

From my experience with Mr. Drill-Mellum, I have no faith that he will change his behavior. This letter is not for him, his lifetime status as a sex offender is what he gets to walk away with. I have no other words for him. He knows what his actions were, and I have never seen any remorseful or apologetic behavior from him. In fact, during his free time, there were several girls who reported to me that he attempted to get them alone and I have no doubt that he had similar intentions with them. His parents on the other hand, who protected him through his actions financially, and allowed him to walk free for nearly two years after the violent crime that he committed, are who I hope will read this. I've never met them, but I've heard that they have daughters. I've heard that one of them is a medical doctor who gives speeches about empathy. I wonder if they ever realized that by helping their son, they were also helping to exhaust me of everything I had, and to bully and intimidate me. I'm sure that they never meant to hurt me through their protection of their child, and I understand that. But I want them to hear what the result of their negligence and enabling behavior with their son was. Everyone else in this courtroom might not know his history, but I know of many other things their son has done and gotten away with before he got to me. This could have been stopped a long time ago, and I want them to remember it and feel it so that they don't make the same mistakes again upon his release.

I never expected anything bad to happen that day. My only plans were going to a football tailgate when I was introduced to Mr. Drill-Mellum. He was in our group and asked me if I would help him get more alcohol from his apartment. I asked a couple friends to come with me, but they both said no. I didn't think much of it. All I thought was that I was helping a friend of a friend grab some alcohol from his apartment. I'll always wish I had fought back stronger, I'll always replay the whole situation and think about what I could've done to stop it, even though I've repeatedly been told by some very helpful people that it wasn't my fault. I remember realizing once I walked into his apartment that there was no one else there, and the terror that quickly set in when I realized what he was about to do. I told him I didn't like sex and I didn't want to have sex, I told him it had been a very long time and I didn't want to. I begged to go back to my friends. He didn't listen. I squirmed away and tried to roll over, but he kept pulling my body back. Eventually, he allowed me to flip onto my stomach as he raped me. I remember thinking "just close your eyes and you can get out of here soon". I didn't even realize I was crying until he asked me if I was; except it wasn't in a caring tone. The tone was mocking, aggressive, and I defiantly said that I wasn't and continued sobbing into the pillow. Despite my protests, he raped me anally as well. He told me that he was going to finish inside of me. He stuck his fingers inside of me and then shoved them down my throat, tearing what I think is called a frenulum. I felt like I couldn't breathe as he forced one arm down on my back and shoved the other hand down my throat as I choked. I thought I was going to die. I kind of hoped I was going to die. When he finally did finish, he grabbed me from behind like we were spooning. It was so

horribly personal that at this point, I started truly physically struggling to get away. Each time he grabbed me back down onto his bed, and said “no” when I begged him to go back to my friends. Then he announced that he was going to rape me a second time. He called it “sex”, but I knew that wasn’t what this was. Finally, my fight or flight response truly kicked in and I was able to get away. Not before I was raped a second time, but before he was able to choke or bite me again, or degrade me in any other possible new way he could think of. I remember grabbing my clothes off the ground in a heap once I was able to get away from him, and shoving them on as quick as possible. I remember stumbling out of the apartment and running in fear, thinking that he would surely come after me. That feeling still sticks with me to this day. I first texted a friend to come and get me, and then called another. The friend who, earlier in the day, told me, “I love Dan”. This friend answered the phone to me sobbing uncontrollably and said “don’t even say a word, I know what happened. He raped my friend too”. In the months to come, I would become angry about this statement, and the fact that this wasn’t the first time he had done this to someone, but at the time I was just happy that he had said “rape” so that I didn’t have to. I had no words for what I had just experienced, and I still don’t. No one word can sum up what was done. As I sit writing this long, endless paragraph, I still don’t feel that I’ve accurately expressed what happened. I still remember the officer asking me if I knew the name of the person who raped me, and I realized I had no idea who he was. I remember crying hysterically in the ambulance that I wanted to call my mom. One of the officers told me that wasn’t a good idea, because he said the situation was embarrassing for me. I remember being questioned about how much I had to drink, and the impatient tone of the detective who told me this “probably wasn’t gonna go anywhere”.

I remember hearing later from this same detective that Mr. Drill-Mellum had insisted that I wanted what happened to me, because I “liked rough sex”. I do remember the wonderful, wonderful SARS nurse who came and gasped when she saw my injuries, and truly listened to me when I told her what had happened, no matter how scattered my brain felt at the time. I will never forget that. It helped put an emotional bandage on the humiliation I felt when she took pictures of me with my legs spread open, and documented every laceration, mark, and tear on my body. The secondary humiliation I faced when he was released from jail without charges, and I was told to move on with my life, was just as devastating if not more so.

After the rape, I couldn’t sleep for weeks. I stayed up, rocking back and forth in my bed all night with the lights on, and barricaded the door to my bedroom with my desk chair because I was so afraid. Every time I did fall asleep, I had nightmares in which Mr. Drill-Mellum was raping me and I couldn’t scream no matter how hard I tried. My mom got me a taser, which I held in my hands even when I finally did fall asleep. Due to the physical injuries he left on my body, I cried in pain every single time I went to the bathroom for two weeks. Every time

I took a step, I was reminded of what happened due to the searing pain that was so unbearable I stopped drinking water, just so that I wouldn't have to go to the bathroom. When I got home in the clothes that the hospital gave me, I couldn't get myself to take them off. I didn't end up showering for over a week. I suddenly felt like my body didn't belong to me. I would see it in the mirror and feel so disgusted that I would end up vomiting. There are still physical reminders on my body of what he did to me. They're small; so small that no one else would notice them but me, but they're there, and as far as I know, they're permanent. I can't brush my teeth without seeing the part of my mouth that he ripped apart when he shoved his fingers down my throat. I can't look down at my chest without noticing an indent that wasn't there before he repeatedly bit my breasts. I can't look down at my stomach without remembering the panic I felt looking down at my naked body while I struggled to get away from him, before he raped me a second time. I can't wear blue underwear because I remember what it looked like as I struggled to pull it on as I ran away from what he had just done to me. Any time anyone tries to touch me, I mentally associate their kind gesture with Mr. Drill-Mellum's violent ones. Every time I cry, I'm reminded of how I cried into a pillow and heard his mocking voice. Every time I consider doing or saying anything publicly, I have to consider whether Mr. Drill-Mellum's legal team will use my action to say that I deserved it, or that I lied, or that I'm crazy. I still remember the screenshots of my tweets that his team tried to use against me during the University of Minnesota's legal process, as if an imperfect or overly blunt person cannot truly be raped. Every time I feel frozen with a panic attack, I'm reminded of how terrified I was while he was raping me to the point that I could barely move. I still wish I would've fought harder. I will never be able to wipe the image from my brain of his face, smirking at me in court during the only other time I was in the same room with him since he had raped me. I will never be able to shake the feeling of absolute emptiness that constantly haunts me as I slowly grew to realize that this experience emotionally isolated me from many of the people in my life.

All of this is permanent for me. I wonder how permanent it is for Mr. Drill-Mellum? His family clearly supports him through his actions, and he was able to negotiate a lower sentence on his own behalf. But me? I never chose any part of this. I had to fight just to make sure that someone actually paid attention to what he did. An endless burden was placed upon me, as well as on other girls who have come forward to me and told me what he has done to them. I became a one-stop resource for victims and potential victims of Mr. Drill-Mellum. Girls came to me and told me their experiences with him, and yet I was helpless to make a difference with my case until it was reopened. I had to struggle uphill, without the many financial resources that he has been blessed with, just to finally see this moment. And now he's receiving 74 months, almost two years after the crime that he committed. I received a life sentence the day it happened, while afterwards I heard news of Mr. Drill-Mellum out partying in Dinkytown and studying abroad. Luckily, unlike many people on the opposite side of this

situation, I was also left with a clean conscience. I know that what I did afterwards made the world a better place, despite the fact that it hurt me to bring him to justice. I wish that I could stop this from happening to anyone else, but I know I can't do that. However, I am grateful that I will look back on this time in my life as an opportunity to gain strength and character. To learn to take care of myself, and do what's right. It wasn't a lesson I asked for, but I grew all the same. I might feel 10 years older than most of my peers, but I feel accomplished. I survived, and lived to see him admit his guilt.

I have to express my gratitude for every person who fought for me, listened to me, and cared for me during the past two years. Each one of them helped me be strong and survive through this process. Each one of them helped me realize that I was not the cause of this, despite my now-constant anxiety over how I come across to others. I wish that I could stop this from happening to anyone else, but I know I can't do that. There are so many things I left out of this statement. So many emotions, so many hurtful moments, so much pain that this whole experience has caused me, but I will continue to refuse to let this experience break me completely. I've come close to giving up many times, but I have a responsibility to speak out and hope that my experience can help promote positive change.