

Man found not guilty in death of ex-girlfriend's 21-month-old son

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WEST PALM BEACH — Radames Torres, accused of abusing and murdering the 21-month-old child of his live-in girlfriend, is not guilty of those crimes, a jury ruled Monday.

The jury began and ended deliberations Monday in the 4-year-old case, announcing at 5:15 p.m. that it had reached a verdict.

Torres, who has been in jail since a day after Louis Roman died of massive head injuries Sept. 30, 1991, said his nightmare is finally over. He buried his head in his hands as the verdict was read and wept. He plans to spend time playing with his grandson who was born while he was in custody, he said.

"It's a long nightmare. I thought I wasn't going to wake up from it," said Torres, 44. "I've got to start breathing some fresh air."

Torres' attorney, Randall Bergman, said the case never should have gone to trial.

"This was a dead-bang winner," he said. "There have since been similar cases that didn't even go to the grand jury. The facts didn't justify any type of motive."



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Prosecuting attorneys hugged Louis Roman's family — his mother, Lourdes, aunt and grandmother, who cried, saying God will be the judge.

"We're extremely disappointed, but we have to abide by the jury's verdict," said prosecutor Paula Russell.

When the baby died, Torres was living with Lourdes Roman and her two sons, Louis and Carlos, who was then 3. The couple had taken Louis to St. Mary's Medical Center with severe head trauma 12 hours before he was disconnected from life-support machines.

The jury learned that Lourdes was taking a shower when she saw Torres putting Louis back into his

bed. Carlos had told him the baby had fallen. Carlos then told him the baby had a bloody nose.

When Lourdes picked up her son, she saw blood oozing from his ear.

The defense raised the possibility that Carlos, who weighed 45 pounds then, could have jumped or fallen onto his younger brother.

Doctors who treated Louis disputed that explanation. But the defense presented testimony from a Maryland medical examiner who had seen a case where an 8-month-old was killed while lying on the floor where older children were jumping from the bed.

The jury asked to rehear that testimony before reaching its verdict.