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# IRISH DAILY STAR

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## FOOT TO THE FOUR

## ASHLING PARTNER SPEAKS

# BETRAYED BY THE JUSTICE MINISTER

**THE** boyfriend of murder victim Ashling Murphy says he and her loved ones have been let down by the Justice system.

**Ryan Casey, 27,** says then Minister for Justice Helen McEntee vowed to give judges the power to introduce

**Paul HEALY** minimum sentences before killer Jozef Puska was sentenced but never did.

He also spoke of his disgust at being labelled as "far right" over his powerful victim impact statement.



**TORN APART:** Ryan Casey today speaks of his heartache and loss after Ashling was brutally slain

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**VOW:** Then Justice Minister Helen McEntee and killer Puska

■ **Promised laws too late to keep teacher's evil killer caged** | ■ **He blasts 'far right' claims over witness impact statement**

# MURDERED ASHLING'S PARTNER

## EXCLUSIVE

BY PAUL HEALY  
Crime Correspondent



**THE boyfriend of murder victim Ashling Murphy insists: "I'm not far right and I didn't incite violence."**

Ryan Casey, 27, feels he has been censored and silenced ever since having to take a defamation case against the BBC over comments that were made about his victim impact statement on their programme The View by journalist Kitty Holland back in 2023.

Speaking for the first time after settling his case against the broadcaster, Ryan opened up to us about:

● **Being labelled as "far right" and having the powerful victim impact statement he delivered in court in November 2022 be censored and misinterpreted by others.**

● **The horrific murder of his soulmate Ashling, 23, who was attacked in broad daylight by monster Jozef Puska while she was out for a run at the Grand Canal Way in Cappincur, near Tullamore Co Offaly on January 12, 2022.**

● **His regret over his final meeting with Ashling two days prior and the harrowing moment when he rushed to the scene, and realised the horror of what had happened.**

● **How then Minister for Justice Helen McEntee and the justice system let him down over a promise to give judges the power to introduce minimum sentences before Puska was to be sentenced.**

Ryan told us he felt he needed to take the case against the BBC after comments made by Ms Holland asserting that aspects of his victim impact statement, read out in court during Puska's sentencing in November 2022, were "not good" and were

**"There's some things you wish did not happen, but I did the right thing"**

RYAN CASEY ON HIS VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT

"incitement to hatred".

Speaking yesterday from his family home in an exclusive Shattered Lives podcast out today Ryan told us: "I don't think there's a word of it that is incitement to hatred or appealing to any of this far right stuff that everyone likes to call everyone nowadays that has an opposing opinion or any concerns about the safety of the country and stuff."

He also stated he was rejecting any notion his statement – directed at Puska, who came to this country in 2013, never worked and lived off the State – in stark contrast to Ashling, was in any way "anti-immigration".

He said: "If it [the victim impact statement] led anyone to believe I was anti-immigration, like shame on you, because read the whole statement and you clearly know I'm not anti-immigration at all.

"Immigration for this country has been an amazing thing.

"This is what the problem is,



# 'I'm not far right and I didn't incite violence... I stand over my statement'

**Ryan Casey speaks out after settling BBC defamation case**



MISSED A memorial placed for Ashling



COMMENTS Kitty Holland

the labelling and just the thought that someone from those two words might think I'm anti-immigration.

"It is what it is and I have no problem in saying I stand over that statement today even more so than ever before."

The brave young man, who says he feels he has been "muzzled" for the past three years amid the defa-



BRUTAL Ashling Murphy was stabbed to death by Jozef Puska

mation case, says he now wants to take back his story and speak out.

He also revealed those powerful victim impact statements were never in his mind intended for public consumption.

Ryan explained: "It wasn't a public statement. It was a statement for the court record, and to the judge and Jozef Puska.

"We didn't want the media in the room. We were requesting this and we were told no, the media have the right to be in the room.

"Look it, I don't regret wearing my heart on my sleeve. Some things you wish didn't happen but I did the right thing."

Asked about the day Puska is released and if he fears that moment Ryan told us: "Do I fear it? Personally?

I don't know, I think he's the one that should be afraid if he's ever released.

"That's my feeling on it. I think it's in his best interest if he stays where he is."

He also spoke of his infatuation that Puska, now housed in the Midlands Prison, is being taught English at the expense of the taxpayer.

He added: "To the tune of about €1,250 per prisoner to get an English lesson. I looked into it and I found it out. He would have been better off maybe learning English when he got here. It might have helped him get a job. Like I said I'm all for reform but there has to be levels to it.

"Like why are we as the taxpayer funding a guy that committed such an atrocity, to learn English. God damn it, what are we like? We're so soft."

The heartbroken young man also

opened up about the harrowing moment he received a call to be told something awful had happened to the love of his life on the afternoon of January 12, 2022.

He last spoke to Ashling in person on the 10th – a stark memory now etched in his brain after they decided not to touch one another due to Covid restrictions.

He said: "We had Covid in the house at the time. I didn't have it but we were isolating.

"And she had done the shopping for us on the 10th, so we couldn't go anywhere.

"She brought in the shopping and she left it at the doorstep and I brought it in. There was a moment.

"She was just about to sit into her car and we kind of latched eyes for a

# 'MUZZLED FOR PAST 3 YEARS'

## JUSTICE MINISTER 'LET US ALL DOWN'

RYAN Casey says he feels let down by then Minister for Justice Helen McEntee after she failed to bring in minimum sentences for killers like Jozef Puska - following her personal promise to him that she would.

He now wants to reveal what he says was a private meeting in early 2022, where he says Ms McEntee vowed that legislation giving powers to judges to hand down minimum prison terms to ruthless killers, would be in place before Puska was convicted.

However the legislation has still not been enacted - and Ryan says he feels let down by her and the justice system.

Even at the time of Puska's sentencing, presiding Judge Tony Hunt expressed his frustration that his hands were tied, stating it was "long past time that judges have some say in setting what the minimum terms should be".

Ryan said: "We were promised this in early 2022. She [the Minister] said it right to us, right to me, to the Murphys.

"She literally said we will have this in place by the time if he's been convicted he will see the full force of the law in this country. I'm talking a month or two after it happened initially. It was said to us in the Murphy's sitting room."

And Ryan believes remorseless Puska, who knifed Ashling 11 times in the neck in a horrific broad daylight attack, should die behind bars.

"He should never see the light of day. That's what I think," he said.

But Ryan, who is 27, also told how Puska could, in fact, be released when he is in his 40s. He said: "The

BY PAUL HEALY  
Crime Correspondent

average has come up a little bit in recent years but the average is 21 years. That's crazy. That's not life.

"I know our prisons are places of reform but there has to be categories to it. It has to depend on the nature of the crime.

"It's all talk and very little action. I'm not a politician, I'm not a barrister or a State legislator but how is that a hard piece of legislation to pass and bring in and run through the Dail?

### SYSTEM

"I don't think anyone would have any argument with it," he said.

Asked if he felt let down by Ms McEntee and the government Ryan said: "Yeah absolutely. We all do. The justice system let us down.

"When you're promised the change will come in the

time before that trial, don't make that promise if you can't meet it.

"That's infuriating to know that he was sentenced then to life and for Tony Hunt to make those comments.

"It's even more infuriating because it just highlights the fact that they didn't even try. They done nothing. And it can't be done retrospectively."

This paper directly contacted Ms McEntee about Ryan's claims and she did not respond - while a spokesperson for her current Department of Education said we should refer our query to the Department of Justice, which is now headed by Jim O'Callaghan.

The Department of Justice did not return a comment before this article went to print.



### LOVE OF HIS LIFE

Ryan Casey with his partner, murdered school teacher Ashling Murphy



“Why didn't I just say feck the [Covid] restrictions the last time we met. Huge regret.

RYAN CASEY YESTERDAY RECALLING LAST TIME HE SAW GIRLFRIEND ASHLING

## He tells of seeing her for last ever time

"She was just about to sit into her car and we kind of latched eyes for a second. I can't even describe it. In the aftermath I thought about it a lot.

"Huge regret around that moment obviously. Why didn't I just say feck the restrictions, who cares.

"Why didn't I just hold her."

They stayed chatting over the phone the next day, Ryan said, and were

texting on the morning before Ashling went for her run.

He said: "We said our goodnights I suppose on the 11th, a little bit past midnight into the early hours of the 12th. I still have those text messages. That would have been the last time I spoke to her.

"Ashling had gone running on the 11th, and considered her run along Grand Canal Way - a busy and popular spot, to be safe.

"This is the thing that's most killing about it. She done nothing wrong."

Ryan revealed how he felt something was up by the evening of the 12th

- and he felt compelled to call Ashling.

He said: "Something got into me on the 12th. It got to maybe five o'clock, maybe half five. Something inside of me just said you know what I'm sick of these frustrations, I don't care and so I rang her.

"I would have text her maybe two, three o'clock. She would have been just finishing school.

"I would have text her I said feck these restrictions, I'm sick of not being able to see you, let's go for a McDonalds or something. I got no response for a couple of hours, which would be unusual.

"I tried to ring her again, I got no answer. A couple of hours went by and I think I rang Ray [Ashling's father]. Ray didn't answer either.

"Ray eventually I suppose rang back

and he didn't tell me initially. He was just distraught and he was telling me 'you need to come over'.

"I never thought it was anything that serious. Dad drove me over and I remember being on the way over with rattles and shakes.

"I just got to the house, cars everywhere and that's when you got a sick feeling, you know?

"One of her cousins came out to me and just hugged me and I think I was just hysterical to be honest. At that stage I knew what the hell's going on.

"No one would tell me obviously. Then I was brought into the front room and they told me then. I don't remember much after that."

It was some time before Ryan would learn the full harrowing facts - that Puska stalked Ashling and attacked her at random - stabbing her multiple times.

The next part of the process was even more difficult for Ryan as gardai investigating the murder had to ask him difficult questions.

He explained: "They have to ask their questions as far as the initial investigation. They're asking you questions for obvious reasons."

**You can watch the entire Shattered Lives podcast interview with Ryan Casey via YouTube. You can also listen to the podcast on Spotify or Apple Podcasts.**

**PART TWO TOMORROW: Ryan speaks about facing evil Puska in court, his political ambitions and more**

OPENING UP  
Reporter Paul Healy  
interviews Ryan

