

26 Flat Rock Road
Easton, Connecticut 06612
July 26, 1988

Dear Mike,

It is now 8 a.m. It was at 8 a.m., one year ago today, that I received a phone call while I was in Petersburg, Virginia. I was just starting to eat breakfast when a waitress said that there was a call for Walton Everett. When I went to the phone, the person on the other end, a pastor from church in Petersburg, said, "Walt, you need to call home. There is an emergency." I called home and my son, Wayne, answered and said "Dad, Scott was murdered last night." I vividly recall the hurt, the anger, the disbelief.

I also recall the growing up years for Scott. There were many joys and, as with most teenagers, there were also many periods of struggle. Both the joys and the struggles are the building blocks that contribute to the making of a personality.

I love Scott, and this past year has been extremely difficult for my family and me. Scott's keen sense of humor and his hearty laugh had been infectious whenever we were together. Those things are only memories now, and though I am learning to live with the pain, it will not go away.

Perhaps the most difficult thing for me to accept had been the idea that one person could have so little regard for the value of another person's life—a life that cannot be brought back. It's difficult to understand how one person can decide that another no longer has the right to go on living.

And when the person who has been killed is my own son, the pain is almost unbearable at times.

Perhaps you will understand what I am saying about my son, if you consider the love you have for your daughter, and the pain you would feel if you could no longer see her.

Having said these things, I wanted to say that I also appreciated your words in the courtroom on July 1. You apologized for the pain that you had caused my family and me. You also said that you did not intend to kill Scott. Someone else said to me, "That apology does not bring Scott back." I answered, "No, but it helps to believe that Mike recognizes the pain we are going through."

I know also that I will not be able to move on with my life unless I can accept your apology, and so although words seem so trivial in some ways (yet they are all that we have now), I do accept your apology, and as hard as these words are to write, I add: I forgive you.

It's one thing for me to say that I forgive you. But I want you to know, if you do not already know it, that God loves you and offers his forgiveness. I hope that you will be able to sense God's presence and love always.

Mike, I know that you can only have a limited number of people on your correspondence list, so I will understand if you refuse my letter. But if you accept it, and if you want to write back, I will be pleased to hear from you.

To write this letter has been one of the most difficult things I have ever done. I will understand if you also find it difficult to write to me.

Sincerely,
Walter H. Everett