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Blount County DUI Case Concludes with 25-Year Sentence, Leaves Family Seeking Justice

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After years of legal delays, a high-profile drunk driving case in Blount County, Alabama, has come to a close. Jacob Doyle was sentenced Thursday to 25 years in prison for the 2017 deaths of Kenny and Dot Sims, an elderly couple who were killed when Doyle crashed into their vehicle while driving under the influence (DUI). The sentencing brings long-awaited accountability in a case that has deeply affected the victims' family and the local community.

Kenny and Dot Sims were returning home from church when Doyle, impaired behind the wheel, collided with their car, killing them instantly. The Blount County court handed

down two sentences of 25 years, one for each life lost. However, under Alabama law, the terms will run concurrently, meaning Doyle will serve no more than 25 years in total. That aspect of the sentence has sparked frustration for the Sims' daughter, Kim Cooper.

"That's wrong. It was two people he killed, not one," Cooper stated in court, expressing disappointment in the justice system's handling of the case. Despite her discontent with the sentencing, Cooper acknowledged a measure of emotional closure after years of painful courtroom proceedings.

Cooper described the devastating nature of her parents' injuries, which were so severe that open caskets were not an option. "They could not even dress them for burial. So, we have no closure at all, so this is finally some type of closure, and that's very emotional," she shared.

Since the 2017 crash, Cooper has remained closely involved in the legal process, attending court dates and speaking out for her parents. She likened the emotional toll of each court appearance to reliving the loss repeatedly. "It's just like opening the wound all over again, it felt like today I went to a funeral," she said.

During the court hearings, Cooper honored her parents by wearing their wedding bands, a small but symbolic gesture that kept their presence close. "These are both of my parents' wedding bands that I wear on occasion. I always wear them to court. So they're always with you? Always with me," she said.

Despite the profound grief, Cooper has chosen forgiveness over hatred. "Forgiveness is not for him. It's for me. And I have no choice but to forgive him. That does not mean that I don't do justice. It just means that I don't hate him. I can't, I don't have it in me to hate," she explained.

While the sentencing concludes a chapter in the case, it does not guarantee Doyle will serve the full term. He remains eligible for parole, a possibility Cooper intends to oppose. She has vowed to challenge any appeal efforts and fight any attempt for early release through the parole board.

The case underscores the enduring impact of impaired driving, not only on victims but on the families left behind. For Cooper, the years of legal proceedings have been a painful but necessary fight for justice. As the sentence is carried out, she hopes it will serve as both accountability for Doyle and a deterrent to others.