

# Salman Rushdie's attacker says 'free Palestine' as he enters court

From the [Telegraph](#) and the [New York Post](#)

The man accused of attempting to murder Salman Rushdie said "Free Palestine" as he entered court.

Hadi Matar, from New Jersey, has pleaded not guilty to charges of attempted murder and assault, which carry a sentence of up to 25 years in prison.

The 27-year-old was heard to say "Free Palestine" as he entered the court in Chautauqua Lake, New York dressed in a blue untucked shirt and trousers, his head shaved.



Hadi Matar, charged with severely injuring author Salman Rushdie in a 2022 knife attack, is led into Chautauqua County court in Mayville, NY, Monday, Feb. 10, 2025

AP

Mr Matar is without his lawyer, Nathaniel Barone, whom the defence said is sick in hospital.

Hadi Matar was changed by a month-long trip to Lebanon in 2018, his mother previously said. Silvana Fardos said her son, who was born in the Middle Eastern country, returned to New Jersey “a moody introvert” who locked himself in his basement. He also criticised her for not bringing him up as a strict Muslim,