

Abusive husband tried to gas wife to death when she said she wanted a divorce

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Pepita Ridgeway, 51, woke up to discover her husband Robert was pumping poisonous gas into the caravan where she slept



Pepita Ridgeway next to her husband Robert before he asked her for a divorce (Image: Medavia)

A mum-of-three woke up after a row with her husband to find he was trying to gas her to death.

Pepita Ridgeway was sleeping in their shared caravan when she heard a 'hissing' sound coming from under her pillow.

It was her husband trying to kill her after she had asked him for a divorce.

Months prior the 51-year-old's husband Robert, who she had been married to for 18 years, had passed her 'complicated legal papers'.

She claims the pair, who had three children together, were trying to make a fresh start after a vicious row.

But after she signed them 'he just grew nastier', she told [The Sun](#).



Pepita Ridgeway stood outside the caravan where her husband tried to kill her (Image: Medavia)

She said that the pair soon got into another argument where he grabbed her by the shoulders.

Pepita called a domestic violence hotline who recommended she contact a divorce lawyer.

By this stage she was so scared of her husband she started sleeping in a 1967 vintage

caravan parked beside the house.

Two weeks later she wrote an email to him asking for a divorce.

Robert pleaded with Pepita to give him one more chance and the 51-year-old agreed to visit a counsellor together.



The caravan Pepita was staying in was parked adjacent to the home (Image: Medavia)



Pepita woke in her caravan to a hissing sound and discovered she was being gassed (Image: Medavia)

But it was clear before the session, she says, that their marriage was irreparable and she contacted a divorce lawyer.

Later that same day she spotted her husband, 64, hovering around the caravan.

At 2am she awoke to a 'weird hissing' coming from under her pillow.

At first she thought it might be a rat chewing on electric cables but the truth was far more sinister.



Pepita said her husband Robert had a 'short fuse' (Image: Medavia)

She spotted a hose snaking down from one of the windows.

The mum-of-three wrote: "Following it back inside, I lifted up the mattress. It had been duct taped all the way to my pillow.

"Stranger still, I saw a jersey had been stuffed in a vent to keep the air out."

The hose was connected to a gas cylinder in the garage.

She realised her husband was trying to kill her.



Pepita asked Robert for a divorce - and he tried to kill her (Image: Medavia)



The married couple had three children together (Image: Medavia)

She switched the cylinder off before fleeing to her brother Sasha's property and told him how her husband had tried to kill her.

She called the police and then headed back to the caravan with her brother, where he showed her the lethal apparatus.

An hour later Robert was arrested and later charged with attempted murder.

He pleaded not guilty but it took a jury just over an hour to find him guilty.

He was sentenced to 10 years behind bars.

Pepita wrote: "Now, I want other women to be aware of the signs. If I can help just one woman safely escape an abusive partner, I'll be happy."