

## WOMAN FACES PREMEDITATED MURDER TRIAL - DETAIL IN DAUGHTER'S DEATH BRINGS CHARGE

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The 34-year-old woman accused of stabbing her 14-year-old daughter 40 times and stuffing the girl's corpse in a storage closet in May will be arraigned on a new charge of premeditated murder next week.

It took 36th District Judge Donald Coleman less than one hour to make his ruling, based mostly upon what police said was a statement **Tammy Burse** made after the killing and testimony from **Burse** 's husband, Ernest **Burse** . He called police after discovering blood stains throughout the family's Florida Street home May 24.

At a hearing Thursday, Detroit Police Homicide Officer Ed Williams read from the confession he said **Tammy Burse** gave at police headquarters during the early morning of May 25, just hours after her daughter Irika Peterson was killed.

Williams said it started with **Burse** angrily questioning Irika about a May 24 visit from the Family Independence Agency, which was trying to check on the girl's welfare. Irika had complained to a counselor at Chadsey High School about abuse and bad living conditions at home. **Burse** didn't answer the door when the officials came.

Reading from the statement, Williams said **Burse** gave police this account of what happened next: "What do you think is going to happen now?" **Burse** asked her daughter.

When Irika walked away and made a smart remark about being put into foster care, **Burse** allegedly told police she said, "I'm not through talking to you."

A tussle began. **Burse** said Irika retrieved a bat and began swinging it at her, Williams said.

That should have nullified the premeditated murder charge, **Burse** 's attorney William Winters said. **Burse** was defending herself, he said.

"It's obvious this . . . escalated into something tragic," he said. But prosecutors argued the next sequence of events make a premeditated charge valid.

"I brought you in this world and I'll take you out," **Burse** allegedly said in the statement.

Then, Irika grabbed a pair of scissors, Williams said.

"Oh, you want to stab me?" **Burse** allegedly asked Irika. After a struggle, **Burse** snatched the scissors from Irika and started stabbing her, Williams said.

What happened next is what the judge said convinced him that Irika's death was premeditated. According to the police statement, Irika was too weak to move when **Burse** went in the kitchen, grabbed a knife and continued stabbing her.

"There was time to reflect, to think about what you were doing," Coleman said.

**Burse** 's explanation for the stabbing: "I was tired of her talking back, being rebellious," Williams said.

Irika died from 14 stab wounds to the face, nine to the hands, six to the neck , six to her arms and legs, three to the chest and one each to the abdomen and the back, according to a Wayne County medical examiner's report attorney Robert Moran read in court.

**Burse** 's husband, Ernest, testified that when he arrived home his wife asked him to dump Irika's body at an abandoned home down the street, but he refused.

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