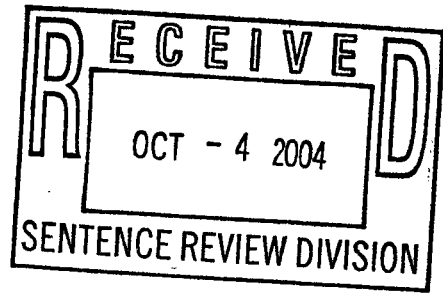


Sentence Review Division
Superior Court Center
17 Chenell Drive- Ste. 1
Concord NH 03301



Dear Judges,

I'm writing today because I didn't want to leave you with the wrong impression. I wasn't prepared to speak at the hearing September 17, because I didn't know that I could. You see, even though I was Cassidy's mother, the state never wants me to speak on her behalf because I won't paint the picture that they want me to paint. When I talked about fixing my statements at Chad's hearing, what I'm saying is I outright lied when the police questioned me after Cassidy died.

I was 18 years old when I was told that my baby died while Jeff Marshall was watching her. The last place I wanted to be was sitting in a police station being interrogated by police officers for 11 hours. I said and agreed to many things that just were not true. Much of what I was telling them was what was obvious to me that they wanted to hear so they would leave me alone. I just wanted to leave and hold my baby and they played every trick in the book to guilt me into staying without ever letting me see her again as they had promised.

Did Chad do some awful things? Absolutely. Am I angry with him for that? Absolutely. But the thing that no one wants to look at is that the state's own medical examiner conceded that Cassidy was "alert", awake, and "watching TV", when medically she was already dead. (EMT's described Cassidy as cool and clammy to the touch with Lividity and Rigor Mortis already setting in upon arrival to Jeff's house). If Jeff didn't kill Cassidy, why would he be calling and lying to Jen, stating that Cassidy was coming around when she was already dead?

The bottom line is Cassidy was my daughter. She was the victim here. Did I fail to protect her? Absolutely. I should have left Chad the first time he squeezed her cheeks. I certainly should have never let her go back to be babysat by Jeff Marshall after he spanked her so hard he put black and blues on her butt because she upset him somehow. I have to live with the knowledge for the rest of my life, that my child died a horrible, senseless death and I was too immature and stupid to see it.

This was far from a "cut and dry" case. As Mr. Cronheim pointed out, the jury deliberated for 5 days before reaching a verdict. This is pretty significant when you consider the emotions involved. I wanted you to know that Chad is not the monster that the state depicted him as. Many of the things Mr. Ruoff attributed to Chad simply are not true and I have to live with the fact that I said and agreed to those things from the beginning and was too scared to go against the police and correct them after.

As Judges I know that you do not see the discover evidence but let me assure you, there was much more to this case than meets the eye. The state is quick to put my sister Jen on display because she can always muster the crocodile tears, but if you could read her police interviews, you would see for yourself how little she cared for Cassidy. She consistently refers to her as "that kid" or "The Kid" and often in person as a "Whinny pain in the ass." The "drama queen" that refers to herself as my Aunt Kathy, only met Cassidy one time in her life even though she had plenty of opportunity. How dare she speak on behalf of my daughter and equate herself as a victim. I've said it before and I say it again, they are on their high horses now but they didn't give a damn about Cassidy when she was alive. It was a hardship to get any of them to watch her while I worked.

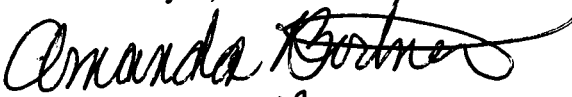
Although I made it clear that I don't agree with the verdict, I think Judge Nadeau's sentencing was fair. She weighed what she believed to be the facts and gave a very thorough explanation of why she chose the sentence that she did. I had the chance to sit before Judge Nadeau twice. Once during Chad's trial and then during mine, (when the state decided to charge

me because I refused to tell their version of what happened.) I didn't like the fact that she sentenced me to the maximum of 2 years, (I thought losing Cassidy was enough punishment) but I respect how thorough she was in her explanation. She made me realize that loving Cassidy with all my heart wasn't enough and that unintentional or not, I had failed in protecting her.

The important thing to remember is that justice can never really be done. As Judge Nadeau stated, we cannot turn back the hands of time and change all of the horrible things that have happened. Just as sure as I, Cassidy's mother, write this letter today, I would be saying the same thing if it were Jeff Marshall that had been convicted. Being just 22 years old, I cannot fathom all that you will miss in life if you were to spend 28 years locked behind bars. To say that it is not enough time to be punished, think about what you have done wrong, and rehabilitate yourself is absurd. The one lesson my mother did drill into my head growing up was, the world needs more forgiveness not vengeance. That is why I know that my mom had nothing to do with my "aunt" Kathy's statements.

I wrote today because I wanted to be heard and unlike the state, Judge Coffey, you made me feel like my voice matters, so I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you how I really felt.

Thank you,


Amanda Bortner