

## **Beauty salon mom knows how to use stupidity to avoid taking responsibility**

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What am I missing? **Tarajee Maynor** spends almost four hours in a beauty salon, all the while her children, 10-month-old Acacia and 3-year-old Adonnis, slowly perish in one of the most excruciating ways to die possible.

As reported in The Detroit News last week, at the preliminary examination, the judge relied on the defendant's ignorance, quoting her as saying she was "too stupid" to know her children would die and thus reduces the charge.

Run this by me again. She was too stupid to know leaving babies in what amounted to an oven kills them? What is this: not guilty by reason of stupidity?

During those four hours as her children baked in the back seat of a black Neon in a parking lot on an 88-degree day, **Tarajee Maynor** was not stupid enough to treat herself to refreshments -- a snack and a drink -- all while her children vomited and suffocated, the toddler gasping for air, leaving an impression of his mouth as evidence of their torturous suffering.

Finding her children dead, **Maynor** was not stupid enough to know that she would be blamed for the deaths. She was not stupid enough to concoct a lie about a kidnapping and rape to conceal her guilt.

When she finally fessed up to the cops, she told them she made up the story "so I didn't appear like a horrible person who left someone in a hot car." She was not stupid enough to worry about appearances. How can she be stupid enough to not know the consequences of what any rational person would not force upon a dog?

In charging **Maynor** with first-degree felony murder -- which is a combination of second-degree murder and first-degree child abuse -- prosecutors were required to show she intended to cause serious physical or mental harm to her children.

Deciding instead to charge **Maynor** with involuntary manslaughter, the judge said: "To the ordinary mind, these actions were likely to prove disastrous. But the defendant said 'I would never hurt my children. I was too stupid to know they would die.' There is no evidence to refute that."

Run this by me again. She was "too stupid" to warrant the fullest extent of the law, but she was not stupid enough to say she intended to kill them? What murderer facing charges is forthright about their intentions to kill?

Why is it that we're not dealing with an "ordinary mind?" This a fully competent 25-year-old woman. She was a full-time student at University of Michigan's Dearborn campus last term and is attending part-time this summer.

She was not stupid enough to know how to beat the system by driving around after her driver's license was suspended three times and was barred from driving in 1999. She had enough "ordinary" presence of mind to steal from her then-employer, Service Merchandise in Livonia, \$15,000 in jewelry, and when found guilty in Sept. 1999, never showed up for sentencing and remained a wanted fugitive.

And she was not stupid enough to know how to get rid of a third baby: just abandon it at a local adoption agency.

She cries foul. She whines like a kid, "But, I didn't mean to!" and gets off, once again.

Oh, no, she's not stupid.

Caption: Marney Rich Keenan

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