

R v Matvei Rumiantsev

Sentencing Remarks

Snaresbrook Crown Court

27 March 2026

1. On the night of 17th to the 18th January 2025 the police received calls from a woman, screaming and distraught. They were from the Complainant in this case, who had been your girlfriend. The reason she was so distraught was that she was being battered by you. After you were arrested you made repeated efforts to get her to drop the case so as to avoid facing justice for your own drunken criminal violence that night.
2. You denied these offences and there was a trial at which you were convicted of them but acquitted of a number of other allegations. That history has two consequences. First, as Ms Wass KC has stressed on your behalf, I need to be careful to exclude those unproven allegations from my deliberations. Second, I have heard and seen you and the Complainant give evidence so I am able to reach factual conclusions about the nature of the two crimes for which I have to sentence you, as long as I am sure of them.
3. The background was that you and the Complainant had been dating, on and off, for several months. Physically she is a slight woman. You are bigger, heavier and stronger and have engaged in martial arts. You are a man given to jealousy and you have a temper. There was an incident a few months before the assaults of January 2025 in which you lost it and broke some of her property in her flat. Your lack of insight and empathy was apparent at trial and is also made plain in the Pre-Sentence Report in which you continue to try to blame the Complainant for everything that has happened. I note that report writes that you pose a high risk of serious harm to future female partners. I have been taken to a letter from a volunteer counsellor in prison and you yourself have written a letter for today's hearing: In neither is there any proper acceptance of the blame you, and only you,

carry for the attack on your victim. You write that you “*acknowledge that, on the night of 17-18 January, my actions were inappropriate*”. That is a very long way from you facing up to the simple truth of what happened that night.

4. On 17th January you had spent the day together. At times the two of you argued. By the evening you were drunk. You argued some more. At trial a lot of time was taken by you and the Complainant talking about the source of the arguments. That doesn't matter. People are allowed to argue, lots of people do. Later that night you snapped and attacked the Complainant. The jury were not sure you deliberately seized her round the neck during the course of that attack, but that is all that can be said on your behalf. On the basis of the timing of the various 999 calls and the evidence of the Complainant, I am sure you hit her multiple times over a prolonged period in the region of an hour. For whatever reason the police never subjected the Complainant to a whole-body examination, so the list of her injuries simply comes about as she saw them and sent photographs to the officer dealing with her case. The injuries we know about are a bruise on left arm, a bruise to the inside of her left elbow, bruising to her right wrist, a bruise on her chin, a bruise on her right jaw line, reddening around her left eye, a bruise to her left shoulder, a triangular bruise on the outer aspect of her left thigh, scratches to the side of her hip, four largely vertical scratches around her waist, a cut on her right index finger, and a clump of hair that fell out after the attack. They are not the most serious injuries these courts see, but the sheer number of them, all over her body, makes your case more serious than an assault that only left a bruise or two.

5. The Complainant twice called 999 but you took the phone off her to stop her getting help. She managed to get out of the flat, half dressed and injured, and banged on a neighbour's door, only to have you drag her back into the flat by her hair. At one stage in the violence there was a call to or from her friend Barron Trump. He saw you beating her up and you held the phone and filmed her, an angry act to humiliate her. Mr Trump properly and responsibly, despite being in the United States, made sure the emergency services here were called, and he told them what he had seen. This all finally ended when the neighbours whose door

the Complainant had run to called security in the flats and they knocked on your door, whereupon the Complainant ran out and hid behind them.

6. The acts that amounted to perverting the course of justice were your phoning the Complainant from the police station within 12 hours of your arrest, your urging a friend to make contact with her, and you writing a letter for that friend to pass on to her. Much was made in the trial of the fact the police station staff should not have let you call her, but it was your choice and done when you knew full well, for all your later lies, that you had attacked her. The prison call about four days later showed that you were urging a friend to continue making contact with her, and asking him to deliver a letter begging her to withdraw her cooperation with the police. This was not a case of a single panicked attempt, it was a sustained course of action against a woman who you knew had loved you, and who you knew was very vulnerable. It is right to say she made her first withdrawal statement before she got the letter, though she had been told it was on its way, but nonetheless your actions from the day of your arrest made clear to her what you wanted to happen and later messages, then the letter, drilled that home. The consequence was a prosecution in which police time was used and the police, Crown Prosecution Service and the Court were uncertain if the central witness would attend court.

7. You were 21 at the time of these offences, you are now 22. You had no previous convictions. Those are both significant pieces of mitigation. I have received and read character references from people who know you very well: they write of you being reliable, honest and able to learn from your experiences, of being intelligent, calm and respectful, and of your being kind and compassionate. I do not doubt those are the honestly held views of those who took the trouble to write the references, though your conduct towards the Complainant, after your arrest, and in parts of your testimony at trial are all at odds with those many commendable qualities. In addition, your history of jealousy and anger in a domestic context means I have to give limited weight to those views, but nonetheless I keep them in mind and they very much underline your previous good character.

8. It was submitted on your behalf that I should take into consideration that you stand to be deported at the end of your sentence and that you would then be conscripted and might be sent to the war in Ukraine. Those are not matters that can lead me to vary what would otherwise be the correct sentence. As a matter of principle judges should not adjust their sentencing to anticipate, or somehow balance out, what Parliament has decided should be the consequence of a particular sentence (see *R v Mintchev* [2011] EWCA Crim 499). As a matter of practicality I do not know if you will actually be deported or if some basis is found to delay or argue against it, and even if you are for all I know the Russian system in its current state may allow for the children of the wealthy to avoid the dangers of conscription and war. I simply do not know.

9. I heard the Complainant give evidence and I have read her Victim Impact Statement. A point made on your behalf is that in the statement she writes on the basis of all the allegations made against you whereas the jury were unsure of some. I acknowledge that but I have heard her give evidence, heard her 999 calls from inside the flat, and seen the police's body worn footage of her speaking to them in the moments after she escaped. I am sure that a great deal of the trauma she describes is directly related to the attack on her of which you have been convicted. She writes of the shame and the fear, of the lasting effect that meant she almost lost her place at college, of the humiliation of being filmed as you attacked her. She writes that she thought she could not escape and that she might die: You knew she was a vulnerable, emotional young woman when you attacked her. I recall that in her first 999 call she said, "*please help me I'm gonna get killed*". I am in no doubt whatsoever that was exactly how she felt.

10. The Prosecution seek a restraining order for 7 years duration banning you from contacting the Complainant directly or indirectly. The power to do so is contained in section 360 of the Sentencing Act 2020 the relevant part of which states that the court may make a restraining order against an offender for the purpose of protecting the victim of the offence from conduct which amounts to harassment,

or will cause a fear of violence. The exercise of that power was discussed in the Court of Appeal case of *Awan* [2019] EWCA Crim 1456. That judgment, so far as is relevant to your case, states that the court should take into account the views of the person to be protected, no order should be made unless the judge concludes that it is necessary in order to protect the victim, and the terms of the order should be proportionate to the harm which it is sought to prevent. You are, judging by the pre-sentence report, totally unrepentant and still blame the Complainant for all your offending. It is at least conceivable you will not be deported for some reason or other. You committed two serious offences against the Complainant. She is a vulnerable young woman. She has been through enough already without living with the fear you will reemerge into her life. The only term of the order is that you do not contact her, which is the most minimal interference with your rights. It is both necessary and proportionate, so I make the order in the terms sought. That means if at any time in the next 7 years you contact the Complainant directly or indirectly, you will be committing an offence which can be punished by up to 5 years' imprisonment.

11. On the basis the police will remove all the data from it, I decline to order the forfeiture of your phone as it hardly features in the two offences. It is tempting to order costs as your family is obviously a wealthy one, but as you yourself have no proven funds, you are in custody, and you should be deported, I do not think the criteria are met for me to do so, so I do not. The statutory surcharge will apply in an amount to be notified.

12. I have considered the Sentencing Council guideline for the offence of assault occasioning actual bodily harm. Within that guideline this offence is culpability A because this was a prolonged and persistent assault, the harm falls in category 2 as both the number of injuries and the grievous and lasting upset are well above the lower level of having limited impact on the victim. That leads to a starting point of 1 ½ years custody with a range of 36 weeks to 2 ½ years. There are numerous further aggravating factors:

- (1) She was physically and emotionally vulnerable given the vast disparity in size and her emotional vulnerability.
- (2) You were drunk.
- (3) You prevented her from seeking help, by snatching her phone from her hand when she dialled 999 and dragging her back into your flat by her hair when she escaped out of the front door.
- (4) In the middle of the assault you filmed her on that Face Time call with her friend Barron Trump. It is a sad fact that in cases like this, an innocent victim still feels shame and embarrassment at having been attacked.
- (5) This was domestic abuse as defined by the Sentencing Council, a significant aggravating factor.

13. The aggravating factors are so substantial that, before making any allowance for mitigation, they take the proper sentence for this assault to above the range, to 3 years' imprisonment.

14. I have considered the Sentencing Council guideline for the offence of perverting the course of justice. It is true that the period over which I can be sure you were working to get the Complainant to drop the case against you was only about a week or slightly less, but it was sustained and there were three strands shown in evidence, the call from the station, the general encouragement to your friend to make contact with her, and the letter. It was planned as you knew you could not send a letter direct to the Complainant from prison, so you sent it to your friend then arranged for him to deliver it. That is sufficient to place the offence within Culpability category A. It is harm category 2 as there was some impact. That leads to a starting point of 2 years with a range of 1 to 4 years. There are the aggravating factors of the Complainant's vulnerability and the domestic context. Taken together that would lead me to impose a sentence of 3 years' custody.

15. With that total of 6 years in mind I reduce the sentence to allow for the mitigation I have already identified and to make some allowance for totality, though sentences for perverting need to attract distinct and consecutive sentences to

deter those facing prosecution from thinking they may as well try to derail the process as it won't make much difference.

16. The total and effective sentence I pass therefore is 4 years imprisonment, made up of 2 years for each offence, the two terms being consecutive to one another. The time you have already served will count towards that sentence. In addition I certify that you have spent 37 days on a qualifying curfew and I direct that 19 days will count towards your sentence: If it is later found that calculation is wrong it will be put right by a correction of the court record without any need for a further hearing. That sentence should mean you are automatically liable to deportation but if for whatever reason you are not, you will be released on licence after serving 40% of the 4 years, but will remain on licence and subject to recall to custody if you breach the terms of that licence for the rest of that time.

Joel Bennathan

27.3.26