



Portland



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VIDEO

Mother of Ayla Reynolds confronts toddler's father, grandmother outside Portland court

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PORTLAND, Maine — Family members of missing toddler Ayla Reynolds confronted one another angrily on Wednesday at the Cumberland County Superior Courthouse, where the little girl's father faced charges [in an unrelated case](#).

Inside the courtroom, Justin DiPietro pleaded guilty to violating conditions of release and an [assault charge against him](#) was dismissed. He was ordered to pay a \$150 fine and serve four days in jail, but was credited with time served.

The assault charge stemmed from a July 6 incident in Portland in which DiPietro allegedly grabbed and pushed a woman, later described as an ex-girlfriend, with whom he was arguing. The woman was not injured, according to police, and DiPietro was released on bail. He was arrested Sept. 6 in Portland for possessing alcohol in violation of his bail conditions.

Wednesday's court proceeding was routine but the action involving Ayla's family members quickly turned dramatic. Phoebe DiPietro, Justin's mother, clashed just outside the courtroom with Ron Reynolds, Ayla's maternal grandfather.

Phoebe DiPietro uttered an expletive to Reynolds as he walked out of the courtroom.

"Did you say something to me? Your son killed my granddaughter," Reynolds

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yelled at DiPietro before being intercepted by bailiffs, ending the first of two confrontations between the two grandparents.

Outside the courthouse, Reynolds told reporters how difficult the last 21 months since Ayla's disappearance have been and cast blame on Justin DiPietro.

The girl, who was 20 months old at the time, last was seen in December 2011 in the Waterville home where Justin DiPietro was living.

"We don't get to hug or kiss Ayla. We don't get to play with Ayla because Justin and his family took all that away from this family," Ron Reynolds said.

Trista Reynolds, Ayla's mother, held a short press conference outside the courthouse before Justin DiPietro's appearance before the judge. She called attention to her dissatisfaction with the investigation of the case of her missing daughter.

"I've lost some faith in the state police," she said, adding that she wasn't contacted by police after she went public Monday with [information on the investigation](#) of Ayla's disappearance. On websites called [United4Ayla.com](#) and [justiceforayla.blogspot.com](#), Reynolds and supporters who maintain the sites [said investigators told them that Ayla's blood was found in multiple locations](#) in and around the Waterville home where she was reported missing by Justin DiPietro on Dec. 17, 2011.

DiPietro told police she had disappeared overnight from his home at 29 Violette Ave.

Seeing DiPietro on Wednesday was shocking but also somewhat comforting, Trista Reynolds said during her press conference.

"He looks like her. She has his blue eyes. I miss those eyes," she said. "Seeing Justin, it was like Ayla was right there."

Phoebe DiPietro on Monday released a rebuttal to Trista Reynolds' statement about the information she said she received from state police. In DiPietro's statement, she said state police had not confirmed Reynolds' allegations nor ruled out Reynolds herself as a suspect in Ayla's disappearance.

"I laughed at what she said because they all know the truth," Reynolds said, reacting to DiPietro's statement. "She has sat on the couch that has Ayla's blood on it. She sits on it to this day. They know she wasn't kidnapped. She knows that she didn't just walk out the door."

Reynolds later sat down next to Phoebe DiPietro on a bench across the street from the courthouse.

"Tell me what you did with my daughter," she said to the grandmother.

"Tell us what you did with her," DiPietro replied, getting up and walking back across the street toward the courthouse.

"Your son killed my granddaughter. You hid her body and then try to blame it on us," said Ron Reynolds, joining the confrontation, which was broken up by bailiffs and sheriff's deputies on the sidewalk outside the courthouse.

Trista Reynolds later ran after Justin DiPietro as he walked toward the Portland Police Department across the street.

"I can see it in your eyes. I know you care," Reynolds said.

He did not reply to her.

Neither Justin nor Phoebe DiPietro spoke to the press.

Earlier, Trista Reynolds told the media during her press conference that no



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matter the outcome, she just wants Ayla home.

"I'm hoping I get to have my baby girl home real soon," she said. "Whether she's there with me and her two brothers and able to enjoy life every day, or whether I have to do the hardest thing any parent has to do. But one way or another I hope [Justin] brings my baby girl home."

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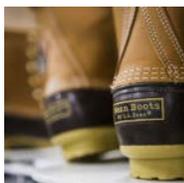
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