

Victim Impact Statement

Submitted By

Racquel Ellis

February 8, 2016

Thank you for this opportunity to share the impact of the death of my sister Melonie, on my family. But despite my genuine appreciation, I remain in shock and deeply traumatized to learn of the disturbing details of my sister's days on earth.

There are no words to describe how I am feeling, knowing that my sister died such a horrible and inhumane death caused by her own father and stepmother. It's devastating to believe that the persons my mother entrusted with her children's happiness, safety and life that they would do such a horrible thing. When I heard what my sister went through before she died, I could not believe that persons like Everton and Elaine are alive.

But today Melonie can rest in peace knowing her killer has been brought to justice. I am happy and glad he was found guilty. It cannot bring my sister back but at least she is at peace and justice has been served.

I am taking time to thank the Canadian Justice System, Tia Adams, Dahlia Nicholson, the Crown Attorneys Mary Humphrey and Anna Tenhouse and Detective Ryan. I would also like thank the media for shedding light on our unfortunate situation. Lastly I would thank the Canadian and Jamaica Citizens for your kind support through this shocking and unbelievable ordeal.

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Submitted by

Ms. Opal Austin

February 8, 2016

I am thankful for this chance to have my say today, but it is the most difficult thing I have ever had to do -to express how I am feeling into words that fully express the impact of this horrific crime against my precious daughter Melonie. There is nothing - I mean absolutely nothing - Melonie would have ever done that could have led to the dreadful outcome of her murder. So I am left wondering why for the rest of my life.

Melonie was my angel, full of love and care for others. She had dreams to be a nurse and she loved to sing. Her dreams were possible to achieve because she was smart, caring and people loved her. She loved her family and I could not have loved her more. I missed her very much when she immigrated to Canada but I believed deep in my heart that it was for the best. As it turned out, it was for the worst; for the very person I expected to keep her safe and support her dreams, turned out to be the cruellest nightmare she will never wake up from.

So now I am left to relive images of the nightmare she went through, over and over. I no longer sleep in peace. My nerves are on edge. My body is weak and I feel sick all over. I cannot stop thinking of how much she suffered at the hands of her own father, her murderer. I don't think I will ever understand or even want to. All I know is he MUST PAY for his crime. It's true it doesn't bring back my Melonie, but it goes a long way knowing that justice has been served. It's true the sentence will not bring her back but it's better than nothing and life will go on. I will go on!

I want to express my deep appreciation for all the support we received from so many people in Canada. This gives me hope and I thank everyone for showing us such kindness and love. We will never forget what so many people did for us at our lowest point in life. We are very thankful.

I was filled with excitement when I met my sister Melonie. She was fun to be around. From the moment we met we clicked. She reminded me of a friend I had and still have, who shared some similar features like: her complexion, her beauty and her Jamaican accent. They even had similar personalities. I wanted so much for her to meet that friend and to hang out with my cousins and I, but that never happened. Melonie and I would make plans for her to come to my home for visits as I wanted to share so many things with her, but I was denied that experience.

Others described Melonie as being quiet, but with me, she was outspoken and had a bit of an edge compared to me.

There was disappointment for her growing absence. Over the years, I began to have nightmares about her.

For years, I really still believed she was alive, somewhere, as I would imagine our reunion on several occasions.

When I learned of Melonie's death in 2012, I was devastated. I was not able to focus on school for weeks; I cried constantly and could not sleep. Melonie's death and the circumstances surrounding her death were and are still intrusive to my waking thoughts and dreams.

I cannot help it, but I hope that Melonie is still alive, still out there, and that they were somehow wrong.

I have so many unanswered questions that perhaps will change with the end of the court process.

Unfortunately, I carry the shame that has now been placed on the Biddersingh name. I am labelled because of the actions of others: "The girl whose father killed her sister". I am also left to hurt with other family members carrying the name, since they too have to bear the burden that comes with the name.

I feel hurt and grief; not just for me, but for all of my siblings who have had to endure a lot because of this situation. My heart breaks for them all, but in particular, Cleon.

When Charmaine was in my care, I took on a mother/guardian role; experiencing much difficulty getting her into school, great stress and worry dealing with her strong fears of having to face school, and her difficult challenge of getting through school, with so much less socialization and education than other children, having not attended school previously. I am so very proud of her.

All this hurt and pain has taken a toll on my emotional and physical wellbeing over the years and I do not know when it will stop. I am hoping it will all subside when this is all over...if it is ever over.

Suan Biddersingh