



Regina

v.

Paul Thomas ROBSON

Sentencing Remarks

1. Paul Thomas Robson, the jury have found you guilty of the blackmail and murder of Caroline Kayll, your former partner, and the attempted murder of a 15 year old boy.
2. I will not name the boy in these sentencing remarks, because what I am about to say will be reported and there is an order prohibiting the publication, by the press or by anyone else, of his identity or of information which would tend to reveal his identity.
3. When you found that Ms Kayll had started an inappropriate and unlawful relationship with the boy, you used the threat of exposing that relationship to make her pay you £29,000 in 8 instalments between 1 and 11 November 2020.

4. Then on 15 November 2020 you went to her home in Linton, about 20 miles north of here, and, when she let you in, you grabbed her, causing bruises to her arms, she fell or was pushed to the floor and you kicked her repeatedly in the face and head with your steel toe-capped boots, fracturing the bones in her face and causing cardiac arrest and fatal brain injuries. In effect, you used those boots as fatal weapons. Not content with that, you slashed her buttocks with a knife and you sprayed an ammonia solution on her.
5. You ended her life and you brought grief and misery to the lives of others. Her ex-husband, Ian Kayll, has said that there are absolutely no words to describe her family's feelings about her loss.
6. You repeatedly attacked the boy, first with scissors, then with a kitchen knife and finally with a meat cleaver. He sustained at least 29 injuries caused by one or other of these weapons. Some of the injuries to his hands were sustained as he tried to defend himself and to grab the blade of the knife. You hit him so hard on the face with the meat cleaver that you broke his maxillary sinus bone. Fortunately, you did not damage a major blood vessel, with the result that his injuries, although gruesome, were not life-threatening. You also bit him four times and sprayed the ammonia solution in his face.

7. His mother has made a very moving statement about the profound effects of your actions on the boy and his family. He is still undergoing medical treatment and he is, understandably, particularly concerned by the scars to his face, which will be a constant reminder to him of his encounter with you. He has post-traumatic stress disorder. He has flashbacks and he has difficulty sleeping, as does his mother.
8. She says that, “The last few months have been a living nightmare for us and have left us all in utter turmoil. None of our lives will ever be the same again. The events that took place on November 15th will haunt us forever.”
9. Less than 5 months have passed since you committed these awful crimes. It is to the credit of all concerned in the investigation of your offences that you have been brought to justice so swiftly.
10. For the murder of Ms Kayll, I have to impose a sentence of life imprisonment. However, I also have to decide the minimum term which you will serve before you are eligible to be considered for release by the Parole Board.
11. It is important that you, and everyone concerned with this case, should understand what a minimum term means. A minimum term is not a fixed term after which you will automatically be released. It is the minimum time which you will spend in custody before your case can be considered

by the Parole Board. It will then be for the Parole Board to say whether or not you will be released. If they do not, you will remain in custody.

12. If and when you are released, you will still be subject to licence. This will remain the case for the rest of your life. If for any reason your licence were to be revoked, you would be recalled to prison to continue to serve your life sentence in custody.
13. You had bought a bottle of ammonia earlier that day in Glasgow, decanted some of it into an empty washing-up liquid bottle and diluted it. I am sure that you chose a washing-up liquid bottle because you wanted to be able to spray the ammonia and the bottle was a weapon which you took to the house intending to use it on Ms Kayll or at least to have it available to use as a weapon. Moreover, you used that weapon on Ms Kayll when you were killing her.
14. As your counsel rightly accepts, the seriousness of your offence is particularly high and the law says that the starting point in such a case is a minimum term of 30 years, although I recognise that that is the starting point for a double murder, whereas you committed a murder and an attempted murder. I have to consider whether I should adjust that figure up or down, so I have to consider all of the aggravating and mitigating factors.

15. The aggravating factors are as follows:

- (1) I am sure that your attack on Ms Kayll was the subject of a particularly significant degree of premeditation as you drove for two and a half hours from Glasgow to Linton, intent on a violent confrontation with the unsuspecting Ms Kayll, if she was at home, and carrying with you the weapon which you had fashioned, namely the ammonia solution in the washing-up liquid bottle, and which you used on Ms Kayll and the boy, albeit towards the end of the incident and without causing any specific injury.
- (2) You killed your former partner in the home which you had shared. This was domestic abuse as that term is defined in the sentencing guideline on domestic abuse and such offences are regarded as particularly serious. In this case, for instance, Ms Kayll would not have let a stranger into her house, but she let you in because of your relationship and you took advantage of that.
- (3) As well as killing her, you used gratuitous violence on her as she lay dying, slashing her buttocks with the knife or the meat cleaver.
- (4) When you killed her, you were on licence and, indeed, unlawfully at large, having been recalled to serve the balance of a 10 year sentence on 1 March 2019.

- (5) You have an extensive criminal record, including some violent offences and some offences involving weapons. You have convictions for 91 offences, including aggravated burglary (of which you were convicted in 1993), possession of ammunition (1998), conspiracy to steal lorries (2001), inflicting grievous bodily harm (2002), when you punched an 18 year old girl in the face and broke both sides of her jaw, possessing heroin with intent to supply (2005 and 2014) and possession of a stun gun, i.e. a taser disguised as a mobile phone (2014).
- (6) Not content with the £29,000 which you had received from her as a result of your blackmail, you took her bank card and tried on the next day to extract more money from her bank account.
- (7) You also took the knife and the meat cleaver away with you and got rid of them. In addition, you took her mobile telephone and his. You changed the PIN on his and it cannot now be accessed. You disposed of your two mobile telephones and the boots and clothes which you were wearing. You did all of this in order to conceal evidence of what you had done.
- (8) Rather than own up to what you had done, you blamed the boy and advanced as your defence at trial the false and incredible claim that he had hit you, strangled you and rendered you unconscious, then

murdered Ms Kayll while you were unconscious and, finally, when you came round, attacked you with a knife, prompting you to injure him in self-defence, while remaining unharmed yourself. As a result, this troubled young man was obliged to face these serious allegations, which, although sensitively put to him by your counsel, unnecessarily increased the suffering which you had caused.

16. There are no mitigating factors. In particular, the jury were sure that you intended to kill the boy and I am sure that, when you stood over this defenceless woman and kicked her in the head and face with your steel toe-capped boots, you intended to kill her. I do not accept the submission that there was any element of provocation. You were upset when you learnt of her relationship with the boy, but you had known of it for over two weeks before you chose to drive from Glasgow to her home.
17. Were I sentencing you for the attempted murder alone, I would have to consider whether to impose a life sentence for that offence. I need not do so, however, since I will be imposing a life sentence for the murder.
18. If you had killed the boy, this would have been a double murder. Instead, you caused him serious and long-term physical and psychological harm. In those circumstances, for the offence of attempted murder, the guidelines say that the starting point is 30 years' imprisonment. Again, I have to consider the aggravating and mitigating factors.

19. Your previous convictions, the fact that you were on licence and unlawfully at large and your concealment of evidence are aggravating factors, as is your use of a series of bladed weapons against a child, and a vulnerable child at that, in a sustained and frenzied attack. You yourself said that you went berserk and over the top.
20. There are no mitigating factors, save that you fetched a neighbour who called the emergency services and began the process of caring for the boy.
21. As for the blackmail, your previous convictions, the fact that you were on licence and unlawfully at large and your concealment of evidence are again aggravating factors, as are the nature of the threat, since exposure would have cost Ms Kayll her career, and the amount which you obtained from her, which largely cleaned out her bank accounts and required her to take out a loan for £10,500.
22. Once again, there are no mitigating factors.
23. There will be confiscation proceedings as a result of the blackmail. I postpone those, and consideration of any compensation order, to another day.
24. I have to impose a total sentence which reflects all of your offending behaviour and which is just and proportionate. I will do that by imposing concurrent sentences, while increasing the minimum term on the life

sentence above what it would have been if I had been sentencing you for the murder alone.

25. Paul Thomas Robson, for murder I impose on you a sentence of life imprisonment. I fix the minimum term which you will serve in custody at 35 years.
26. I impose concurrent sentences of:
 - (1) 35 years' imprisonment for attempted murder; and
 - (2) 5 years' imprisonment for blackmail.
27. Since they are concurrent, these will not affect the total length of your sentence.

Mr Justice Lavender

31 March 2021