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'Sungazer' killer sent to prison

SANTA CRUZ — One of two suspects convicted of throwing the man known as "The Sungazer" off the San Lorenzo River footbridge was sentenced Thursday to 15 years to life in prison for second-degree murder.

Superior Court Judge William Kelsay imposed the sentence on Gary Randolph Gray, 36.

Gray and Michael Bradley Perrin, 28, were convicted in June of throw-

ing 54-year-old Raul Lopez off the footbridge. Lopez died of his injuries.

Perrin is to be sentenced Sept. 11. Lopez gained the nickname "The Sungazer" for his habit of standing on the Pacific Garden Mall near the Cooper House and staring into the afternoon sun.

Lopez' death touched the heart of the city. When no family came forward to claim his body, townspeople

arranged a service at Holy Cross Church.

When a police officer discovered that Lopez had served in World War II and earned the Purple Heart, local veterans gave him burial with full military honors.

Robbery was the motive for Lopez' murder. A witness testified he saw two men attempt to take a bag of groceries from Lopez. When Lopez resisted, the witness said, Gray and Perrin threw him off the bridge.