

Man pleads guilty to fatally stabbing nephew

Judge sentences him to 25 years in prison

By Dionne Waugh

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Cortez Hamlett loved his aunt Ruby like she was his own mother.

So when she ran into his James Crossing apartment to get away from her estranged husband, Gary Henry Jackson, 41, who had been

choking her, he stepped in.

Hamlett, 20, died five days later on June 26 from stab wounds inflicted by Jackson with a pocketknife.

On Friday, Jackson pleaded guilty to second-degree murder as part of a plea agreement with prosecutors, who had planned to try Jackson on first-degree murder charges in front of a jury in December.

Circuit Judge Leyburn Mosby then sentenced him to 25 years in prison.

"We've had people step in (to help) before, but I've never had the hero die," said Lynchburg Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney Chuck Felmlee after court.

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All murder cases are difficult, but especially a case like this when Cortez Hamlett was standing up for his aunt. Cortez was a true hero.'

Chuck Felmlee,
Lynchburg deputy
commonwealth's attorney