

In the Crown Court at Sheffield



**R v GARY ARTHUR ALLEN**

**Sentencing Note**

**Mr Justice Goose:**

1. Gary Arthur Allen, you are aged 47. You have been convicted of the murder of two women, 21 years apart. In 1997 you murdered Samantha Class, for which you were tried in this Crown Court in 2000, and because of your lies, you were acquitted. You thought that you had got away with that murder, but today your past has caught up with you. Then in 2018 you murdered another woman, Alena Grlakova. Again, you tried to lie your way out of the murder, but this jury has, on overwhelming evidence, convicted you of both murders.
2. You are an extremely dangerous man, with a long held, deep seated and warped view of women, particularly of sex workers. I am satisfied that you fantasise and plan serious violence to sex workers, intending that they should suffer and be killed. It would not be an overstatement to say, that what you did to those two women and the loss and suffering to their families, was wicked.
3. The sentence I impose on you is Imprisonment for Life on both convictions for Murder.
4. It is also my task to fix the minimum term that you must serve in prison. That is the minimum term which you must serve in custody. You will not be permitted to apply to the Parole Board for release until after you have served that minimum term. On the basis of what I have seen and heard in this trial, I doubt that it will ever be safe to release you into the community.
5. Samantha Class was aged only 29 when you killed her. She was a single mother of three children. She was a sex worker in Hull, where she lived. On Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup> October 1997 she went out to work in the evening, leaving her children in the care of others. At about midnight, when you were aged 24, you pulled up in your car and asked her for sex. She got in and you drove away. She was not seen alive again. It was the following morning, on Sunday the 26<sup>th</sup> October, that Samantha's body was found by schoolchildren on the foreshore of the Humber Estuary, about 8 miles away in North Ferriby. She was partially submerged in the mud and some of her clothing, including a shoe, her knickers and tights, was missing. They were found several days later, upstream, on the foreshore near Melton. At that place the police also found blood staining from Samantha. How she came to be in the Humber Estuary only you can say. But you have lied about that, as you did in your trial in 2000.

6. What is obvious from the evidence and the post mortem examination is that you had sexual intercourse with Samantha, most probably in your car, which you quickly disposed of at a scrap yard afterwards, so that it could not be examined. You attacked her with savage violence, including using a ligature to strangle her to death and your car to drive over her. She had 33 injuries or clusters of injuries to her head and body externally and internal bleeding, together with injury to her heart, spleen, liver, adrenal gland and kidneys. She also suffered multiple rib fractures. Finally, when she was face down and her heart had stopped beating, you drove over her body before disposing of her body in the Humber. It was a brutal, callous murder of a woman you thought had no value because she was a sex worker.
7. You were not arrested for this murder until after July 1998, when you were stopped by the police whilst driving when you were drunk. Your DNA profile was recorded and later found to match a profile from semen inside Samantha. You told the police and the jury in your first trial that you had not seen Samantha again after she walked away from you in Hull. That was a lie, which you have repeated in this trial, but now the truth has been established.
8. After your acquittal in 2000, you believed that you had got away with that murder. You went to live in Plymouth. Within weeks you committed two separate offences against sex workers in that city. You approached them both, one in March 2000, the other in April, and asked them for sex before attacking them. You targeted the neck of each of them, gripping it with your hand, before sexually assaulting or violently attempting to assault them. In both cases you were disturbed by others, which brought the attacks to a halt and you ran off. It is highly likely that they both escaped more serious injuries, possibly worse. You were convicted of those offences against the two women and received an Extended Sentence of imprisonment.
9. In 2003, during your custodial term of that sentence and after your release on licence, you were interviewed by Probation Officers, Rosemary Parks and Daryll Fisher. You told them of your mindset, or thinking, about sex workers. Rosemary Parks, reported about you as follows:-

*“He spoke openly about his strong dislike of prostitutes.... He described prostitutes as being ‘scum’ and ‘the lowest of the low’. Gary admitted to me that he planned and subsequently committed the attacks on the prostitutes in Plymouth. He stated that he targets prostitutes as, “They go with anybody.” He stated that, “The pleasure of hurting builds from the planning stage.” “Prostitutes are easy targets. I just want to hurt people, can't tell you how far, you know I can't tell you what I want to do to them. I enjoy thinking about it, I get pleasure from the thinking, I just really enjoy different types of violence”.*

You made similar comments to Mr Fisher.

10. In 2010 and 2011, during an undercover police investigation after you had moved to live in Grimsby, you made clear and unequivocal admissions to an undercover police officer, that you had in fact murdered Samantha Class. The dedication and

professionalism of those undercover officers cannot be overstated. Whilst it may have been insufficient on its own at that time to bring about an application to retry you for her murder, it has been very important evidence to bring about your conviction for both murders in this trial.

11. By 2018 you were living in Rotherham and had met Alena Grlakova. You were aged 45. She was aged 38 and was from Slovakia having moved to South Yorkshire in 2008, with her husband and 4 children. They were aged between 12 and 19 when she died. By the time that you met her, she was at a very low point in her life. She had separated from her family and was drinking excessively and taking drugs. To feed her habit she had become a sex worker, offering herself to different men in return for drink, money, and even shelter. You met her in the summer of 2018 after which she visited your flat, at 13A, Bradbury's Close, Rawmarsh, on a number of occasions. You had sex with her and gave her drink and other items.
12. It is of alarming significance that, consistent with what you had told the Probation Officers, Ms. Parks and Mr Fisher in 2003, that on one of your mobile telephones later recovered by the police in 2019, there were stored images of dead women, some of whom were described as sex workers and some being strangled with a ligature. This confirmed, if confirmation were needed, that your mindset towards sex workers was deeply entrenched in you.
13. The last time that Alena Grlakova was seen alive was late in the evening of the 26<sup>th</sup> December 2018. That was on the same day that she had attended your flat, uninvited, and you had thrown her out, threatening to inflict serious violence on her. The words you used and the anger in your voice, were recorded on an MP4 recording device. You shouted that you would "beat the fucking living shit" out of her. You also shouted at her "I'm knocking the crap out of you, it's that fucking simple".
14. In the following days you began to search for hand trowels and gloves, buying some at a store. You visited the area where Alena's body was discovered over three months later, in a watercourse or stream, partially buried and naked. Her head had been forced into an unnaturally extended position and her genital area was exposed. Gravel or grit had been placed over parts of her body, together with some stones. You had put her there, in that position and in water so that she might not be found. You made efforts to cover the body with grit and stones to conceal it from discovery.
15. You weren't arrested until April 2019. Perhaps, for a while, you thought you had got away with another murder. The jury in this trial have made sure that you have not.
16. Alena's body was, very sadly, in a high state of decomposition when it was discovered. Nevertheless, after careful examination by the pathologist, Dr Carter, it was clear that Alena had also died from a neck injury. You had strangled her, as you had Samantha Class.
17. This court, and the members of the public who have attended this hearing, has heard the moving statements made on behalf of the families of Samantha Class and Alena Grlakova. It has been their opportunity to tell you, Gary Allen, what you have done to them. The profound and lifelong grief which has been caused to them by your wicked murder of their mother, their wife, their sister or their daughter, is almost palpable.

18. Your antecedent history reveals that in addition to the offences in 2000 in Plymouth for Attempted Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm and Indecent Assault, also you have convictions for Breach of a Sexual Offences Prevention Order, two convictions for Battery and an offence of Possession of an Offensive Weapon. The Plymouth offences are, in my judgment, aggravating factors of seriousness in relation to Count 2, the murder of Alena, which took place after those convictions.
19. There is little that can be said in mitigation, although Miss Goddard QC has advanced before this court all such material as might be available.
20. In fixing the minimum term, which you must serve before you may apply for your release, it must be recognised that the murder of Samantha, in 1997, predates the Criminal Justice Act 2003. That means that the law in relation to the minimum term is different to that which exists since 2003 and applies to the murder of Alena. Accordingly, I must set separate, concurrent, minimum terms for these two murders. In doing so, however, I shall reflect the totality of your offending in fixing the term for the murder of Alena, Count 2.
21. In respect of Count 1, under paragraph 12 of Schedule 21 to the Sentencing Act 2020, I must impose a minimum term no greater than would have applied before December 2002, and in accordance with Schedule 22 of the 2003 Act.
22. It is suggested, by the prosecution, in relation to Count 2, that your offending is of such exceptional seriousness that it merits a whole life order. Whilst there can be no doubt that the seriousness of these murders is particularly high, I do not conclude that it falls within those circumstances characterised within paragraph 2 of Schedule 21 to the Sentencing Act 2020. Your conviction for two murders means the starting point on Count 2, before any aggravating and mitigation factors are taken into account, must be 30 years.
23. I find the following substantial aggravating factors of seriousness, not referring to each of those raised by the prosecution. First, that in both murders there was a significant degree of pre-meditation, your mindset towards sex workers demonstrates that you had targeted your victims; second, the substantial suffering that you caused Samantha Class before she died, born out by the extensive injuries upon her; third, what you did to Samantha in the short time after she died, when you drove over her body in your car; fourth, your concealing of the bodies of both victims, by disposing of them in the river and a stream respectively; fifth, your disposal of evidence when you quickly sold your car to a scrap yard after killing Samantha, and equally I am satisfied that you disposed of the trowel and gloves you used to conceal Alena's body; sixth, your previous convictions for the Plymouth offences, when you killed Alena.
24. Taking into account all of those aggravating factors and any mitigation, I conclude that the minimum term of imprisonment you must serve, is 30 years in respect of Count 1 and 37 years in respect of Count 2. Those terms will be served concurrently meaning that your minimum term is 37 years, subject to the time you have served on remand.

25. I sentence you to Imprisonment for Life on both Counts 1 and 2 of the Indictment. The minimum term that you must serve in custody is 37 years, less 624 days, being the time you have already spent on remand. It will be for the Parole Board to assess when it will be safe for your release. The appropriate Statutory Charge will apply to Count 2 only and will be recorded as part of your sentence.
26. Finally, I wish to commend to the relevant authorities the dedication and professionalism of those police officers who have been named in in the prosecution's note for sentence. They have all played a vital part in bringing Gary Allen to justice, but in particular the work of the Under Cover Officers "Ian", "Sean" and "Scott" must receive the highest commendation.