NOTICE
Decision filed 10/30/26. The text of this decision may be changed or corrected prior to the filing of a Petition for Rehearing or the disposition of the same.

2026 IL App (5th) 250386-U

NO. 5-25-0386

IN THE

APPELLATE COURT OF ILLINOIS

FIFTH DISTRICT

NOTICE
This order was filed under Supreme Court Rule 23 and is not precedent except in the limited circumstances allowed under Rule 23(e)(1).

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS,	)	Appeal from the
	)	Circuit Court of
Plaintiff-Appellee,	)	Champaign County.
	)	
v.	)	No. 22-CF-1416
	)	
SHAMARIO BROWN,	)	Honorable
	)	Matthew D. Lee,
Defendant-Appellant.	)	Judge, presiding.

PRESIDING JUSTICE CATES delivered the judgment of the court.
Justices Barberis and Vaughan concurred in the judgment.

ORDER

¶ 1 *Held*: The evidence was sufficient to find the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

¶ 2 Following a jury trial, the defendant, Shamario Brown, was found guilty of two counts of attempted first degree murder. The defendant was sentenced to a total of 55 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC). On appeal, the defendant claims that the State used only circumstantial evidence and an unsupported theory of retaliation, thus the evidence failed to prove him guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. The defendant additionally claims that the evidence only supported guilt by association. For the following reasons, we affirm the judgment of the trial court.

¶ 3 I. BACKGROUND

¶ 4 The defendant was indicted by a grand jury for attempted first degree murder and aggravated battery with a firearm in connection with the September 2022 shooting of Annette and

Tom Ramsburg. Counts I and II alleged that the defendant, with the intent to kill, committed attempted first degree murder that "proximately caused great bodily harm" which carried a sentence enhancement of 25 years. The State also charged, in counts III and IV, that the defendant, "or one for whose conduct he [was] legally responsible for," committed the offense of attempted first degree murder, "with the intent to kill" Annette and Tom Ramsburg. The State later sought sentence enhancements of 20 years on counts III and IV. Counts V and VI alleged the defendant committed aggravated battery with a firearm. The defendant pled not guilty to all counts.

¶ 5 After completion of pretrial proceedings, a jury trial commenced on February 10, 2025. Before trial, the parties entered into several stipulations. One of the stipulations read to the jury acknowledged that the defendant had been on trial before in another matter, which was not further explained. The stipulation indicated that the State had called O'Shae Cotton as a witness during the previous trial. The stipulation further indicated that the defendant was acquitted in that previous matter.

¶ 6 Annette Ramsburg was then called as a witness for the State. She testified that on September 8, 2022, at around 2 p.m., she and her husband, Tom Ramsburg, were moving items into their new condominium. Tom was backing their silver gray Jeep Cherokee into their driveway, and Annette was sitting in the passenger seat. Annette noticed that a white car drove slowly by their condominium. (Surveillance footage captured from a camera, across from Annette's condominium, later confirmed that the white vehicle she observed was a white van or crossover SUV.) Before Annette and her husband exited their Jeep, the white vehicle parked down the street and two men got out. Annette heard a loud boom and looked up to see two men standing in her front yard. The men approached the Jeep and Annette saw that one of the men had a "gun pointed directly at us." Annette could not identify the men, but she testified that they were both males,

fairly young, and in street clothes. Further, she stated that the men were wearing what "looked like jeans, sweatshirt or something heavy" and the male that was closest to her was "dark complected."

¶ 7 As a result of the shooting, Tom had a graze wound to his upper right arm and numerous cuts from the broken glass. Annette had a head wound that required 24 stiches. Additionally, Annette was shot in the upper back and suffered a collapsed lung that caused a hematoma. Annette had two surgeries: one to remove the bullet from her back and one to repair scar tissue. A bullet fragment remained behind her right eye. Tom passed away from cancer in 2023.

¶ 8 Several officers testified at the trial. Collectively, they produced the following evidence. Champaign police responded to the shooting and their investigation discovered 20 9-millimeter casings and bullets, one .45-caliber bullet, and one .45-caliber live round at the scene. Near the victims' driveway, in the middle of the road, police found a plastic grocery bag containing a blue bag of popcorn that appeared to have been purchased from a Circle K gas station. Additionally, police recovered a red bag of popcorn in the road with the same Circle K brand on the bag. The second bag was found open and popcorn was scattered about in the road. Police determined that the bags of popcorn were part of the crime scene because they appeared to be recently dropped in the street and undisturbed when police arrived on the scene.

¶ 9 The investigation partially focused on the bags of popcorn, so police requested transaction records from Circle K's corporate office that showed only both types of popcorn being purchased together, about the time of the shooting. A stipulation was read to the jury acknowledging that the bags of popcorn were purchased on September 7, 2022, at a Circle K gas station, located in Urbana, Illinois.

¶ 10 During the course of their investigation, police were able to retrieve 5 fingerprints from the red popcorn bag, no fingerprints from the blue popcorn bag, and 21 fingerprints from the grocery

bag that contained the blue popcorn bag. Four fingerprints from the red bag of popcorn matched a codefendant, Kenichi Townsend. The last fingerprint from the red bag was unidentified. With regard to the fingerprints found on the grocery bag, eight fingerprints matched Townsend, eight matched the defendant, and five were unidentified.

¶ 11 Officers obtained surveillance footage from the Circle K gas station after they confirmed the bags of popcorn had been purchased there. Two men were seen on the surveillance video purchasing the bags of popcorn. Records obtained from the Circle K indicated that the bags of popcorn were purchased with the defendant's supplemental nutritional assistance plan (SNAP) benefits card. The defendant was also identified as one of the individuals purchasing the popcorn, along with a person identified as Javon Mays.

¶ 12 Detectives further investigated the transaction history of the defendant's SNAP benefits card and determined that on September 6, 2022, a transaction was made at a different Circle K. Surveillance footage from that transaction showed the defendant, Mays, and Townsend arriving at the gas station in a white crossover SUV. On September 8, 2022, further investigation into the use of the defendant's SNAP card led detectives to discover a purchase made at a location called the Super Lucky Star mere hours after the shooting. Surveillance footage from the Super Lucky Star showed the defendant, Mays, and Townsend arriving in a van that did not match the description of the car used in the shooting. This footage showed that Townsend was driving, Mays was in the front seat, and the defendant was located in the back of the van. Officers were unable to connect the defendant, Mays, or Townsend to any vehicle records for a white van or SUV.

¶ 13 The defendant had become a suspect in the shooting of Annette and Tom after police tracked the defendant's SNAP benefits card to the purchase of the popcorn bags found at the scene of the shooting. This information had led police to obtain the surveillance footage from the Circle

K and Super Lucky Star, which further confirmed police suspicion of the defendant's involvement. Police had also identified Townsend, Mays, and the defendant as associates.

¶ 14 Thus, on September 12, 2022, Detective James Hobson, employed by the Champaign Police Department, was conducting surveillance in an attempt to locate Townsend and the defendant. Hobson was aware that the information collected by that date suggested that the defendant and Townsend committed the shooting of Annette and Tom because the victims' vehicle matched the vehicle of O'Shae Cotton, who had testified against the defendant in a separate matter. Hobson had also known Townsend from a previous encounter. Hobson observed Townsend and two Black males leave a residence and enter a white conversion van. Hobson observed the vehicle as it drove away from the residence and then observed the van as it circled back to its original parking spot. Fearing that he had been spotted by the men in the van, Hobson repositioned his unmarked squad car and continued his surveillance. The van left again, and Hobson radioed on-duty patrol officers working in the area and asked them to initiate a traffic stop on the van.

¶ 15 The van, at first, pulled over for the stop, but then "took off eastbound from the stop." As police pursued, the van was "driving erratically, weaving out of traffic." The pursuit continued for a couple of minutes until the van became involved in a one-car collision. As the vehicle came to a stop, all three male occupants exited the van and fled the scene on foot in different directions. By this time, multiple officers were involved. During the foot pursuit, Townsend was apprehended and subsequently arrested. A .45-caliber handgun and an additional fully loaded magazine were recovered near the route that Townsend had taken during his attempted escape. Mays was located in the backyard of a residence and arrested. A 9-millimeter handgun was recovered from the front yard of the residence where police found Mays hiding. Another responding officer, who knew the defendant, spotted the defendant in the vicinity of the crash. The defendant, however, avoided

capture at that time, but was eventually arrested for a separate matter and taken to La Salle County jail.

¶ 16 After the arrest of Townsend and Mays who were in the van, officers took DNA swabs from the recovered guns and magazines. The DNA swabs were later compared to DNA samples taken from the defendant, Mays, and Townsend. On one of the magazines, the DNA collected excluded all three individuals as possible matches. The second magazine, that was located next to the recovered .45-caliber handgun, had a DNA mixture of four individuals, including Townsend and the defendant. DNA recovered from the grip of the .45-caliber handgun belonged to three individuals, including the defendant and Townsend. The defendant's DNA was identified as the major contributor. The DNA found on the 9-millimeter handgun excluded the defendant and Mays, but Townsend's DNA was a match.

¶ 17 A fingerprint analysis was done on the .45-caliber magazine that was recovered near the .45-caliber handgun that had been recovered on the route taken by Townsend after his escape from the vehicle on September 12, 2022. There were five unidentified fingerprints and one thumbprint that matched the defendant. Several experts testified at trial as to the reliability of the DNA and fingerprint analysis that connected the defendant to the scene of the shooting and to the .45-caliber firearm that was used in the shooting.

¶ 18 The jury found the defendant guilty of the attempted first degree murder and aggravated assault of Tom and Annette Ramsburg. The jury found the defendant not guilty of personally discharging the firearm in that the State failed to prove that the defendant "discharged a firearm that proximately caused great bodily harm, permanent disfigurement or permanent disability, to another person."

¶ 19 The defense filed a motion for a new trial and raised several claims including insufficiency of the evidence and that the evidence produced at trial was unduly prejudicial. The trial court denied the defendant's motion. At sentencing, the trial court considered whether the defendant was one of the two shooters, regardless of the jury's decision to reject the enhancements. The trial court found that there was "absolutely credible and reliable evidence presented at trial" that the defendant was one of the two shooters. The trial court additionally found that the defendant inflicted severe bodily injury on at least one of the two victims, which triggered mandatory consecutive sentences. Ultimately, the trial court sentenced the defendant to 25 years for the attempted first degree murder of Tom Ramsburg and 30 years for the attempted first degree murder of Annette Ramsburg. The sentences were to be served consecutively for a total of 55 years in IDOC. This appeal followed.

¶ 20 II. ANALYSIS

¶ 21 On appeal, the defendant claims that the State failed to prove the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, where the State used highly circumstantial evidence and an unsupported narrative about an alleged motive from the defendant's prior trial of an unrelated matter. The defendant further claims that the evidence only supported guilt by association.

¶ 22 When reviewing a claim that the State's evidence was insufficient to support a conviction, the relevant question is whether, "after viewing the evidence in the light most favorable to the prosecution, *any* rational trier of fact could have found the essential elements of the crime beyond a reasonable doubt." (Emphasis in original.) *Jackson v. Virginia*, 443 U.S. 307, 319 (1979). Under this standard, "it is the responsibility of the trier of fact to resolve conflicts in the testimony, weigh the evidence, and draw reasonable inferences from the facts." *People v. Gray*, 2017 IL 120958, ¶ 35. Therefore, a reviewing court "will not substitute its judgment for that of the trier of fact on

questions involving the weight of the evidence or the credibility of the witnesses." *Gray*, 2017 IL 120958, ¶ 35. Further, a reviewing court applies this standard regardless of whether the evidence is circumstantial or direct. *People v. Jackson*, 232 Ill. 2d 246, 281 (2009). Circumstantial evidence that meets this standard is sufficient to sustain a criminal conviction. *Jackson*, 232 Ill. 2d at 281.

¶ 23 "A criminal conviction will not be reversed for insufficient evidence unless the evidence is so unreasonable, improbable, or unsatisfactory that it justifies a reasonable doubt of the defendant's guilt." *Gray*, 2017 IL 120958, ¶ 35. However, "merely because the trier of fact accepted certain testimony or made certain inferences based on the evidence does not guarantee the reasonableness of its decision." *People v. Ross*, 229 Ill. 2d 255, 272 (2008).

¶ 24 Here, the State proffered testimony from the victim, expert fingerprint analysis on items found at the scene of the shooting, surveillance camera footage connecting the defendant to the purchase of popcorn found at the shooting, the transaction history of the defendant's SNAP card to purchase the popcorn from the Circle K, evidence connecting the defendant to a firearm used in the shooting, and surveillance camera footage that showed the defendant with a codefendant before and after the shooting. The jury also heard testimony from several experts regarding the fingerprint analysis and DNA evidence obtained from the firearms used in the shooting and the popcorn bags recovered at the scene. The defendant's fingerprints were found on the grocery bags that contained one of the bags of popcorn that was recovered from the crime scene. Police officers traced the purchase of the bags of popcorn to the defendant's SNAP card and obtained surveillance footage from the point of purchase that showed the defendant buying the bags of popcorn that were recovered at the scene.

¶ 25 Furthermore, police officer testimony described the pursuit of the suspects four days after the shooting had taken place. The defendant was identified as one of the individuals who avoided

capture when he fled the scene after the van crashed. Following the pursuit, police officers recovered both handguns used in the shooting of Annette and Tom, which included the .45-caliber handgun. The defendant's DNA and fingerprints were found on the recovered .45-caliber handgun.

¶ 26 The evidence in this case was circumstantial in nature but overwhelmingly connected the defendant to the shooting of Annette and Tom. The jury considered all of the evidence and was allowed to draw reasonable inferences from the evidence produced by the State. See *Gray*, 2017 IL 120958. Based on the evidence and the reasonable inferences, the jury found the defendant guilty of two counts of attempted first degree murder. We find that the evidence, taken in a light most favorable to the State, was not so unreasonable, improbable, or unsatisfactory as to warrant a reversal of the defendant's convictions. Thus, we will not disturb the judgment of the trier of fact. Therefore, we affirm the judgment of the trial court.

¶ 27 III. CONCLUSION

¶ 28 The judgment of the trial court is affirmed.

¶ 29 Affirmed.