago. The events which gave rise to this offence were really quite trivial. You and a number of people were seated on a footpath partially obstructing other users from using the footpath.

The victim in this matter, who was running at that time, this was 6 o'clock in the morning, approached the group in which you were a member and requested that you not drink along the footpath and, for some reason, took photographs of you. That is, of the group of you.

I do not fully understand why he took that action because it was only ever likely to escalate the situation and that is, indeed, what took place because you and others in the group took offence at the victim having taken photographs of you without your permission and you tried to obtain the mobile phone which he used to take those photographs.

You grabbed the victim by his shirt and another male within that group took hold of his arms and held them to the rear of his body. A struggle ensued before either you or the unidentified male successfully obtained the victim's phone and then fled. On the facts it appears to me that you played a lesser role in the physical altercation with the victim than the unidentified male.

Whilst the elements of the offence of aggravated robbery are made out, I am satisfied that the particular offence is one which falls at the bottom of the range of such offences.

I have received a victim impact statement from the victim. I take into account that this has had some ongoing effect upon his behaviour. It appears from the victim impact statement that the greatest effect upon him was that of the actions of the male co-offender. It is, of course, unacceptable that you behaved in the way in which you did on this occasion. You committed a serious offence which is punishable by a lengthy period of imprisonment.

I take into account your personal circumstances as set out in the written statement of your personal circumstances which have been filed by your lawyer and also to which she spoke in the proceedings today. I note that you are now 29 years of age and you were 27 at the time of this offending.

You have seven children under your care at the present time, the oldest of which is 10 years old and the youngest is still being breastfed. Whilst you have a partner who is able to provide some assistance with caring for those children were you to be

placed in custody it would be particularly undesirable in light of the number of children and also the fact that one of them is continuing to be breastfed, for you to be separated from those children.

The provisions of s 78B of the *Sentencing Act 1995* apply such that I am obliged to order that you serve a term of imprisonment that is not suspended in whole or in part or make another sentencing disposition by way of an Intensive Community Correction Order or a Community Correction Order with an order that you participate in an approved project not exceeding 480 hours, unless I am satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances in relation to you or the offence which justifies taking a different course.

I am satisfied that there are a combination of circumstances which satisfy the requirements of s 78B such that I may impose a different sentencing disposition to those which are otherwise set out in that provision. In particular, I take into account that the offence itself is at the bottom end of the level of seriousness of offences of that nature.

Secondly, that your involvement was less than the other offender. Thirdly, that there was behaviour on behalf of the victim which escalated the situation and, finally, that you have seven children in your care, as I have stated, one of whom is breastfeeding. I am satisfied that all of those circumstances taken together justify, for the purposes of s 78B of the *Sentencing Act* adopting a different sentencing approach.

I also take into account in sentencing you that you did provide information to the police relating to the alleged co-offender. That person had already apparently been charged with a lesser offence of possession of stolen property. And as I understand subsequently no actions have been taken to charge him with the more serious offence which you have had to face.

Be that as it may, I do accept that you did provide some assistance to the authorities. I also accept that your plea of guilty was an early plea of guilty taking into account the difficulties that have existed in terms of you being able to have communications with your lawyers because of the remote location in which you live.

I accept the submission that was made by Ms Collins that your denial of having committed a robbery at the time that you were arrested by police was not a denial of your involvement in this incident. It was simply a denial of your belief that what had occurred was robbery.

You did not fully understand the nature of that offence and once being told by your lawyer of the nature of that offence you have subsequently entered a plea of guilty. I will reduce the otherwise appropriate sentence by approximately 20 percent because of your plea of guilty.

You do have a criminal history which is fairly conceded by the prosecutor is largely made up of traffic offences but there is one matter of violence back in 2014

although the offence itself occurred in April 2013. Now, that was some considerable period of time ago and I accept that there has been no repetition of any violent conduct between then and the present offence in December 2024.

Based upon all of the material before me, it appears that you have good prospects of rehabilitation and that would be particularly so if you avoid consuming alcohol and particularly in a public place. In my opinion the appropriate course is to impose a suspended sentence of imprisonment. I will not impose a requirement for supervision.

You will be convicted of the offence and you will be sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment which will be suspended wholly as of today. And there will be an operational period of 12 months, during which you are not to commit a further offence punishable by way of imprisonment.

So, I have sentenced you to 12 months' imprisonment but you will be able to be released today but you will be required to make sure that you do not commit any further offence in the next 12 months. If you do not commit any further offences then at the end of the 12 month period the matter is concluded and you do not have to serve any of that 12 months' imprisonment.

But if you commit a further offence, particularly one which is punishable by imprisonment you can be brought back before the court and you may be required to serve that 12 months' imprisonment or part of it. Do you understand all of that?

THE ACCUSED: Yeah.

HIS HONOUR: Thank you.

Is there anything arising from that?

MS MCKINNEY: Not from the Crown, your Honour, no.

MS COLLINS: No, your Honour.

HIS HONOUR: Thank you.

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