

UNREPORTED
IN THE APPELLATE COURT
OF MARYLAND

No. 511

September Term, 2024

NAQUAN JAMELL FORDE

v.

STATE OF MARYLAND

Wells, C.J.,
Friedman,
Woodward, Patrick L.
(Senior Judge, Specially Assigned),

JJ.

PER CURIAM

Filed: August 1, 2025

* This is a per curiam opinion. Under Rule 1-104, the opinion is not precedent within the rule of stare decisis nor may it be cited as persuasive authority.

Following a bench trial in the Circuit Court for Baltimore County, Naquan Jamell Forde, appellant, was convicted of two counts of second-degree rape, two counts of third-degree sexual offense, two counts of fourth-degree sexual offense, and two counts of second-degree assault. His sole contention on appeal is that there was insufficient evidence to sustain his convictions because the State failed to prove his criminal agency beyond a reasonable doubt. For the reasons that follow, we shall affirm.

In reviewing the sufficiency of the evidence, we ask “whether, after reviewing 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.” *Ross v. State*, 232 Md. App. 72, 81 (2017) (quotation marks and citation omitted). Furthermore, we “view[] not just the facts, but ‘all rational inferences that arise from the evidence,’ in the light most favorable to the” State. *Smith v. State*, 232 Md. App. 583, 594 (2017) (citation omitted). In this analysis, “[w]e give ‘due regard to the [fact-finder’s] findings of facts, its resolution of conflicting evidence, and, significantly, its opportunity to observe and assess the credibility of witnesses.’” *Potts v. State*, 231 Md. App. 398, 415 (2016) (citation omitted).

The victims in this case, A.R. and A.G., were sisters. Viewed in a light most favorable to the State, the evidence at trial demonstrated that between 2020 and 2022, appellant was dating the victims’ aunt, and would occasionally spend the night at their mother’s house. A.R. testified that, when appellant stayed at her mother’s house, he came into her bedroom and “touched” her multiple times, including putting his penis into her vagina. A.G., who shared a bedroom with A.R., also testified that appellant had touched her, including putting his penis into her “back” private area.

Appellant acknowledges this evidence, but challenges the victims’ credibility, asserting that both they, and their brother, testified inconsistently regarding: (1) the number of beds in their bedroom; (2) whether A.R. had been in the room when appellant sexually abused A.G.; and (3) the number of times he slept over at their mother’s house. He further notes that there were other men who slept overnight at the house who could have committed the offenses and that no physical evidence implicated him as the perpetrator.

However, it is “not a proper sufficiency argument to maintain that the jurors should have placed less weight on the testimony of certain witnesses or should have disbelieved certain witnesses.” *Correll v. State*, 215 Md. App. 483, 502 (2013). That is because “it is the [trier of fact’s] task, not the court’s, to measure the weight of the evidence and to judge the credibility of witnesses.” *State v. Manion*, 442 Md. 419, 431 (2015) (quotation marks and citation omitted). In other words, we defer to the trial court’s resolution of all credibility questions, reconciliation of conflicts in the evidence, and determination of evidentiary weight. *Hayes v. State*, 247 Md. App. 252, 306 (2020).

Here, the victims testified that appellant was the perpetrator of the charged offenses. And that testimony, if believed, was sufficient to establish his criminal agency beyond a reasonable doubt. *See Archer v. State*, 383 Md. 329, 372 (2004) (“It is the well-established rule in Maryland that the testimony of a single eyewitness, if believed, is sufficient evidence to support a conviction.”). Ultimately, the trial court, as the finder of fact, was aware of the inconsistencies in the evidence that appellant now raises on appeal. And it

nevertheless found the victims’ testimony to be credible. Consequently, we hold that there was sufficient evidence to sustain appellant’s convictions.

**JUDGMENTS OF THE CIRCUIT
COURT FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY
AFFIRMED. COSTS TO BE PAID BY
APPELLANT.**