

Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgement that something else is more important than fear.

Your Honor,

Fifteen years and twelve days ago my life change in many ways. The defendant, Mr. Harrison sodomized me, and the system failed me. I haven't been the same since.

When it comes to Mr. Harrison and what he did to me, I was mentally, sexually, and psychologically tormented. Not just for the short moments that I was sexually assaulted, but for many years later. In a way I was held prisoner with his actions. I struggled to break free from the torture that he put me through. I was just fifteen years old, a child, when Mr. Harrison decided to victimize me. For many years I blamed myself. I told myself that if I would have never asked Mr. Harrison for that cigarette, then this would have never happened to me. But the truth is, I was never to blame. Mr. Harrison saw me as an ignorant, vulnerable child, who he could deceive, lecher and sodomize. He was an adult man who took advantage of a young girl. The blame for ~~this~~ this whole situation falls on him and him alone.

The way I see it is no matter what angle this is viewed from, it all falls back to his actions. The length of the case, the backlog sexual assault kit, everything is on Mr. Harrison. The way I see it, if Mr. Harrison would have never done what he did to me there would have never been the need to process a sexual assault kit. There would have never been a case. Honestly though, this is not the only part that affected me.

On that day the responding officer did not spend much time talking to me. Instead he made

me feel like I was a burden. After I was taken to get the rape kit done, I heard nothing else. Not a follow up call, not a call from a detective, I was completely set aside and forgotten like many other victims. Not only did it make me feel like I didn't matter then, but it caused me to go through hell many years later.

After Portland P.D. contacted me 11 years later, I had to go through hell all over again. For 11 years I had learned to accept that nothing was going to happen with this case. Never did I think that the lack of due diligence in the beginning was going to cause so much pain years later. I had to relive everything, in complete detail.

I had to bring the detectives to the place where it all happened. I had to show them step by step what had transpired that morning, all those years ago. I was interviewed and had to relive it in that process as well. This is the most traumatizing experience that I have ever endured. Many of these steps should have been taken years ago. But since they weren't I had to be the one who suffered.

I then had to through the process of Grand jury. I had to look at photos and explain to complete strangers what had taken place. I had to tell them how I was degraded, humiliated and treated like a piece of trash.

I endured all these things. I had to learn to relive everything, and somehow not lose myself in the process. I had to learn how to survive not just what Ms Harrison put me through, but what the

system put me through as well.

Mr. Harrison claims he doesn't remember what he did to me, in my eyes that is a luxury, I would give anything to not be able to remember what he did to me. Instead, I have had to learn to live with and survive the pain he put me through.

Like I said in the beginning of this statement, this journey that I was forced to take has changed me. It has torn me apart, broken me, and has even made me lose sight of who I am. I have felt hate, anger, resentment, humiliation, hopelessness, and fear. For a very long time I forgot my worth. Just from one choice he made Mr. Harrison took so many things from me for many years.

On that day February 3rd 2007, I was a child victimized by a predator. What Mr. Harrison didn't know is that child that I used to be, would turn out to be the strong woman I am today.

I had a choice to make. I had to choose between allowing myself to remain Mr. Harrison's victim or standing and becoming a survivor of his actions. I chose the latter. Honestly choosing to be a survivor is one of the toughest things I've gone through.

I had to learn how to forgive. I have learned how to forgive the system for failing me in the beginning. I had to learn how to forgive myself, for me blaming for something that wasn't my fault. Most of all, I had to forgive Mr. Harrison. I knew I would never be able

to fully heal and let go without doing so.  
I chose to forgive a man who probably isn't  
even remorseful over what he did. I forgave  
him to give me peace, not him.

After all these years. After half of my life  
I am finally finding closure from all of this  
I still have a long road ahead of me, but one  
day I will get there.

After today I will be able to move on.  
While Mr. Harrison sits in a prison with the  
weight of what he did, I get to finally  
put this in the past. I get to spend my time  
healing and finally being set free.