

March 30, 2016

The Honorable Nikki R. Haley
Office of the Governor
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Governor Haley,

My name is Lunetta Day and I have been a resident of South Carolina all of my life. I am writing you today in great concern of the Victims Advocacy that lies within the South Carolina Department of Corrections. On May 29, 1990, my mother, Sandra Louise Day, was brutally raped and murdered. Myself and my family suffered a horrific loss and to this day cope in the best way that we can. Attached is the letter that I wrote to a prisoner, Tafford Lee Dyar, who was convicted and is serving a life sentence for the murder and rape of my mother. It has been denied to be read by the prisoner. At some point in the past few years Tafford wrote to my brother and asked for his forgiveness. I was unaware until February of this year, 2016. After much thought, I decided to reply being that my brother did not do so. I called the South Carolina Department of Corrections and spoke with Ms. Nichole Abrams who introduced herself as the coordinator for that department. I inquired on what I needed to do in order to be added to the contact list in the event of prisoner changes – I was already on the list, my information was incorrect as I had moved over the years. After we corrected the contact information I asked her what I needed to do in order to write a reply to Tafford Lee Dyar. She said that I would need to send the letter to her to be screened and then the SCDC would ask the prisoner if he would accept the letter. I mailed the letter the following day, February 25, 2016.

On March 30, 2016 I received a call from Ms. Nichole Abrams. She advised me that she did receive the letter at the beginning of March and that she was just now getting around to calling me. She repeated the opening sentence that was on the cover letter of my response to Tafford. She then went on to tell me that she would be “unable to forward the letter due to the content of the letter; that it may possibly upset him.” I was at a loss for words as she continued with how it “may disrupt him” and “they cannot have that happen.” As I was still at a loss for words, I did manage to utter while fighting back the tears, “but it is okay that he has disrupted my entire life?” She really did not acknowledge that because after all, I am just an upset victim of the situation that she has probably heard a thousand times, right? I believe after she determined that I was extremely upset, she said it was for the protection of the guards, that they are unaware of “how he will handle this letter.” It literally ruined my day; and here is why.

The sentence on my cover letter simply stated, “Even if this does not reach Tafford, it comforts my soul to finally let it all out. I have waited almost 26 years for this letter to be sent.” That was in no shape or form an invitation to call me and tell me that he would be unable to read the letter because it could possibly make “him” upset. A victim is defined as someone who has been harmed and advocate is defined as to publically recommend or support. Together its meaning is to “support victims and defend them.” There seems to be a flaw here as it seems to me like she was advocating for him; the prisoner

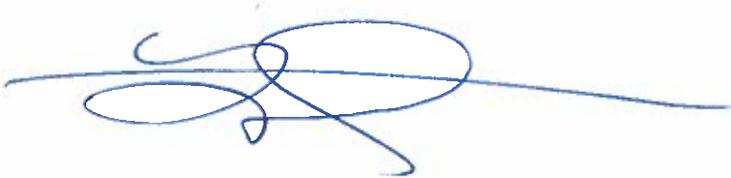
and the person who murdered my mother. What made her think that it was okay to call me and “upset” me with this type of news? Are some things just better left unsaid? I had started the process of moving on and healing by not knowing if he read the letter or not. I did not care as I would have never accepted a response from him. I said what I needed to and got my point across of just how much pain and emotional torment that he caused. It took a huge burden off of my shoulders and for once I started to feel inner peace. Now that burden is back and possibly even heavier than before. Why? Because Ms. Abrams, the Victims Assistance Coordinator of the South Carolina Department of Corrections decided that it was okay to “upset” me in order to protect upsetting a prisoner who was convicted of murdering my mother over words that explain to him why we will not accept his plea for forgiveness.

I am the only voice that my mother has. I chose to use that voice in order to let a convicted murderer know how they have ruined a life; a family. I foot the bill as a taxpayer to house Tafford Lee Dyar. Victims’ families should never have to do that, especially being that no one is footing the bill for our emotional damage and grief from their cognitive decision to take the life of an innocent person. If a prisoner is a threat when they cannot handle the truth of their actions, then put them in solitary confinement and let them work it out until they can return to general population and no longer be a threat. I understand that people think that they are human beings and deserve fair treatment, but so was my mother; yet died at the hands of a monster.

I am currently in school and earning my Bachelors of Science in Psychology. I had ambitions to work in Victims Advocacy and Assistance as my Associates is Criminal Justice. That ambition is now no longer as I would never work in that field if Victims Advocacy is not for the victims of South Carolina. The system has let me down for the very last time. I thought about writing the Department of Corrections but assume that they will just toss this to the side as they have probably heard these cries before. As I previously said, I am my mother’s only voice and he deserves to hear what I have to say. His existence is proof that my family and I have had to listen to what he has to say for the past 26 years.

I write this in hopes that something can change for the victims and that the criminals stop getting more protection than us. That the Victims Advocacy within the South Carolina Department of Corrections will actually work for the victims and not purposely upset them with uncaring words of discouragement within our justice system. We did not ask for our lives to forever be changed, someone obligated themselves to do it for us – yet we cannot be heard.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lunetta L. Day', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Lunetta L. Day

Evans Correctional Facility
c/o Tafford Lee Dyar
#00181668
SID SC00180044

Attn: Nichole Abrams
Victims Assistance

Even if this does not reach Tafford, it comforts my soul to finally let it all out. I have waited almost 26 years for this letter to be sent.

His actions are between him and God and I hope that his proclaimed found devotion to Christ is real. Only he can truly forgive.

February 24, 2016

Dyar,

In speaking with my brother today in a conversation that we never have about Mom, he mentioned to me that you sent him a letter a few years ago asking for his forgiveness. It took him years to tell me as he knows how hard this has been on me. It is wonderful that you have found Christ but I do hope that you understand its meaning and not just using that to make yourself feel better.

Let me break down to you the forgiveness you are asking for:

On May 29, 1990 at approximately 8pm, you, Tafford Lee Dyar, forever changed our lives; with ignorance and no remorse to the crime you committed. You took a wife, a sister, a niece, a cousin, a daughter, a granddaughter, but most importantly, you took a mother. You forever replaced her physical love with nothing but a sheer memory. She has missed weddings, funerals, graduations, and the births of her grandchildren. She has missed Christmas mornings, Sunday dinners, and time from her church that she loved so graciously. We are forced, because of you, to only remember her face by portraits, her voice by tapes, and her loving ways through videos.

You have created terror within our family and grief that is never going to heal. You have permanently created a black hole within my heart that will never be filled. You have forced our minds to think of the unthinkable, animal-like pain that you inflicted on my mother before you brutally raped and murdered her, only to leave her dead, decomposing body to be found by someone who knew her dearly. A memory that they too will have to replay within their mind for the rest of their lives. You left her for the animals and insects to finish off what you had done. You took away the chance for her and me to apologize for our argument before she walked out of our back door for the very last time. Words that are forever burned into my memory and riddled with guilt. You did that.

I have battled for almost 26 years, depression, anxiety, fear, trauma, and PTSD. I attempted suicide on multiple occasions, almost succeeding one time with a machine to breathe for me for over 24 hours because I could not get the burned images of her described last moments of life and her body though court hearings out of my mind. Thoughts of how she more than likely begged and pleaded for her life, screamed for help, and told you that she had a daughter, a son, a family to live for. You ignored her cries and you brutally beat her until she took her last breath, only to rape her again. Disrespecting her body and soul for one last nut because in your sick mind, that was pleasurable to you. At that moment I lost my mother, my best friend, and my heart. For three days my family, my community, and law enforcement looked for her. My father could not even tell me that they found her, my seventh grade teacher had to do that. He was too broken. Even to this day I cry because I can only imagine what she felt after you hit her with your truck. How much pain she felt and how much her heart was hurting as you were destroying her family because she knew that she wasn't going back to her physical home that night, only to the arms of Jesus. You destroyed a family. You did that. Not only did you murder a beautiful, kind, and loving woman, you murdered an entire family. You took away something from us that you had no right to take away. You caused my father to die of a broken heart; five years later. How is that for icing on the cake? Now he too has missed so much within our growing life. It is unfortunate that we have had to grow without them and place roses in place of what should be their physical presence on special days. You took that growth away. I was the one who took all of this the hardest. I am the one that still to this day has to go to a therapist to talk out my fears, pain, depression, guilt, and mostly the hurt of having a heart that has such a big void. You have done that.

The only way that I can be close to my mother is to visit her grave. The only kiss that I can give is to her tombstone. Never does she talk back, never does she hold me when I need her, and never will she give me motherly advice that I need in times like these. I will never again hear her tell me that she loves

me or that things will be okay. No one in my family will hear her beautiful voice again. You did that. You took that away.

So what is it that you want us to forgive, Dyar? Forgive you for doing the devils actions and now you have found Christ? Forgive you for destroying our lives and giving us horrible memories that we are constantly reminded of? How dare you reach out to MY family and disrupt and disturb what we have all tried so hard to not think about. You have caused enough pain. You have destroyed enough lives. I just do not understand of how on God's earth that someone like you be allowed to breathe. You deliberately took someone's life and you want forgiveness because you found Christ? I know that I am asked by God to forgive you of your sins towards me; I just do not think that any of us are willing to give you that any time soon. The demonic actions and emotional, lifelong pain that you have caused is truly unforgivable.

Let's not forget the family in California that you destroyed as well. My family isn't the only one who was murdered by you.

May God truly be with you,

Lunetta Day