

Teacher 'seduced girl, 15, while wife was away': This was no Romeo and Juliet, this was a gross abuse of trust... jury in runaway trial told of secret sex sessions

- **Jeremy Forrest, 30, pursued 'vulnerable' pupil for months, court hears**
- **They allegedly had secret meetings at his house while his wife was out**
- **Also 'exchanged flirtatious, intimate and inappropriate text messages'**
- **Couple fled to France on a ferry where they spent a week in Bordeaux**

By Tom Kelly

Amateur singer: Rumours flew around the school that Jeremy Forrest had written a song for the girl

A married teacher absconded to France with an 'infatuated' schoolgirl half his age as their four-month relationship was about to be exposed, a court heard yesterday.

Jeremy Forrest, 30, pursued his 'vulnerable' pupil with 'flirtatious texts' in a 'gross and long-term breach of trust', a jury was told.

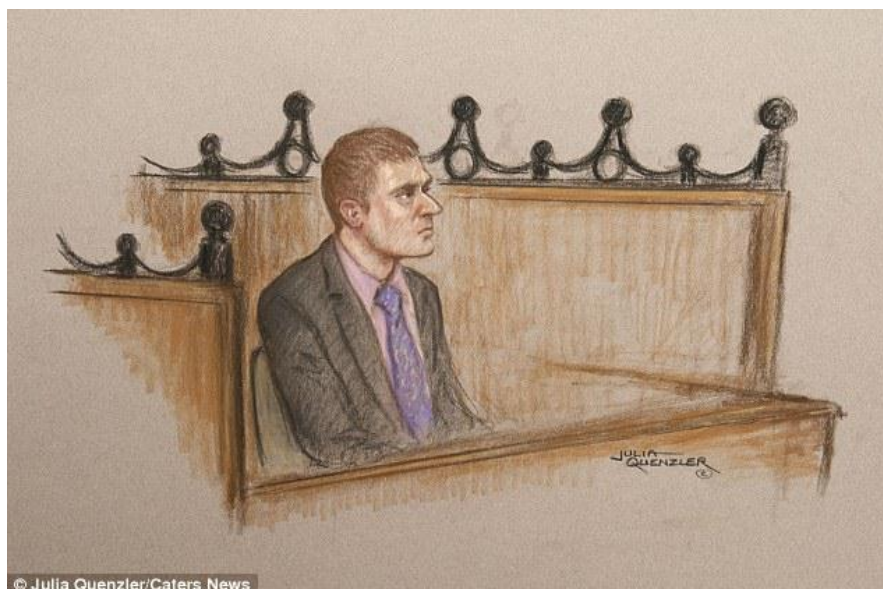
He seduced her for sex at secret meetings at his house while his wife was out, in his Ford Fiesta and in budget hotels where they stayed as Mr and Mrs Forrest, it was alleged. Forrest also reportedly met the girl in a local crematorium. But this was no 'Romeo and Juliet' story, the court was told. When colleagues repeatedly warned Forrest against encouraging the girl's 'obvious infatuation', he told 'bare-faced lies' and denied that anything was going on, Lewes Crown Court heard. He even telephoned the teenager's mother to complain about the effect the 'falsehoods' could have on his career, the jury heard.

But after police were tipped off, the couple fled to France in what was described as 'every parent's worst nightmare'. The court heard how the runaways spent a week in Bordeaux under false names and dyed their hair to avoid being detected. They were eventually found after eight days. The fact that the schoolgirl was 'undoubtedly a willing participant' in the alleged abduction was no defence, prosecutor Richard Barton said.

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- [Teacher, 30, accused of abducting one of his pupils in court for trial](#)
- [Racy picture of a Russian teacher in her underwear goes viral after pupils find it while hacking her boyfriend's laptop looking for exam answers](#)

He said: 'This is not Romeo and Juliet. This is a 15-year-old with her own vulnerabilities and a 30-year-old teacher. 'When parents send their children to school they quite properly expect those who teach their children to care for them properly. This is a case of gross and long-term breach of trust.' Forrest began to pursue the relationship when his pupil was just 14, and while he was teaching at Bishop Bell Church of England school in Eastbourne, the court heard.



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Allegations: Forrest (pictured in Lewes Crown Court yesterday) began to pursue the relationship when his pupil was just 14 years old while teaching at Bishop Bell Church of England School in Eastbourne, the court heard

The teenager had confided to friends at the start of 2012 that she had a crush on Forrest and during a school trip to Los Angeles in February she had said she enjoyed seeing him in his swimming trunks. On the flight home, Forrest sat next to her and held her hand, apparently to help calm her during turbulence. The incident sparked gossip among other pupils, and two teachers spoke to Forrest to warn him to 'keep his distance'.

'This is not Romeo and Juliet. This is a 15 year old with her own vulnerabilities and a 30-year-old teacher.'

- Richard Barton QC

But he started exchanging messages with the girl on Twitter and later gave her his private mobile phone number so that they could text each other more 'flirtatious, intimate and inappropriate' messages in secret, the court heard. Pictures found on the schoolgirl's phone included one of Forrest, apparently taken by himself, in his underwear, the court heard.

It was also rumoured that Forrest, a keen amateur musician, had written a song about the schoolgirl, the court heard. The schoolgirl also began to turn up early to school to visit the teacher in his room, often with other friends to 'provide cover'.

Forrest started having sex with girl around the time of her 15th birthday, the court was told. She used to slip away from her home, telling her mother she was spending the night with friends, it was claimed.





Going inside: On the flight home Forrest (pictured arriving at Lewes Crown Court yesterday) sat next to the schoolgirl and held her hand, apparently to help calm her during turbulence

But when confronted again by teachers about their concerns, Forrest became upset, and cried 'crocodile tears', asking why these 'falsehoods' were being spoken about him, the court heard. He even telephoned the schoolgirl's mother, and in an 'utter lie' denied the allegations, despite the fact he was having 'clandestine meetings' with his pupil, the prosecutor said. After police were tipped off about the relationship in September, an officer and social workers went to the schoolgirl's home and spoke to her mother, who agreed to hand over her phone for analysis.

When the schoolgirl heard what had happened, she immediately went to see Forrest and the pair made plans to run away.

Mr Barton said: 'Earlier in the year, when they were in the beginnings of their relationship, they had discussed running away together but only in general and rather fanciful terms, in a sort of forbidden love. 'Now it seemed a more realistic and tangible possibility.'



Trial: Jeremy Forrest (pictured yesterday upon his arrival at Lewes Crown Court in East Sussex), 30, pursued the 'vulnerable' pupil for months, a jury was told

That night the schoolgirl secretly packed a bag of belongings and took it to school the following day. Forrest booked ferry tickets in his name and the name of his wife. The schoolgirl arranged to spend the night with a friend and Forrest later turned up to pick her up looking 'ashamed', the court was told. He told the girl's friends that he was 'very sorry that he had to take her away'. On the way to Dover she phoned a friend and said 'Me and Jez are going north' in an attempt to put anyone off their trail.



Hearing: The fact that the schoolgirl was 'undoubtedly a willing participant' in the alleged abduction was no defence, prosecutor Richard Barton QC told Lewes Crown Court (file picture) in East Sussex

Minutes after boarding the ferry, Forrest sent a final text to his wife saying: 'Don't worry I'll call you tomorrow', before getting rid of his phone. He was later pictured on the ferry's CCTV hand-in-hand with the schoolgirl. After dumping the car in Paris, they travelled by train to Bordeaux, south-west France. When Forrest submitted a false CV to an English bar in the city, the owner recognised him from online news reports and contacted Sussex police, the jury was told.

After liaising with French officers, police set up a sting operation which allowed police to arrest him as he arrived for a trial shift.

The schoolgirl returned to Britain soon afterwards and he was later extradited home to stand trial. Forrest denies child abduction.

The case continues.