

## Victim Impact Statement

[REDACTED] JANE DOE

I went home from school that weekend to spend time with my sister. And I did get to be with her — laugh with her, enjoy her weirdness, and be happy the way we always are when we're together. Never did I imagine I would have to pick her up from the hospital the next morning.

On my way to the hospital, I pulled over two times because I was crying too hard to drive. When I finally arrived my sister was sitting there as composed as she could will herself to be, hugging me, and saying over and over again, "Don't cry! Don't cry! None of this is your fault!" She was the one trying to assure me everything was okay, trying to protect me, when I was picking her up from the rape crisis center. I have witnessed her try to lessen my pain by holding it herself. The victim — the one who experienced the trauma — put herself aside to comfort me when she saw me hurting. But when we got home that morning, she let me hold her for a few hours as we stared at a blank TV. Without having to tell me, she was communicating that she now needed to be held, to be taken care of, that for a while she did not have it in her to be the stronger one.

Because she had blacked out, neither of us knew exactly what happened. I had to learn about every graphic detail of her assault through a police report that went publicly viral before anyone told us. I had to read about the way her body was found. I realized that the reason I could not find her that night, after checking every room in the fraternity house, after yelling her name outside, was because she had been unconscious and hidden behind a dumpster. That she was naked from the waist down. That two men had saved her. That night, she came with me to have fun with me and my friends, with no interest in even meeting anyone, let alone hooking up with anyone outside. She had even called me right before he found her, standing and slurring, alone and vulnerable. Today, I am still sick thinking about it. Sick to my stomach every time that I am reminded of the incident. I am still sad that I was not there to protect her. We have both been devastated, we have been speechless, and we have cried until our bodies have run dry.

After the preliminary hearing, she came back to school with me to sleep in my bed because she couldn't be alone. She became quiet, when normally she was easy to smile and outgoing. She seemed tired and weak. We were too drained to speak but needed each other's presence. I was falling behind in school. I left class whenever I would dwell on that night for too long. I began suffering panic attacks from the anxiety, crying hysterically and unable to think or breathe. I was barely sleeping. I stayed up at night obsessively turning the events of the night over in my head; delusional that it was my fault for leaving her alone for a stranger to prey upon. In my head, I still have an image of the assailant right before he tried to kiss me earlier in the evening; the face of the man who assaulted my sister, is burned into my memory.

An entire part of my brain has been permanently warped, and an entire part of my heart has been permanently broken. A few of my professors confronted me, asking me why I was distracted, why I was no longer the always-laughing, always-engaged student. I was fatigued. I was falling behind. I have broken down, crying, in their offices. One by one I had to explain the event to them, to describe again and again, that my sister had been assaulted and that we were in the middle of a seemingly endless battle for justice, that for the year I would have to

be traveling back and forth. I have spent heavy portions of my senior year of college driving six hours alone on multiple trips to sit in a dreary courthouse. Whenever my sister and I thought we could distance ourselves from this horrid memory, the media was there to remind us in full detail about her sexual assault.

My message to Brock Turner is that the damage you inflicted is irreversible. What has affected me most is that you did something to someone I love that I cannot take back. In this last year and a half, I have experienced some of the lowest points of my entire life; I have felt more sadness, guilt, and anger than I have ever felt. But I would go through what I've suffered a million times over if it meant that I could take away what you did to my sister. I can't undo your mistakes and I can't mend the part of her that you took away, even though she's dedicated her life to mending me when I need her.

Those moments that you assaulted her were just the beginning; you took her down with you because you failed. When I read the comments about how it was just "two drunk kids who made a mistake," I feel such intense hopelessness that there will always be people like you, who believe alcohol can dismiss perverted, harmful, sickening actions. You saw a drunk girl alone, incapacitated — why would you not try to find her friends? I was trying to find her. Where has your remorse been? Really, truly: do you feel guilty because you were sexually assaulting her, or because you were caught?

But then I think about the two men that found her, the men who understood within two seconds that what you were doing was wrong, and I find hope again. I think about all of the police, my family, the counselors, the hospital workers, my professors, our friends, anonymous strangers, the District Attorney — I remember that the majority of people out there understand the depravity of sexual assault, and are kind, respectful, caring, attentive — traits you will have to grow into.

I asked my mom to read this statement and she could not finish reading because she was crying so hard. My dad has constantly reminded me and my sister that he is proud of us. My sister and her boyfriend have to call me to check in frequently. We are all trying to heal after the assault and the year long mess, the nightmare that you have created for our family. You nearly destroyed her spirit, but you did not succeed. You cannot undo the harm you have caused her, the darkness you have put us through, but you can now finally leave us alone to heal.

Thus far, it appears that you have not been appropriately remorseful. I really do, sincerely, hope that one day you grow to take ownership for your actions. I hope that you learn to take accountability for sexually assaulting my sister while she was unconscious, and causing the subsequent damage that you have inflicted on my family.

The only sorrow I feel for you is that you never got to know my sister before you assaulted her. She's the most wonderful person in the world.