

VICTIM PERSONAL STATEMENT

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27. 2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

URN

Statement of: Elizabeth Anne ROBERTS

Age if 18 or under: Over 18 *see overleaf (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation:

This statement (consisting of 3 page(s) each signed by me is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Victim / Witness signature: E. A. Roberts

Date: 18/10/2022

I would like a request to be made to the Court for me to read my personal statement aloud (select ONE option):

Yes, to read aloud myself

Yes, on my behalf (CPS Prosecutor)

No

Whilst the request to read your statement will be made, the decision to allow this is at the discretion of the Court and it may not always be possible. If you are unable to read out your personal statement, it will still be taken into account by the prosecution and the Court.

Victim Impact Statement - Elizabeth Anne Roberts:

First, I'd like to say thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak. The hope that I would actually get to read this in court has helped me to steady myself over the past months leading up to this day. When the police asked me if I'd like to a) make a victim impact statement and b) read it myself, I grabbed both opportunities, as I believed it would help me to win the ongoing, internal war inside my head that tells me I am 'stupid and weak'. The fact I am here now helps to reassure me that I am neither, especially as I have decided to appear here today without the support of screens.

So where to start? The reality is that I wrote my first victim impact statement almost 30 years ago but did not have the strength or courage to send it. My next attempt was far more successful, thanks largely to those around me and a realisation that I was hitting the floor yet again in terms of my mental health. That took the form of a 5-page letter I sent to Andrew in July 2020, outlining in detail the impact of having had my life destroyed at the age of 8 by his cruel and utterly selfish actions. The contents of that letter were met with

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denial, insults (that effing bitch is trying to destroy my life'), and lie upon lie, topped off with an avalanche (as opposed to a tsunami) of self-pity. As with everything else in his life it became all about him - even his so-called pathetic attempt at a 'confession'! To help me this time, I am going to read you sections of the transcript of some deeply personal voice recordings I made in those awful weeks and months last year - a period of my life when I hit the ground very hard once again.

"So why am I here? I'm here because I'm exhausted - mentally and physically. I'm sick and tired. I'm sick and tired of being depressed and anxious. I'm sick and tired of the life-long self-loathing, the episodes of depression and anxiety peppered with thoughts of not wanting to be here anymore, because I feel unlovable, weak and very stupid. I'm sick and tired of battling - battling various forms of self-harm and the accompanying all-consuming anger. I am tired of the deep shame and disgust that runs through me like a stick of rock. I'm tired of pushing people away, especially those closest to me. I'm tired of having very few friends and family in my life, and I'm really, really sick and tired of the injustice of it all.

They say that time is a great healer, but that is not the case with child abuse. In fact, the opposite is true. You lock these feelings and this fear up tight inside a box, and then they come out when you're feeling anxious or frightened (which is a lot of the time!); but these emotions don't come out rationally. You can't respond to stress as a normal adult that hasn't experienced childhood trauma would. Your reactions are extreme and often disproportionate. These thoughts and feelings are very confusing and frightening, and they alienate you from everyone around you that doesn't understand what you've been through. I have finally realised, after decades of trying and failing to manage my emotions and negative self-belief, that the only way to stop living a half-life is to put my faith in psychotherapy and, eventually, in the legal process which has brought us here today. I've put in so much work to get to this point, and part of this work requires me having the courage to stand up and face him and make him see what he's done, and hopefully pay for it.

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He needs to be punished properly for this. I feel that I, and my husband and daughters, have been punished for this instead, and that isn't fair. I can now include the impact that this has had on my other two brothers in this. To say that they have been traumatised by what he did would be an understatement. We have now all experienced the stress (such a tiny word for such a massive emotion) of the legal process - culminating in last month's trial which yet again sent me into free-fall. The only way I could manage my emotions and prepare for this was to bolt from my home and lock myself away from friends and family for almost a week.

So what next? I want to look forward to my life and to love my family and maybe even have some friends that I don't feel are a threat to me, because I see almost everyone as a threat; I'm scared all the time. I find it hard to trust anybody, but now that my true friends, and certain members of my family have stood up and been equally appalled by what he did, I feel like I've got something to live for; but I can't do that if he is allowed to continue living the life he is living in getting away with it". *E.A. Roberts*

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