

## ***Sample Victim Impact Statement (unedited)***

Dear Judge,

I appreciate the opportunity to express my feelings today. In many ways, I feel like a character in a horror movie. My experience is both surreal and unbelievable. One moment I was leaving the grocery store with my son and the next moment I am handcuffed in my own vehicle, raped and stabbed. How can one human being do this to another?

That night, I thought I was going to die. The experience was horrific and indescribable. I was raped in my own car while my son played with my hair from the backseat. While the defendant was stabbing me, there was a moment when I knew I was dying and for a few seconds, I gave up. But then I thought about my son and I knew I had to live to protect him. I could not give up and I started to fight back harder. After I fought him off, I ran, bleeding with my pants undone, into the nearest building. I was immediately surrounded by people who asked me questions but I could not answer because I had been stabbed in the throat. I am not the same person; I will never be the same person. And while my body survived, a part of me did die in that vehicle that night.

When I came home from the hospital, I felt lost and I did not know who I was anymore. When I looked in the mirror, I did not see a person, I could only see a rape victim; a woman subjected to the worst type of violence. All I could see was the crime and I could not see past it. I was disconnected from society and from the people I love. I knew they loved me but I felt separate. I still feel separate because no one will ever really understand what I went through that night.

For several months, I suffered from nightmares. Every time I closed my eyes, he was there. I could not seek comfort from my partner because all physical intimacy felt like another violation. I could barely bring myself to give him a kiss. I felt like I would only ever be a rape victim. I was no longer a mother, a woman, a friend or a daughter. I felt exposed and I imagined that strangers could see through me, like the details of that horrific night were written all over my face.

I still suffer from paranoia. When men walk past me slowly I am afraid. I am afraid of anyone that resembles the defendant and I will often walk the other way to avoid them. I take my dog with me wherever I go. It took me two months before I could go to the grocery store. The crime occurred in the neighborhood where I lived and I had to move. The defendant's violence broke my family apart and ultimately tore me out of my home and everything that I knew.

For the longest time, I felt like my soul was removed from my body. I wondered what I did to deserve this and why he chose me. It is only within the last month that I have begun to remember anything positive; that I am alive, that my son is alive and that we survived. The defendant tried to take my life from me but he did not succeed.

He needs to be held accountable for his actions and a sentence of life in prison is barely punishment enough. He is a coward I want him to be miserable and to suffer in prison, as my son and I have suffered. He does not deserve my forgiveness and I do not forgive him. He is a rapist and a murderer; he just failed to kill me.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Jane Doe