



# MIRROR

IRISH DAILY

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NOVEMBER 29, 2022

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## Great Scott

I'm a Celeb  
Jill set to  
earn €1m

SEE PAGE 3



Portugal  
power  
on to  
last 16

World  
Cup pullout  
inside



# They're red hot for revenge

SEE PAGES 8,9 PLUS SPORT

Wales  
fear Lions  
backlash



## DOG ATTACK HORROR

# BOY, 9 MAULED BY PITBULL



TRAUMATISED Young Alejandro Mizsan, before and after being attacked

### EXCLUSIVE

BY JOHN HAND Chief Reporter

**A NINE-YEAR-OLD boy is lucky to be alive after he was mauled by a pitbull while playing near his home.**

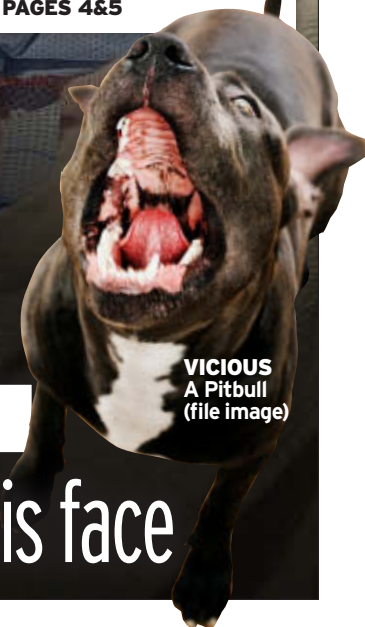
Alejandro Mizsan was on a green in the Old Forge Road estate in Enniscorthy, Wexford on Sunday afternoon when he

was attacked. His older brother Raul said: "He will never be the same again."

Alejandro's face was ripped apart, with his bottom lip and cheeks torn off along with extensive damage near his left eye.

He has already undergone two surgeries and faces more operations as he recovers.

SEE PAGES 4&5



VICIOUS A Pitbull (file image)

Alejandro to undergo more operations to repair damage to his face

# 1.6m viewers watch Toy Show

BY DANNY DE VAAL

MORE than 1.6 million viewers tuned in to watch last Friday's Late Late Toy Show – making it the most-watched programme on Irish TV this year, RTE has confirmed.

The national broadcaster also revealed the Wizard of Oz-themed special had 303,000 streams on the RTE Player across the weekend from more than 139 countries.

It also announced viewers donated €3.8million to help children's charities across Ireland in this year's Toy Show Appeal. This



STARS Tubridy and Saoibh Loneragan

brings the total amount raised to €17million since 2020.

Host Ryan Tubridy said: "Friday night was a joy to be part of and that is exactly what I was. I was part of a big Toy Show family gath-

ering. That is to say, people working behind the scenes and the children who participated.

"The reaction has been very gratifying and very heartening.

"I just got the sense that people wanted a night off from reality, they wanted a night to smile, laugh and cry together."

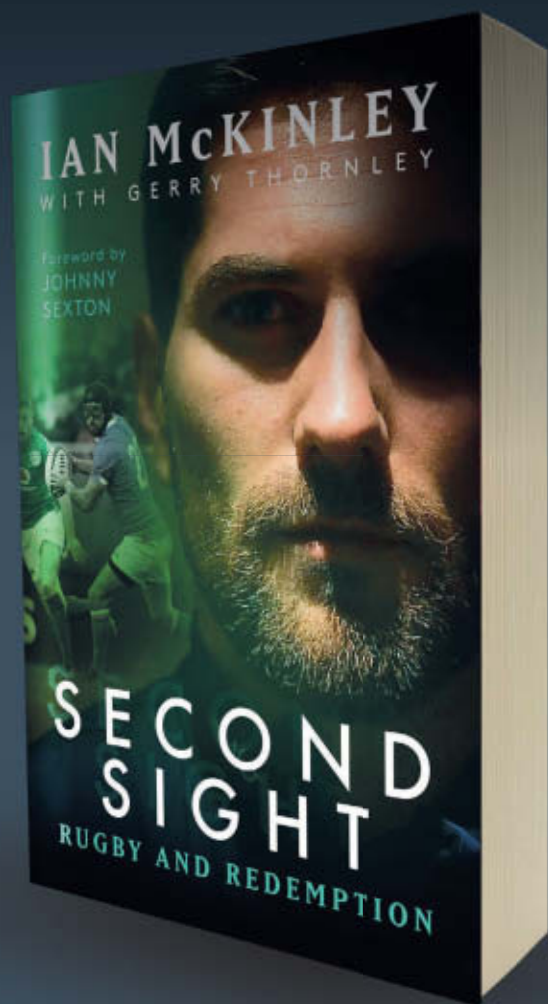
It comes as Montrose chiefs said over the last week the hashtag LateLateToyShow received 39.2 million views on TikTok as the nation prepared and enjoyed the annual toy bonanza.

## SEEING IS BELIEVING

Blinded in one eye and told he would never play rugby again...

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But Ian McKinley never gave in...



'You couldn't have made up his story' Johnny Sexton

'Brilliant. A compelling read' The Late Late Show

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# YOUNGSTER MAULED BY DOG AS HE PLAYED



RECOVERING Alejandro in his hospital bed

### EXCLUSIVE

BY JOHN HAND Chief Reporter

**THE older brother of a nine-year-old boy who was viciously mauled by a pitbull revealed his family's devastation and said: "He will never be the same again."**

Alejandro Miszan was playing on a green area of the Old Forge Road estate in Enniscorthy, Co Wexford, on Sunday afternoon when he was attacked.

His face was ripped apart, his bottom lip and each of his cheeks torn off, with extensive damage near his left eye. He also suffered serious leg injuries.

The family gave the Irish Mirror pictures of Alejandro and permission to use them which show what damage such dogs can do.

The sustained attack by the unmuzzled animal – which was roaming the estate freely – was only interrupted when heroic neighbours stopped as they drove by.

The mum and her two sons jumped out of the car to scare the dog away and called 999.

After emergency services arrived, the child was brought to nearby GAA grounds where the Irish Coast Guard's Rescue 117 helicopter airlifted the boy to Crumlin Children's Hospital in Dublin.

Alejandro underwent emergency surgery on Sunday night before another one yesterday.

In an exclusive interview with the Irish Mirror, his brother Raul, 21, revealed his family's pain.

He said "We're devastated. We don't have words to describe the feeling we have now. My little brother is only nine years old. The pitbull nearly killed him. "The pitbull destroyed him. He is in never be the same again. His face is in bits. It's just terrible.

"My brother's life is destroyed. He will not be a normal kid like he used to be ever again.

"We don't know what to do or how to act, we're just in shock. We just thank God he's still alive.

"My brother is a very strong boy and he survived.

"You can only see his nose and his eyes, the rest you cannot see anything."

Raul also explained medics at Crumlin Children's Hospital were stunned the youngster survived the attack.

He added: "Even the doctors, when they saw my brother, they said they had never seen anything like this before and they are surprised he's still alive."

Raul said his sibling will have many more surgeries as he recovers from the incident. He has received skin grafts



BEFORE Alejandro Miszan, 9



FEROCIOUS Pitbull dog (file image)

**"It's a miracle that he is still alive. We truly believe only God can fix this"**

RAUL MISZAN ON INJURIES HIS BROTHER SUSTAINED IN ATTACK

to the face and an extensive amount of stitches.

Raul added: "Everybody loves my brother. He's very popular there, our community, everybody loves him. He's a very good kid to everyone, friendly.

"It's a miracle that he is still alive. We truly believe only God can fix this.

"Nobody can bring my brother back again the same."

The Miszan family are originally from

# 'The pitbull nearly killed him, he will never be the same again'

## Brother reveals horror ordeal of Alejandro, 9



SCENE Old Forge Road Estate in Enniscorthy, where attack took place

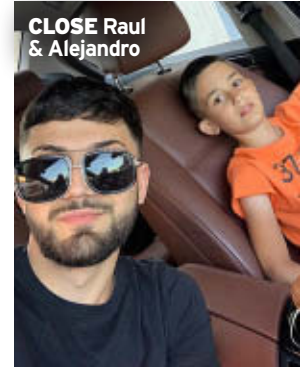


EMERGENCY Air ambulance transports boy



TOUGH FIGHT Injuries on Alejandro Miszan

Pictures: MICK O'NEILL



CLOSE Raul & Alejandro

undergoing treatment for serious injuries. The dog has since been destroyed.

In June, another pitbull cross attacked a small child in the south of the city.

Last year, a 12-year-old needed 150 stitches after his face was badly damaged in a dog attack.

The incident coincides with a major rise of maulings over the past five years.

Between 2016 and 2021, there have been more than 1,700 attacks on people by dogs.

news@irishmirror.ie

Romania. They have lived in Ireland for more than 10 years and in the new estate where the incident happened for about a year.

Raul explained his mum and little sister are struggling to cope.

He said: "My mum is very stressed. My sister is five, she is crying. She is not eating or drinking."

Family friend and neighbour Alfredo Barbu yesterday told us Alejandro had only called to his house 20 minutes before he was mauled.

The Irish Mirror has obtained footage of the pitbull which carried out the attack. The animal has been put down.

But Raul has told us that the same dog also targeted children just days before his brother was attacked and does not understand why it was let out freely in the estate again.

He told the Mirror: "My brother was just playing like every other kid.

"All the kids go out and play football or whatever. This is not our fault.

"It could be anyone's kids. But not only did the dog attack my brother, he attacked another two kids a few days

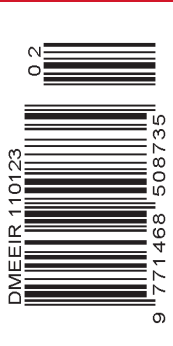
before and nobody said nothing. The dog was out in the estate.

"But it was a very dangerous dog. If an adult was attacked it would be the same situation as my brother."

It is understood the dog owner has yet to be located by gardai following the incident.

In a statement, a Garda spokesman said: "A child [male] received serious injuries after being allegedly attacked by a dog.

"The child was later airlifted to the CHI at Crumlin in Dublin where he is



# IRISH DAILY Mirror

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## Price hike's stout of order

SEE PAGE 5

## United fronts... Red Devils and Toon in semi-finals

SEE SPORT



GOALS  
Marcus Rashford and Dan Burn, below



CRASH Mary Lowry and late Paddy Connolly

## Quirke's lover Mary on death drive charge

SEE PAGE 4

# BRAVEST BOY

## Alejandro, 9, is back home after horror pitbull attack



SCARS Alejandro Mizsan yesterday



EMOTIONS Back home with mum and dad

Pictures: MICK O'NEILL

EXCLUSIVE BY JOHN HAND, Chief Reporter

**A BOY aged nine who suffered horrific facial injuries when he was savagely mauled by a pitbull has returned home to his family after seven weeks in hospital.**

Alejandro Mizsan was embraced by his emotional mum as he came through the door of his house in Enniscorthy, Co Wexford.

His brother Raul told the Irish Mirror: "The nightmare is over, today is a dream for us. He's just a very brave boy."

FULL STORY: PAGES 6&7



# FAMILY WELCOME BACK DOG

# ATTACK VICTIM ALEJANDRO

## We are so happy to have him home, the nightmare is over.. it's a dream for us

### Joy as 'brave fighter' out of hospital after 7 weeks

**EXCLUSIVE**  
BY JOHN HAND Chief Reporter  
In Enniscorthy

**PITBULL attack victim Alejandro Mizsan was hugged by his mother when he returned home from hospital after seven weeks as his brother said: "The nightmare is over, today is a dream for us."**

The Irish Mirror was invited into the Mizsan home in Enniscorthy, Co Wexford, yesterday as neighbours and friends called over to welcome the brave nine-year-old back.

Although he was not expected to be released from Crumlin Children's Hospital for another few weeks, medics gave the go-ahead which left his family overjoyed.

His older brother Raul revealed: "We're just very happy to have him home here.

"He's just a very brave boy. He's delighted to be home too.

"It's very emotional. I never felt like how I felt today just to have my brother back home.

"The nightmare is over. Today is a dream for us."

Alejandro was hugged and kissed by his mum Otilia as he arrived home with his dad Ion Florin while Raul and younger sister Estera were also there for the homecoming.

Alejandro was playing on the green of his estate with some friends when a crazed pitbull attacked him on November 27.

He suffered life-changing injuries, with the animal – which was later put down – tearing off his bottom lip and mauling each of his cheeks as well as injuring his body and legs.

He was airlifted to Dublin and remained in hospital until yesterday.

Shy Alejandro explained the stretch in the hospital was very long but said the staff there were "all very nice".

And as the young lad prepared to leave, doctors and nurses came out to him to say goodbye.

Raul, 21, told the Irish Mirror: "It was something very nice from them.

#### GOODBYE

"All the nurses and doctors came out and hugged him and said goodbye to him.

"They were so sound to him. It was something to remember.

"When you are looking back at a very, very bad memory – his time in hospital – we will now have a good memory about it.

"When we're thinking and Alejandro is thinking, 'hospital was such a bad place', we can now look back at a good memory."

Raul, who recently got a tattoo in honour of his brother, explained how the family have endured a traumatic time since the incident, with Alejandro having to spend Christmas and New Year in hospital.

But they are "very grateful" it did not claim his life and they are now aiming to integrate him back into normal day-to-day things before he undergoes more surgery.

Raul explained: "I didn't have my



**A BIG HUG**  
Otilia and Ion Florin with son

Pictures: MICK O'NEILL



**REUNITED**  
Alejandro with family yesterday



**HORRIFIC**  
Injured youngster in hospital



**EMBRACE**  
Alejandro with big brother Raul

words to describe how thankful I was that he was alive when it happened.  
"And now I can't find any to say how happy we are that he's home and we can restart life again.  
"Obviously it's kind of hard. We're not going to go anywhere for the moment, until everything is back to normal, and then we will go everywhere.  
"We'll go wherever he likes, wherever he wants to go. But it will

take a while for him to come back to normal life."  
Social care worker Raul said while they were thrilled to have Alejandro home, they all still struggle at times with the devastation the incident has left behind.  
He explained: "Today, it's fine, everything is OK and we're good mentally.  
"I know this is going to be just for today.  
"Maybe tomorrow when we wake up, we look at him and it'll be different.  
"For us, for everything to go away will take some time and for him as well. Every time he looks up, we all

remember what happened but we have to get used to it, to live with it. He's a brave, brave fighter."  
**MOOD**  
Asked about how mum Otilia was doing, Raul said: "She's not in a very good mood and she's not in a very good place mentally.  
"But just the fact that we can see him at home, it gives us hope.  
"We have to go everywhere with him, he has such a long road ahead of him."  
Alejandro will then undergo yet more surgery for his bottom lip as well as the scars left behind from the attack. More than €178,000 has been

raised in a GoFundMe for Alejandro but it remains open for people to contribute.  
Raul said: "This money – we wish this money was not something we need.  
"We wish my brother was back as he was. But this has happened and the money has been raised. But it's extremely helpful for us.  
"Even with the money raised so far, we are so grateful for everyone's donations, but it's still not enough. It's huge money but it's not enough money."  
■ To donate to the fund for Alejandro visit [gofundme.com/t/just-playing-with-his-friends](https://www.gofundme.com/t/just-playing-with-his-friends).

## Crackdown on safety

BY CATE MCCURRY

THE Government is to review fines, enforcement, microchipping and the provision of dog wardens as part of a crackdown.

A working group is to examine all the issues, including the promotion of responsible dog ownership and licences, over the coming days in a bid to protect people and animals.

Minister for Agriculture Charlie McConalogue and Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys met on Monday to discuss how their departments can address shared concerns regarding dog control and ownership.

Mr McConalogue, right, and Ms Humphreys said they will consult and engage with relevant

stakeholders to update them regularly on the progress of the group. He said: "As two ministers with primary responsibility in the area of dogs, Ms Humphreys and I held a very constructive meeting with a focus on working closely together.  
"There is a clear commitment from both of us to tackle this issue and ensure that the law is as robust as possible to ensure that both people and animals

are safe. Our dogs are more than pets, they are our companions and loyal friends. However, the harrowing scenes we have witnessed recently show the threat dogs can pose.

"Both Minister Humphreys and I will work proactively on this in the time ahead."

Ms Humphreys said: "Attacks by dogs can have a devastating impact on families, as we have seen during a number of deeply disturbing incidents in recent weeks.

"While the issue of dog control crosses a number of different government departments, as well as our local authorities, it is vital that we get to grips with this issue."



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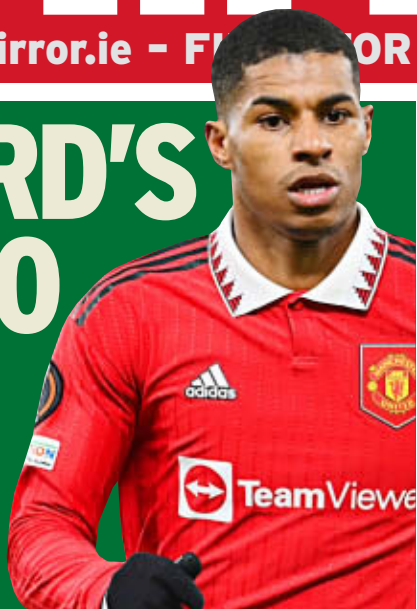
# IRISH DAILY Mirror

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## RASHFORD'S €500,000 A WEEK DEMAND

SEE SPORT



## Barry killed by one punch thug in Boston

SEE PAGE 8



TRAGIC Dubliner  
Barry Whelan, 46

## Comedian Paul O'Grady dies at 67



## Smiling till the end

FULL  
STORY:  
PAGES  
6&7

# MURDERED FAMILY INQUESTS

# We lost 3 gems.. no one can replace them

## Nephews travel from India to grieve for victims at graveside



KILLED Seema Banu  
with daughter Asfira  
Riza & son Faizan Syed

PAYING  
RESPECTS  
Nephews  
at graves  
in Dublin  
yesterday

**EXCLUSIVE**  
BY JOHN HAND Chief Reporter

**HEARTBROKEN** relatives of murdered Seema Banu and her two kids have spoken of their anguish at the deaths.

Seema's nephew Kashief Ahmed travelled from India to visit their graves. He wept as he said "nothing will ever replace" their "gems".

He hoped the inquests, which begin today, may give them closure.

Seema, 37, Asfira Riza, 11, and six-year-old Faizan Syed, were strangled by husband Sameer Syed, who took his own life in prison.

FULL STORY: PAGES 4&5

# NEPHEWS TRAVEL FROM INDIA TO VISIT FINAL RESTING PLACE

# Relatives graveside tears for Seema & her kids



### MESSAGE

Call to relatives at home in India

### EXCLUSIVE

BY JOHN HAND Chief Reporter

**RELATIVES of tragic Seema Banu and her two kids wept as two nephews video called them from their graves yesterday.**

And in an exclusive interview with the Irish Mirror, Seema's nephew Kashief Ahmed told how "nothing will ever replace" their "gems".

Seema, 37, her daughter Asfira Riza, 11, and six-year-old son Faizan Syed, were reportedly strangled by Seema's husband Sameer Syed.

He had been charged with their murders but took his own life in the Midlands Prison last year before he stood trial.

Ahead of their inquests today, Kashief also explained that while they do not want to listen to the gruesome details of their deaths they feel it may give them some closure.

### DRIVEN

Kashief along with another nephew of Seema, Suhan Syed, were driven to Newcastle Cemetery, Co Dublin, by gardai.

The pair were assisted by the force to travel the 8,000km trip to Ireland from the Mysore district in Karnataka state, in the southwest of India.

They both said prayers before they solemnly planted flowers on the graves.

Then they video called weeping family members back in India.

Kashief and Suhan are the first relatives of Seema and the two children to visit the graves nearly two-and-a-half years on from their harrowing deaths.

They were killed at their home in Llewellyn Court, Rathfarnham, South Dublin, in October 2020 in a triple tragedy which stunned the nation.

Speaking at their graveside yesterday, an emotional Kashief told the Irish Mirror: "We are the first

» Family back at home weep during cemetery video call

» Gardai assisted pair to fly 8,000km for today's inquest



### PRISON

Sameer Syed took his own life

family members to visit the grave. She was such a lovely woman. We lost three gems and no one can replace them or fill a place for them.

"The video call was awful, everyone was crying.

"For me, I wanted to come here and the Garda helped us to get here so we are very grateful." Thug Syed,

who subjected Seema to a brutal campaign of terror in their marriage, was not arrested in the immediate aftermath of the killings and insisted the mother and children be buried in Dublin.

Despite the best efforts of Seema's family, he got his way.

Vile Syed even sobbed over the coffins at the burial despite being the man who took their lives. Kashief added: "It remains hard to accept that

they are buried here and not at home. We tried a lot to get the bodies home but we were helpless."

Kashief said he and Suhan did not wish to attend the inquest but hopes it may help him and his family with their grief.

He added: "We don't want to but maybe yes, it might give some closure."

Remembering Seema, grieving Kashief told how she was the

decision-maker for the family. He smiled and told us: "Everyone from the older people to the younger people listen to her.

"She was always the right person to have a suggestion for whatever case. If she didn't know she would have asked and helped out.

"Faizan, he was cheeky and funny. He wanted me to buy bikes with him. Asfira was like my sister." Seema's family also thanked the investigation



**POIGNANT MOMENT**  
Nephews Suhan and Kashief at graveside yesterday



### EMOTIONAL

Kashief Ahmed lays flowers



### TRIPLE KILLING

Seema Banu with her kids Asfira Syed & Faizan Syed

“ We tried a lot to get the bodies home but we were helpless

KASHIEF AHMED NEPHEW OF VICTIM SEEMA YESTERDAY



### SCENE

House where family were killed

teams based at Blackrock and Dundrum Garda stations for their work in the case and the assistance they have given.

### ABUSE

The death of Seema came after a litany of abuse at the hands of Sameer who repeatedly attacked her during their relationship.

The day after the killings, Syed was due to appear in Dublin Circuit Crimi-

nal Court charged with launching a "serious assault" on her on May 16, 2020.

As a result of that, he had been ordered to stay away from the family and was living in a different home in Rathmines.

He had also tried to strangle her in India and again in Ireland as she tried to escape.

But determined Seema was set to return home to India with her kids to

flee the monster, but he took their lives before they could.

Just 40 days following Seema's death, her family's grief was compounded by the passing of her father Abdul Ghaffar, while her mum Qurishid-un-nisa is currently very ill.

Seema had been living in Ireland for a number of months and her kids were in the local Ballinteer Educate Together National School who at the time paid tribute to them. Syed was

arrested at the end of November 2020 and was then charged with the three killings. He never left custody.

Final preparations were being made by prosecutors for his triple murder trial with the weight of evidence against him likely to lead to a conviction. But he ended his own life in his prison cell last June.

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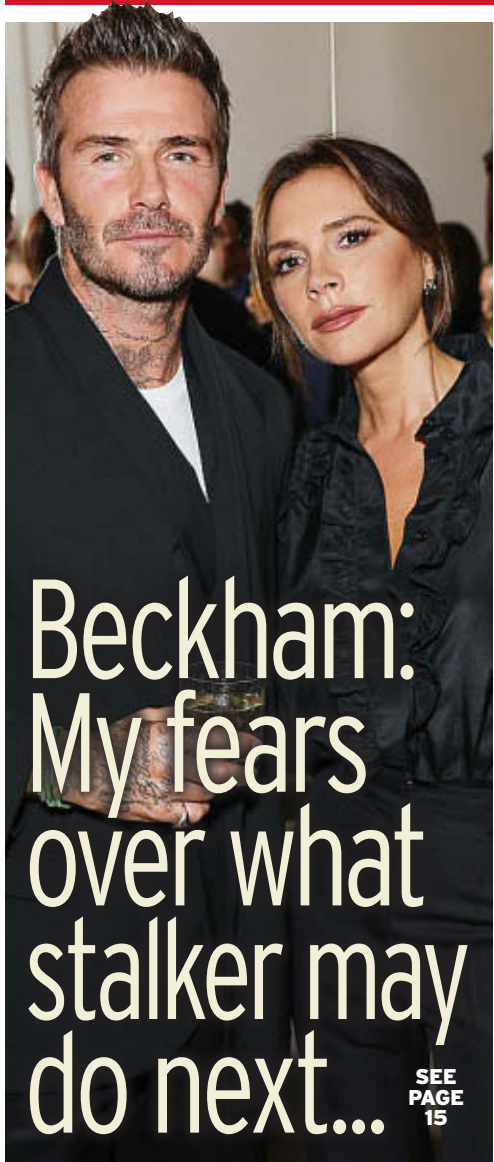
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Beckham:  
My fears  
over what  
stalker may  
do next...

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15

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# ROGUE BUILDER DESTROYED OUR LIVES

TRAUMA Mary and  
husband Colman



EXCLUSIVE

BY JOHN HAND Chief Reporter

**A WOMAN believes she suffered a heart attack from the stress of losing her life savings after a cowboy builder destroyed her home.**

Mary Ring O'Flynn and husband Colman were forced to borrow more than €70,000 to repair the damage caused to their Dublin house by conman Simon Dominican Byrne.

Mary said: "We just don't want it to happen to anyone else. We don't want people to go through what we went through."

Rogue builder Byrne walked free from Dublin Circuit Court yesterday after pleading guilty to two counts of deception.

The 40-year-old, left, got a two-year suspended term.



FULL STORY:  
PAGES 4&5

Couple tell of €70k debt and health ordeal after conman walks free

# COUPLE'S €70K DEBT ORDEAL AFTER COWBOY BUILDER



**NIGHTMARE**  
Litany of issues at couple's home

# On so many occasions I have sat on the stairs and cried... our money is gone and all we're left with is a mess

## Conman handed 2-year suspended sentence

**EXCLUSIVE**  
BY JOHN HAND Chief Reporter

**A COUPLE** have revealed the stress they went through after losing their life savings at the hands of a cowboy builder.

Mary Ring O'Flynn and her husband have had to borrow more than €70,000 to try to repair the damage left behind by conman Simon Dominican Byrne at their property in Ranelagh, south Dublin.

After a two-month period Byrne left behind a leaking roof, live wires in the garden – which electrocuted a man.

He also burst a gas main pipe at the front of the property among a litany of other issues.

Yesterday at Dublin Circuit Court, Byrne was sentenced for two counts of deception for inducing Mary to accept an insurance certificate as genuine and as a consequence caused a substantial loss to her and her husband in May 2019.

But the 40-year-old – who has never apologised to the couple – avoided jail and was instead handed a two-year suspended sentence.

Today Mary and her husband Colman tell their story so that others don't fall victim to Byrne, who continues to work as a building contractor.

In an exclusive interview, Mary told the Irish Mirror: "We just don't want it to happen to anyone else. We don't want people to go through what we went through.

"It's our home and somewhere we should be able to live without the horrors we've had to endure. On so many occasions I've sat on the stairs, looked around me and cried.

"And I'm still crying. Our money's gone and all we're left with is a mess that will possibly cost even more to rectify."

The couple had lived in the house since 2007 and although some work was

done over the years it was in need of a major renovation. The two accountants worked for years to build a pot of money to get the job done.

Mary said: "This was our dream project. We had decided we're going for it. We'd saved enough. This was it."

The couple came across Byrne after he replied to their post on a building Facebook page in 2019 looking for someone to carry out their renovation.

He met them at a hotel in May of that year before coming to their home.

The project involved making a single storey at the

back of the property into a double height ceiling, electrics and plumbing of the whole house including a complete rewiring.

It also needed a new roof, the replacing the piping out to the water mains and some paving in the garden.

Mary said: "He added on some extra stuff for us at the end, like he could clear the garden and a few small extras.

"But I suppose that was to reel us in. He had everything about him that you thought he knew what he was on about."

After agreeing a price, Byrne was to take on overseeing an eight-week project and the couple and their two boys moved out.

But some days before the project, Mary emailed him to ask for his insurance policy, stressing that no one would

go onsite without having that proof. He sent them two false insurance documents they had no reason to doubt.

Colman told us: "In hindsight, we should have called the insurance.

"But we had a piece of paper and we trusted him. Like it was proper insurance. You'd know your own insurance documents and it looked right."

### PROJECT

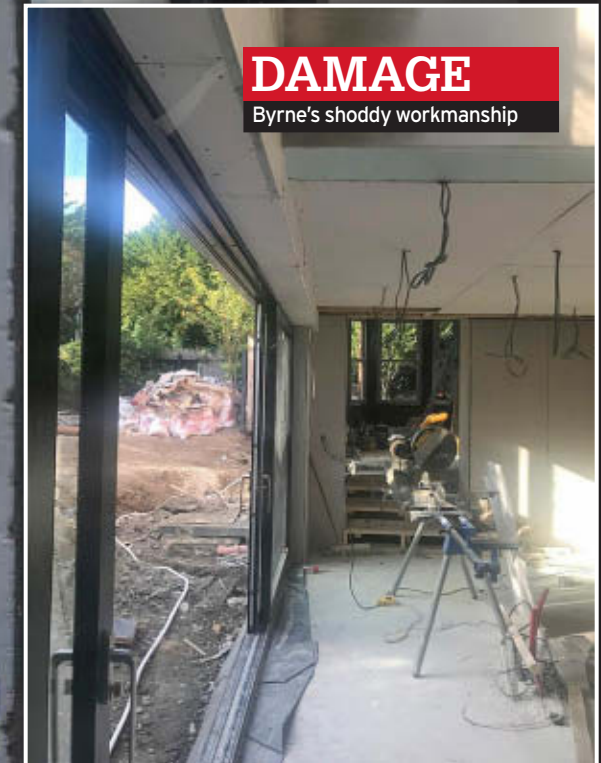
It was some weeks into the project when alarm bells started ringing and issues began to stack up.

Mary said: "One of the days we arrived and the neighbour said, 'god you were lucky' and I said, 'what'.

"He cut a gas pipe out the front when he was digging with a mini digger. The whole street could have gone up in



**DECEIVED**  
Mary and Colman in Ranelagh



**DAMAGE**  
Byrne's shoddy workmanship



**LIVE WIRE**  
Loose cables in the house



**CLEAN UP**  
Works still needs to be carried out



**UNINSURED**  
Simon Dominican Byrne

**“I wanted to see him brought out in handcuffs”**  
MARY RING O'FLYNN ON SIMON BYRNE

flames. He never said a word." He also dug a trench in their garden to take up clay pipes and replace them with PVC pipes but never did.

Mary added: "He just filled it back in without replacing the pipes. Until we got an engineer out after he had left, we didn't know."

When the couple tried to claim on Byrne's insurance they discovered he was uninsured.

Cruel Byrne also ordered €14,000 worth of goods on their account from the building supplier company but much of it was not even brought to their site, despite Mary telling them that everything Byrne ordered must go there.

The building supplier company later

settled with the couple. Their dream project turned into a complete nightmare and it was left in such bad condition that they had to leave saucepans out to catch water from the leaking roof which later had to be redone.

One morning, one of their two young boys woke up covered in water from a roof leak.

Live wires were left lying around, including in the garden where the children were playing and later a man was electrocuted on it but thankfully he was not too badly injured.

The whole ordeal caused so much stress that Mary ended up in hospital on three occasions, including in September last year when she suffered a heart attack. Mary said: "Everything was

going downhill. Our money was gone, we had nothing. It was always in the back of my mind.

"Every day you got up, you saw the impact of what he did. We saw the impact it had on our two boys."

The couple have had to borrow more than €70,000 in a bank loan and from family to repair the work but more needs to be done including the rewiring of the home.

Byrne, of Swanbrook, Bray, Co Wicklow, had previously pleaded guilty to his offences. But Mary feels that he got off lightly with his suspended sentence.

She said: "I knew we weren't getting anything financially. But I just wanted to see him being brought out in handcuffs. Just going to prison would have given me some solace."