

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA, IN AND FOR PASCO COUNTY
CASE NUMBER CRC2014CF005586CFAXWS

STATE OF FLORIDA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

ADAM MATOS,

Defendant.

PROCEEDINGS: SENTENCING

BEFORE: THE HONORABLE MARY HANDSEL
Circuit Court Judge

DATE: November 21, 2017

PLACE: Courtroom 3-A
West Pasco Judicial Center
7530 Little Road
New Port Richey, Florida 3465

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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3 THE COURT: State, the jury now returning four
4 verdicts of murder in the first degree with a
5 sentence of life in prison, any objection to moving
6 forward at sentencing at this time?

7 MR. SARABIA: No, Judge.

8 THE COURT: Defense, any objection?

9 MR. LIVERMORE: No.

10 THE COURT: All right. I believe there are
11 some family members present that the State would
12 wish to give victim impact at this time.

13 Would you like to do that?

14 MR. SARABIA: Yes, Judge.

15 THE COURT: All right. Do you know who you
16 have to speak?

17 MR. SARABIA: There are quite a few of them.

18 THE COURT: Okay.

19 It's Mr. Brown, correct?

20 MR. RICHARD BROWN: Mr. Richard Brown.

21 THE COURT: Mr. Richard Brown. Yes, sir.
22 What would you like to tell me?

23 MR. RICHARD BROWN: Well, I'd like to tell you
24 about my family.

25 THE COURT: Okay.

1 MR. RICHARD BROWN: Okay. I'm not going to
2 sit here and talk about the Bible or Romeo and
3 Juliette. I want to talk about the Brown family.

4 THE COURT: Okay.

5 MR. RICHARD BROWN: Okay. So, the Brown
6 family, which consists of my mother, Patricia
7 Brown, sitting in this courtroom. Marie Brown, the
8 older sister who is sitting in this courtroom.
9 Myself who sits before you -- or stands before you.
10 And my little brother Roger who unfortunately was
11 sick and could not make it. But we are all here
12 from New Jersey after over three years of living
13 the pain that only others that we hug and cry with
14 could only understand.

15 So my name is Richard Brown, Greg's younger
16 brother. Our mom, Patricia Brown, sitting there,
17 squeezed five kids into a small house one day where
18 we were children. These were the good old days for
19 us. Most kids today wouldn't even hear of such a
20 thing of squeezing five kids in one little house,
21 but they have no idea what they missed out on.

22 Greg was the second oldest after Marie and it
23 was the middle -- I was the middle, followed by
24 Mary Anne Brown and Roger Brown.

25 As a child in our family I remember the small

1 hallway in between two bed rooms, one for the girls
2 one for the boys. We were little kids. We were
3 upstairs. My mother was downstairs. She was all
4 alone. We had no father. We know poverty just
5 like everyone. We drank that powdered milk. We
6 had reduced lunches. We had all of those things.
7 We had no lavish lifestyle.

8 As a child in our family, we had these two
9 rooms. And going over the line was off limits. It
10 could actually result in some serious hair pulling.
11 Boys in one room, girls in the other. Our life is
12 what we had. We had little. But one thing that we
13 did have was we had each other. Five children and
14 a mother that we loved so much.

15 Greg was the oldest boy and certainly helped
16 to fill the role of our missing father. He showed
17 me and my brother Roger the ropes, teaching us about
18 mechanical work, teaching us about electrical work,
19 and always demonstrating a strong work ethic. All
20 of us kept care of each other, sisters and brothers
21 all united. We were a family of shared experiences
22 and deep values.

23 I remember our childhood as altar servers at
24 St. Rose. He taught me how to make a flamethrower
25 out of Pledge polish, taste nasty sour wine, and

1 trick us into ringing those communion bells at the
2 wrong time. We were all comrades, but the only
3 comrade that ever got caught was poor Greg at these
4 little things.

5 We did the normal, the sinister kid stuff and
6 my mom continued to bring us up five children on
7 her own and did a great job keeping all of us on
8 the straight and narrow path, instilling values
9 that we maintain today.

10 Greg later became the first cool kid with a
11 car in our family. Instead of taking preference to
12 drive his other cool friends around, his preference
13 was to include even his little brother six years
14 younger or five years so that he could hang with
15 the cool kids because that was Greg's kind of love
16 for his sisters and brothers.

17 Now that he had a car he could work two jobs.
18 One day my little brother learned that during
19 Christmastime Greg used to use his own money to
20 make sure that we had a good Christmas. He said to
21 my mother, "Mom, Roger's only eight. He needs to
22 have a good Christmas with real toys."

23 Compassion and service to others was in our
24 family's nature and it was paramount to my mother.
25 It was the most important thing, more than money,

1 more than luxuries that we could never have. She
2 would be the first one to volunteer her little Army
3 of kids to dig holes, break up concrete, cut your
4 lawn, pick your dandelions, shovel snow. Nothing
5 was off limits. The neighborhood was happy because
6 the Brown kids would always help.

7 The Brown family was always on standby to help
8 without any question. Greg never forgot these
9 values and continued to put people before himself.
10 He had the softest heart of all of us.

11 Greg, Maggie and Megan were our family
12 members. They were loved and they had the same
13 rights as any other human being to live, to love
14 and to feel loved by others.

15 For over three years our family has had to
16 play through these murderous events in our heads
17 over and over and over again, nightmare after
18 nightmare because the defendant systematically took
19 all of this and their humanity away one at a time.

20 Let me detail my nightmare for the Court.
21 Maggie, a strong woman with an attitude. They
22 owned a farm. You better not be lazy around her
23 farm. That was the first sentence that came to my
24 mind when I wrote this. She was a hard worker and
25 she never had anything herself either.

1 Her inner strength comes from an extensive
2 line of experiences, hardships and all the other
3 things life throws at us during a lifetime like
4 every other human being on this planet. At over
5 50, it was now her turn to enjoy some of her life
6 and enjoy her grandchild. Once again, a monster
7 decided on his own that Maggie did not deserve to
8 live, although the defendant has had the full
9 protections of the judicial system and now may
10 live.

11 That night, the defendant appointed -- that
12 defendant appointed himself the executioner of
13 humans. Maggie never had a chance to defend
14 herself against a monster from sneaking up behind
15 her like a coward with a (indicating) bam to the
16 head with a hammer as hard as possible until her
17 head was so smashed up he ultimately revealed her
18 brain matter.

19 The defendant has said in his own testimony
20 that he wanted to contain the blood and brains in a
21 bag to lessen the cleanup.

22 Nick. The defendant is responsible for the
23 bludgeoning and destruction of a human face to the
24 point of it becoming the unidentifiable remnants of
25 what used to be a human, a human that had inherent

1 right to live like all of us, to be happy in life
2 and maybe even have children of his own someday.
3 Instead, the defendant made sure that this could
4 never happen as the hammer slowly pounded away at
5 Nick's face until it was pulp so that his mother,
6 father, sister could not recognize him. This, to
7 me, was one of the most worst crimes against
8 humanity I have ever seen in my 25 years of law
9 enforcement.

10 Megan. I can see Megan holding [REDACTED] as the
11 gun was aimed for her head to shoot her in the face
12 in front of her son. I wonder how close that
13 bullet came to that scared little boy's head. Was
14 he spared because he could not talk as a witness?
15 How many times did the defendant ignore her pleas
16 not to kill her son. Isn't that how it really
17 happened? Sure it is.

18 Greg. With blood and brain matter on the
19 defendant's hands, the killing spree is not over
20 yet. The murderous rampage continues by hunting
21 through the house to find Greg feverishly trying to
22 defend the people he loved the most with the only
23 thing that he owned, unloaded riffles stored high
24 atop a shelf where they would be safe from his
25 grandson away in a closet.

1 In my nightmares I see him trembling and
2 shaking to find and load his rifles. His hands
3 shaking so much he's hardly able to get a shell
4 into his gun to defend his family. To this day I
5 can feel the helplessness and shock of these
6 murders as they were unfolding right in front of
7 him.

8 Again, the defendant walks up behind Greg and
9 (indicating) bang, shot him right in the back just
10 about killing him as he slumped over and fell
11 facing Mr. Matos again. But (indicating) bang,
12 shot him again to finish the job to make sure that
13 he was lifeless.

14 After all of this, it's time to open up a
15 six-pack of beer, smoke a pack of cigarettes and
16 play video games, isn't it, because finally the
17 house is quiet. After all, they're all dead.

18 The next few days were spent cleaning the
19 house, wrapping up, tying up, bagging up our
20 relatives for their final resting place. So
21 ingenious of the defendant to figure out how to
22 load four lifeless human bodies into a vehicle with
23 dollies and ropes and pulleys or whatever and in
24 the process dropping them sometimes on the floor
25 because the makeshift winch did not work correctly.

1 So a new plan would have to be developed to figure
2 out a new way to get them into the vehicle, all
3 while whatever blood was left in their bodies
4 seeped out of their bodies to add to the existing
5 post mortem smell already permeating the
6 neighborhood.

7 And, finally, the defendant drove them to a
8 dirt pile where they were dragged out of the
9 vehicle one by one like human garbage. Dragging
10 each one of them out of the van systematically they
11 were placed head to toe because you were even so
12 lazy to even put a pile of dirt with a new shovel
13 that you purchased on top of their bodies.

14 Instead, animals feasted on our loved ones in 100
15 degree weather allowing maggots to slowly live off
16 whatever flesh was on their bodies until there was
17 nothing left to even identify them. It was as if
18 these bodies were a result of a war crime in Syria.
19 It was yet another crime against humanity committed
20 by Mr. Matos and you almost got away with it.

21 Right until the very end, the defendant
22 purposely lied to the jurors hours before they were
23 about to deliberate, but these lies were quickly
24 thwarted once again. The defendant came to the
25 stand, faced the jury. This was the moment that

1 victims were waiting for, to finally hear the truth
2 and remorse. We waited in these pews in
3 anticipation after all these years of lies that
4 were made up, conspiracies, to finally hear the
5 truth and some remorse in the defendant's words.
6 Instead, lies, lies, lies, never the truth. Right
7 until the very end in a desperate measure, the
8 Defense would want everyone to believe no one
9 suffered. They just got tapped in the head with a
10 hammer and died instantly. I can only say wow.

11 During this week and anytime in the future,
12 anyone with a moral compass and common sense could
13 certainly see through these lies. Desperate lie
14 after desperate lie led everyone to believe
15 anything but the gruesome truth.

16 When the defendant finally took the stand,
17 what did the victims hear? More lies coupled with
18 not even a hint of remorse to the victims sitting
19 right in front of you. I wonder how could this be
20 possible not to show remorse after telling a jury
21 how you shot my brother in the back, put bags over
22 heads, and used hammers to make hamburger out of
23 human faces. For one second I thought you may say
24 the word sorry to the victims, instead, again, the
25 choice was just more lies over remorse. So no

1 remorse, no sorry, nothing. For this you obviously
2 are not a part of humanity and have no place in our
3 society.

4 Finally, our family also thinks about all the
5 police, the first responders, medical examiners and
6 the jurors themselves and the prosecutors, and you,
7 Judge, who have endured viewing our loved ones
8 piled up, smashed up, decomposed and riddled with
9 maggots.

10 Our family, being the way that they are, hopes
11 and prays that these public servants can put these
12 images behind them and someday clear their heads of
13 this horror scene.

14 Our family also prays that someday we can wipe
15 our tears and move on with our lives without these
16 haunting -- without this haunting us night after
17 night after night after night.

18 THE COURT: Thank you, sir.

19 Good afternoon, ma'am.

20 MS. MOLDER: Good afternoon.

21 THE COURT: If you can state your name for the
22 record.

23 MS. MOLDER: I am Marie Brown Molder. I am
24 Gregory's sister, Maggie's sister-in-law and
25 Megan's aunt.

1 THE COURT: Okay. Yes, ma'am.

2 MS. MOLDER: First of all, Your Honor, thank
3 you for having -- allowing me this opportunity to
4 read my victim's impact statement.

5 For three years, their deaths have dominated
6 our thoughts and our lives. I cannot adequately
7 describe the pain, horror and overwhelming despair
8 experienced because of one person's actions, of the
9 loss of so many hopes, dreams and expectations of
10 so many people affected, including his own son.

11 Gregory was our softhearted eternally giving
12 brother. He was amazingly patient and unselfish.
13 He became the man of the house at 16.

14 During his summers he would work 80 hours a
15 week just to help make ends meet. He never
16 complained and never in his life did he feel sorry
17 for himself, nor did he use it for an excuse.

18 He met Maggie when he was about 19. Michael,
19 Maggie's child from her first marriage was about a
20 year old. From the moment he held him, he was his
21 son unconditionally. Maggie and Greg went on to
22 have two more children, Aaron and their princess
23 Megan. He adored them and he also adore his nieces
24 and nephews, but the second love of his love was

25 

1 My brother wrote on Facebook on their
2 anniversary, "So I met a girl. And after we went
3 on our first date, I told my mom I was going to
4 marry her. She has been my best friend now for 34
5 years. She is a beautiful woman, caring mother and
6 a loving grandmother, a giving and understanding
7 woman even through rough times. Thank you, Maggie
8 Brown for the best years of my life with many more
9 to come. I will always love you and be there for
10 you. Here's for another 34 years."

11 Greg was what you would call a good person.
12 He loved his children unconditionally, adored his
13 wife. He had his deep faith in God. He loved
14 hunting, fishing, the farm and just being with
15 friends and family. He worked very hard all his
16 life and always did the right thing. He made you
17 special, specifically loved and cared for. He
18 would be the first to help anyone, even strangers
19 if he saw a need shying away from recognition.

20 From as a kid when it snowed shoveling out
21 people on the way to school, to as an adult he
22 would get his tractor out and do the same for
23 people he didn't even know. This is the person
24 that you murdered.

25 Maggie was quickwitted, straightforward and

1 still fragile at the same time, always hopeful and
2 would let nothing get in her way if she thought
3 something was a good idea. She'd tease my brother
4 unmercifully and loved him deeply. I can still
5 hear her yelling "Brown" or "Old man." She was
6 strong, capable and loving.

7 She taught me a lot about myself, tempered my
8 anxieties as a new mom and always had open arms
9 during times of trouble. Maggie and I were
10 stay-at-home moms. We raised our children a block
11 from one another. Along with her sisters, we
12 tag-teamed for grocery store runs, doctor
13 appointments or just folded laundry together.
14 There was always a house full. Between Maggie, her
15 sisters and myself, I think we may have had nine
16 kids under five running around at any given time.

17 This is a family that was in and still is in
18 each other's lives daily. As new mothers we shared
19 the struggles, laughs and ironies of life, husbands
20 that annoyed us, children needing stitches, bills
21 that needed to be paid. Now I can't say, "Remember
22 when" to her, but we will remember and we will make
23 sure her sons and grandchildren know.

24 Megan Elizabeth. She was our stunning tomboy,
25 a natural beauty, athletic, loving mother and, of

1 course, Daddy's little girl. Everything she did
2 she did for her son. She left a full ride at Penn
3 State for track because of [REDACTED] She took jobs
4 around Maggie and Gregory's schedule so [REDACTED]
5 would always have people around him that loved him.
6 [REDACTED] was the center of her world. She did not
7 strive for a career even though she could have
8 easily, instead she focused on her son, his diet,
9 schooling, at-home activities. They were always a
10 priority to her. She would rather bake cupcakes
11 with him than go out with her friends. She even
12 journaled her son's progress daily, what he ate,
13 his milestones, what she wanted to work on with
14 him.

15 My brother and Maggie also used these journals
16 to capture his day. They were his caregivers, his
17 world.

18 Maggie and Greg have two sons Michael and
19 Aaron that survived. Gregory has four brothers and
20 sisters. Maggie has six brothers and sisters.
21 Megan leaves behind two brothers, all these aunts
22 and uncles, and 20 cousins in a family where your
23 cousins were raised to be your brother and sister,
24 your best friends, your aunt and uncles, substitute
25 parents at times.

1 Imagine watching each one of these loved ones
2 suffer, seeing your mother your siblings your
3 children, nieces, nephews, Maggie's parents, her
4 sisters and brothers, Megan's cousins all in so
5 much pain feeling hopeless and helpless at the same
6 time not being able to talk about it for fear of
7 hurting them.

8 What could we possibly say to Michael and
9 Aaron? They lost their father, mother and sister.
10 They lost most of their family because of this one
11 selfish act. Maggie, Gregory and Megan will never
12 be able to see their children, grandchildren, be at
13 weddings or just talk to them on the phone.
14 Another twisted effect because of your actions is
15 how friends either say too much, nothing at all or
16 just avoid you because this is so devastating that
17 they don't know what to say. Now, imagine going
18 through this with your entire support system
19 destroyed at the worst time of your life.

20 As for ██████████ Adam, you claim to love him;
21 he's your whole world, yet you took his world. You
22 killed his five foot two, 52-year-old grandmother
23 by bludgeoning her. And if that wasn't enough, you
24 put over a bag over her head to make sure she
25 wouldn't make a mess. You testified to this

1 without feeling as you did with all their murders.
2 We imagine their pain every day.

3 Adam, you took the life of Nick. You beat him
4 at least 21 times with a hammer. I timed it. It
5 took a long time. A lot of rage and effort. You
6 took his life because he was there. But he was
7 there because you threatened Megan. You then
8 hunted down my brother and shot him in the back.
9 To make sure he was dead you shot him a second
10 time. This man who took you into his home, who
11 treated you fairly and would only help, never hurt
12 anyone. You coldly and without conscious killed
13 him. We think about him every day, every minute,
14 what his last thoughts were and if he saw his
15 daughter died. And all of this you killed him in
16 front of [REDACTED]

17 Megan, the mother of your child, this alone
18 shows how little you really care about [REDACTED] I
19 absolutely believe this was in front of [REDACTED] as
20 she begged for both of their lives. I was at that
21 house for three days after it was released to help
22 back up their personal belongings with their sons.
23 It was over 100 degrees in there. We saw the blood
24 splatter, the smears. We smelled the decomp. We
25 saw Maggie's handprints on the walls while she

1 struggled to get away. I straddled the hole in the
2 closet where my brother died just to get what was
3 left of their belongings.

4 At that time, Nick's sister arrived at the
5 house and quietly asked to see where her brother
6 died. What was left of my heart was broken. She
7 sees the hole in Megan's floor, the bullet hole in
8 the wall. He died with my family, such an intimate
9 event with a person I never met.

10 The worst part was the east garage. I brought
11 with me a body of holy water from where Gregory was
12 baptized. Praying, I sprinkled over the very wet,
13 very large pool of blood where their bodies were
14 stacked in the garage. The detectives did try to
15 spare us by putting paper over it, but it just bled
16 through. On the walls were more blood handprints,
17 blood splatter, yet you sit and testify how not
18 sorry you were by how you loaded them in the car.

19 The house told the story. We could not escape
20 what happened. What is worse is that you
21 carelessly threw their bodies into the woods. For
22 days we try to get health, dental, surgical,
23 skeletal records, anything to identify their
24 bodies, reliving what little we knew with each
25 conversation, begging the stranger on the other end

1 to help us. None of this material helped. Their
2 bodies so severely decomposed rotting in the
3 Florida sun while the animals did their damage this
4 would not allow it. Not only did you murder them,
5 you desecrated their bodies. You made it so that
6 we would not be able to see our loved ones before
7 we buried them. We couldn't even bring their
8 bodies home. This was even taken from us. Three
9 years later I still have nightmares.

10 Just because [REDACTED] has autism doesn't mean
11 he doesn't know what happened and who's responsible
12 for his mother and grandparents' death. In fact,
13 in the three years since this nightmare, [REDACTED]
14 ability to communicate has blossomed. He's able to
15 tell the story as he experienced it in clear
16 language. [REDACTED] relives what trauma -- that
17 trauma and will for the rest of his life just as we
18 will.

19 But [REDACTED] will grow up within these
20 wonderful families remembering his mother but
21 terrified of you. He will grow up surrounded by
22 people who adore him, care deeply for him and would
23 never hurt him. He will thrive, he will be happy
24 and he will be totally loved without you.

25 Lastly I would like to thank Your Honor, the

1 Court, the lawyers working on this case. I would
2 especially like to thank the police officers,
3 Detective Cougill, Kennedy and the numerous
4 professionals that brought us here today. I would
5 also like to thank Deputy Cleaver for helping us
6 during this time.

7 THE COURT: Thank you, ma'am.

8 MS. PYLE: Hello.

9 THE COURT: Good afternoon, ma'am.

10 MS. PYLE: Good afternoon.

11 THE COURT: Your name, please.

12 MS. PYLE: Amber Pyle.

13 THE COURT: Last name?

14 MS. PYLE: Pyle, P-y-l-e.

15 THE COURT: Pyle. I got it. All right,
16 Amber. What would you like me to know?

17 MS. PYLE: So I am Amber Pyle, niece of
18 Margaret Brown, my Auntie M, Gregory Brown and
19 cousin to my best friend Megan Brown.

20 I did not write a impact statement for myself
21 nor will I. I just can't bring myself to spew my
22 emotions out to you. You know how I feel about you
23 because you know what you've done.

24 I am writing solely the impact on what you've
25 done to your son [REDACTED] I once was [REDACTED]

1 cousin but now legally am his sister. My mother,
2 Rebecca Thomas, is now legally his mother. You
3 should know this. You signed the papers to allow
4 my mother to adopt him and thank God for that.

5 We, as my entire family, my aunts, my uncles,
6 my cousins, grandparents, we adore him. We get to
7 watch him grow. We get to listen to his infectious
8 laugh and we get to see his bright beautiful smile.
9 We get to see his school works, his projects that
10 are posted up all around our house in whatever spot
11 he choses because he is our king and we, in fact,
12 will never do anything to hurt him or put him in
13 harms way. He is loved; he is special; and he has
14 a family.

15 We're trying to fill the void that he feels
16 with the loss of his best friend, his mother, as
17 well as his grand parents. I'm sure that you would
18 like to think that with his autism [REDACTED] would be
19 able to forget what you've done, but I promise you
20 he's not. He tells us daily what he saw and what
21 he remembers. He tells us things along the line
22 as, "Daddy made a boo boo on my mommy's head and
23 there was a lot of blood." And he tells us things
24 like, "And then he put him in a car and they were
25 all gone" and he never saw them again.

1 He tells us how scared he is of his father,
2 that he is a bad man and I tell him, [REDACTED] I
3 agree." I hug him and I get to console him, you do
4 not. He makes my mother promise him when they say
5 their prayers every night that she will never leave
6 or hurt him. He's terrified of you, Adam. So I
7 hope when you put your pillow on the bed to sleep
8 at night, you know that your son that you loved and
9 tried to keep safe no longer does feel safe when he
10 thinks about you. He, in fact, tells us he does
11 not.

12 He has told us on countless occasions that "My
13 daddy is in jail and he will never get out and he
14 can never hurt me" or tells us that "My daddy made
15 boo boos on my feet when he made me walk for so
16 long", that would be referring to when you made him
17 run out of the house without shoes causing large
18 painful blisters on the bottom of his feet that my
19 mom had to tend to once he got back to New Jersey.

20 He tells how thirsty and how hungry he was
21 when he was with you. There's things that remind
22 him of his other mommy, as he calls her, referring
23 to his beautiful loving mother Megan, certain
24 foods, certain snacks, certain juices. He'll smile
25 from ear to ear saying, "My other mommy used to

1 give me this."

2 It breaks my heart that he has to refer to the
3 person that he loved the most in this world and the
4 person who loved him the most in this world as his
5 other mommy.

6 I saw Megan with [REDACTED] more times than I can
7 count and I can only pray that one day I can be
8 half of a mother as she was.

9 There's not a single day that goes by in my
10 life that I don't think about my family that left
11 the world at the hands of a murderer. There's not
12 a single day that goes by that your son does not
13 think about his family that he lost at the hands of
14 a murderer. He loves his mother, he loves his
15 grandparents, and he loves us. He does not love
16 you. He saw what you did. He heard what you did.
17 You did not keep him safe and you did not care
18 about him. You stole his whole world. You've
19 ruined his whole life and we are here to pick up
20 the pieces. We love him. Thank you for the gift
21 of [REDACTED]

22 Thank you.

23 THE COURT: Thank you, ma'am.

24 Good afternoon ma'am.

25 MS. RYSTROM: Good afternoon.

1 THE COURT: If you can step up.

2 MS. RYSTROM: Judge Handsel.

3 THE COURT: Your name, ma'am.

4 THE WITNESS: My name is Paula Rystrom.

5 THE COURT: Okay. Ms. Rystrom, what would you
6 like to tell me?

7 MS. RYSTROM: I'd like to thank you for
8 allowing me this opportunity.

9 THE COURT: No problem.

10 MS. RYSTROM: Nicholas Alan Leonard, my son,
11 my only son, was born on the morning of April 29th,
12 1977. My only beautiful son. To lose our son this
13 way has caused unimaginable pain to our family.
14 The worst that can ever happen to a mother has
15 happened to me. I grieve for my son's lost future,
16 for Nick's baby sister Daniel. Nick was her loving
17 big brother, her protector, her best friend, her
18 confidant, her closest ally, a sidekick like no
19 other, now her guardian angel. How I wish I could
20 take away her pain. I can't take away that pain.
21 The year after Nick's murder, he missed her
22 wedding to Michael. He never saw the man he was so
23 happy and relieved she would finally find -- she
24 had finally found. Michael Shoup. Nick's would-be
25 brother-in-law. The man who so graciously would

1 ultimately identify Nick's rotting corpse on that
2 roadside to spare our family the pain of seeing our
3 son in death, a son-in-law we are eternally
4 grateful to have.

5 Michael and Daniel will never have an
6 opportunity to be an aunt or uncle to Nick's
7 children because you took that away from him. Or
8 have him as an uncle to there's. Nicholas never
9 got that chance to experience fatherhood. I
10 promise you, he would have been the best father
11 given the chance.

12 I grieve for Nick's father, Dan Leonard, who
13 taught him to succeed in his life by using his
14 hands and his heart, to bring beauty to this ugly
15 world, a father who taught Nick to take pride in
16 his work, the father whose life was saved several
17 years ago by Nicholas when he suffered his heart
18 attack and thankful Nick was close by to restore
19 his life that day, the father Nick wanted to be
20 just like, the father who wasn't supposed to
21 survive his son.

22 I grieve for Nick's grandparents of which my
23 father recently joined Nick's paternal grandparents
24 in his heavenly home. My father who struggled
25 daily to remain healthy with one kidney he was born

1 with in constant failure to which Nick was offered
2 his own to extend his grandfather's life died with
3 a broken heart over his first grandson's murder and
4 only murdered relative in our family never to see
5 justice here on earth in his lifetime.

6 And for my mother, my mother, the woman who
7 called him Nicky pickles. Nick was her favorite,
8 her first grandson who always made her laugh. This
9 grandmother still living in Wisconsin in the care
10 of Nick's Uncle Marty, my brother Jonathan Martin
11 Rystrom battling the throws of dementia that robbed
12 her of her memories. My mother was told that day
13 they found the bodies, we lost Nick with his
14 girlfriend and her parents to which my mother said
15 through her tears, "That sounds like it was a
16 horrible car wreck." We had to leave it at that.

17 My mother was never told of the details of
18 Nick's death. It breaks our hearts when in her
19 un lucid moments she asks, "How's my Nicky and Danno
20 doing?" We always tell her, "Fine, Mom. Really
21 really good." We must lie to her so we don't upset
22 the routine that sustains her life.

23 I grieve for his aunts, uncles, and
24 heartbroken cousins who lives are forever shattered
25 by this deeply painful, senseless, evil murder

1 spree.

2 I grieve for Nick's countless friends and our
3 friends, our lifelines who loved him dearly, those
4 who Nick would drop everything on a call for help.

5 I grieve for the Hudson community, Nick's home
6 and home to Nick's employees and his business
7 associates he worked for and with.

8 I grieve for Nick's customers who made it a
9 point to come to my home upon his death to tell us
10 how saddened they were, to say how his hands
11 touched their homes. Nick was so much more to them
12 than just a carpenter, a handyman. He was a
13 trusted friend who treated their homes as his own,
14 a son they would proudly call their own.

15 I grieve for the many veterans Nicholas
16 assisted with the basic needs of life, to help them
17 with a ride to the VA for medical appointments they
18 could no longer get picked up for or those who that
19 just needed to get out of the cold for a night who
20 Nick provided a hot meal, a warm shower, a good
21 night's rest while Nick laundered their clothing or
22 gave them his own when necessary. To honor them
23 was a tribute to his Grandpa Leonard's military
24 service.

25 To Nick's elderly neighbors Joanie, Jack and

1 Ralph: Ralph, you heard from his son Robert. They
2 counted on Nick to help repair their homes when
3 they couldn't themselves or run to the store, tend
4 to the clothes, to the chores they no longer could
5 handle. Nick provided hot home-cooked meals or
6 just a jar of salsa made with love from his own
7 hands from a vegetable garden he tended to.
8 Nicholas took pride in sharing and giving of
9 himself to those in need, a hero to many.

10 And, lastly, the many women who came to me
11 after Nick was murdered to share their stories of
12 how Nicholas fearlessly rescued them from their own
13 violent situations. Nicholas went the extra mile
14 to help them and their children by opening his home
15 while finding affordable housing, furnishings, food
16 and toys. Nick made sure they had everything
17 needed to sustain free of their abusers.

18 This was my loving son, my caring child,
19 nurturing, honorable, compassionate, deeply
20 respected and very much loved son. He didn't
21 deserve to be brutally broken, bludgeoned to death
22 and dragged like trash hidden on the roadside with
23 the woman Nicholas described as the love of his
24 life Megan along with her parents.

25 Over dinner on what I would find out later was

1 the eve of Nick's death, he told me, "Megan is one
2 amazing woman, Mom, and you will love her and her
3 family when you meet them." That day never came.
4 The day I was informed of his death, the bodies
5 stacked to rot in the elements for a week with the
6 animals eating and tearing at his open maggot
7 infested wounded flesh, a hole was blown through my
8 heart. My world darkened in that moment. The
9 visioning of circling vultures above your son's
10 rotting corpse does irreparable damage to a
11 parent's psyche, a vision forever embedded in my
12 mind.

13 I continue to have constant nightmares of my
14 son begging for his life, calling out to me for
15 help as his skull is cracking open with each blow
16 to his head. I blame myself for not knowing he was
17 in danger. I am in constant pain wondering if he
18 died instantly or endured lingering torture. The
19 what-ifs slowly kill me.

20 My brother, Nick's uncle, once asked, "What if
21 I had done something differently to change the
22 course of his life?" He wishes he could have
23 brought him to Wisconsin to work with him. We all
24 wish that now.

25 I touch his face everyday on the photo that

1 sits above my home office desk. I hold his ashes
2 in my hands like I did when he was a baby. I cry
3 constantly. I have the last shirt I ever saw on
4 him sealed in a bag tucked away in a box I take out
5 when I need him close to me then quickly return it
6 to preserve his scent as long as possible.

7 On that awful day I was told of my son's
8 murder, I collapsed on a bathroom floor wailing and
9 shaking as I began to vomit until my throat, mouth
10 and tongue were burnt so badly it took weeks to
11 heal. I experienced that again when you took the
12 stand (indicating).

13 My daughter kept coming to my aid to ensure I
14 wouldn't take my own life that day. My life as I
15 had known it was over in that moment.

16 I will forever be grateful for my surviving
17 child Danielle and my fiance Ed for just holding me
18 for weeks comforting me to help me get back on my
19 feet. No matter how unsteady, they made that
20 possible for me.

21 Then came the memorial for Nick. I will never
22 understand how I gathered the strength to eulogize
23 my son at his celebration of life service in front
24 of 700 of our closest friends.

25 In immense heartbreak I survived yet another

1 painful hurdle, another layer of unnatural grief as
2 I prepared to attend the services in New Jersey for
3 Megan -- Megan, Gregory and Margaret Brown. A new
4 waive of grief for the Browns, Thomas's and Monahan
5 families took hold. Just when I thought I couldn't
6 endure any more pain, my heart was so shattered all
7 over again for Megan's brothers, Margaret and
8 Gregory's surviving sons, and all their families.
9 My pain was no longer just for the loss of my own
10 son Nick. We now shared in our losses and became
11 the family of faith that we are today. Our darkest
12 moments, our angels blessed us. Maggie's sons each
13 were blessed with a baby. Gregory Aaron Brown and
14 Janie's beautiful baby boy Rylan came into the
15 world on April 29, 2016, the same date 39 years
16 earlier my son Nicholas entered this world, a date
17 we could all celebrate again. Our tears replaced
18 with warmth. We are grateful to share in the joy
19 of these very special children's lives, Rylan and
20 Olivia.

21 Although this place in time does bring much
22 joy, sadness creeps in. Maggie, Gregory, Megan and
23 Nicholas were denied this joy. They should have
24 had a chance to enjoy this time. I grieve they
25 didn't get a chance to see these babies. It wasn't

1 long before anger reared its ugly head in me.

2 The day we cleaned out my son's home as I
3 gathered his paint-splattered work shirts, another
4 wave of grief flowed. Nicholas believed in working
5 hard, never relying on others and took pride in a
6 job well done. I neatly stacked those shirts in a
7 basket I would keep for two years before finally
8 letting them go.

9 Nicholas believed you reap what you sow. He
10 couldn't stand a liar or a thief. If you didn't
11 earn it, you don't deserve it. Nicholas would ask
12 God often to bless the work of his broken hands and
13 his hands were broken. He couldn't have grasped
14 anyone around the neck because he was scheduled to
15 have surgery on his broken hands two weeks after
16 you killed him. His hands were injured in a
17 construction accident to which I attended his
18 lawsuit. And it's all on file in Pinellas County.
19 You can pull it and look at it yourself. I settled
20 that lawsuit posthumously in absentia on behalf of
21 my child.

22 I need a moment.

23 THE COURT: Yes, ma'am.

24 MS. RYSTROM: Nicholas wasn't altogether
25 perfect, but he learned from his mistakes and

1 always took responsibility for them. I realized to
2 get through this pain I had a choice to either
3 allow it to destroy me or to fight. I chose to
4 fight through countless hours of trauma therapy,
5 the best of friends in life and support groups.

6 I stand before you today proud of my precious
7 son. I will continue to honor my child and his
8 life along with the lives of the Browns. We all
9 struggle and suffer daily to put our feet on the
10 floor, manage our grief and somewhere in between to
11 try to live again in our own life sentences.

12 I pray that no other families have to
13 experience the loss of a child to such evil,
14 horrific demise or in any way for that matter. Our
15 families are now members of a club that we never
16 wanted to be part of and now can never leave.

17 I believe now Nick may find peace in heaven
18 with Megan and her parents. I deeply miss my
19 beautiful son, the joy he brought to all of us,
20 that beautiful smile, his explosive laugh, my best
21 friend in life, his gentle kiss on my head. And
22 hearing his last words of, "I love you, Mama Duke",
23 I am left with a broken heart to go on without him.

24 I honor Nick's life by raising awareness for
25 the children in our community about the dangers of

1 domestic violence and hosting a fall festival each
2 year in his honor of which we had to cancel this
3 year to tend to the important matter at hand. The
4 festival is now Nick's legacy and my goal to stop
5 the madness with the help of the hundreds of
6 businesses Nicholas patronized in our tight-knit
7 Hudson community, families such as Get Hooked -- my
8 best friends. They were my best friends. Your
9 employer was my best friend -- came to me and said,
10 "What can I do? What can I possibly do?" I hate
11 that my friends were put in that position, but I
12 love them for asking.

13 Get Hooked is one of our festival's major
14 sponsors, by the way. We will continue to bring
15 this festival to the children of Hudson completely
16 free of charge to support our local Hudson domestic
17 violence shelter through the donations raised.
18 These are our friends from Nick's community who
19 loved him very much and are more than honored to
20 help us.

21 My pain is not gone. I live the daily
22 nightmare of my son's skull being bludgeoned to
23 death. I feel and hear every one of those 21 blows
24 delivered to Nick's head over and over like a
25 broken record returning every time I close my eyes.

1 My son's story is still not over, nor will it
2 ever be. My wound is still open fresh and deep. I
3 still scream in search for my son. Nicholas will
4 always be remembered as the kind and gentle soul he
5 was.

6 You now know my son, a hero to so many. I
7 know with certainty Nicholas wouldn't have been
8 anywhere else that fateful day. I would move
9 heaven and Earth to bring my son back. I've spent
10 countless hours trying to will him back to life. I
11 would gladly trade places with him. He should
12 still be here. There is no greater pain than that
13 of a mother who loses a child. My son was the
14 first to touch my heart from the inside. This is
15 who Nicholas Alan Leonard was to this world, my
16 son. My gift to life. He was and always will be
17 loved, deeply missed, celebrated and remembered
18 until I take my last breath I promise you as I live
19 out my own undeserved life sentence.

20 Thank you for your time today.

21 THE COURT: Thank you, ma'am.

22 Good afternoon. How are you all?

23 MS. THOMPSON: Good afternoon Your Honor.

24 We're not very good, frankly.

25 THE COURT: I'm sure you're not.

1 MS. THOMPSON: My husband's coming with me.
2 He'll be 79 next month. He's Margaret Brown's
3 father, as you know, and Megan's grandfather and
4 Greg Brown's friend and son-in-law.

5 I have a prepared statement, of course, to
6 help me, but I wanted to make sure that everyone
7 knew some things about Megan and our relationship.
8 We lived far away from them for many years and Greg
9 was wonderful enough to bring him -- bring her and
10 her mother and her brothers to Alaska to visit us.

11 We had a fantastic time. And at eight years
12 old, Megan would sit in her grandfather's lap and
13 read Robert Service Poems to him with intonation.
14 It was amazing. And she came again to Alaska in
15 2000, and she drew -- she was very artistic. She
16 drew a beautiful sketch of one of my dogs. And she
17 also shared in our love of dogs. She actually was
18 in the AKC first book of dogs for children where
19 she was photographed with one of our dogs, so we
20 always shared that joy. But with the sketch, I
21 bring it out on occasion.

22 She wrote almost a haunting message back in
23 2000. She wrote, "To Gramps and Grandma Linda.
24 Love will last, but I will miss you forever." I
25 didn't know why she wrote that then. I still

1 don't, except that I know that she was only 13 and
2 it's the truth, that our love for them will last
3 forever and we are always going to miss them. We
4 have the worst of life sentences. And then --

5 MR. THOMPSON: Jerk off.

6 MS. THOMPSON: Please don't do that, honey. I
7 know you're upset. My husband's, of course,
8 terribly distraught. Margaret was his baby girl.
9 He cradled her. Her mother cradled her. Her older
10 siblings cradled her. Her big brother, he could
11 hardly stand it he couldn't protect her from this
12 violence.

13 And I only knew her as an adult, so my grief
14 is different but it's still cutting and deep. And
15 like some of the other professionals in this
16 courtroom, I was a criminal defense attorney. I
17 represented mostly murder cases, even mass murders
18 and I would die to protect that Constitution with
19 my last breath. So I'm glad you've got your due
20 process; I'm even gladder you're getting your due
21 punishment. It's not enough. I hope you find real
22 justice when you get to that prison and you'll be
23 watching over your back the rest of your life.

24 THE COURT: Ma'am, let's keep it up here.

25 MS. THOMPSON: There is not one of us,

1 regardless of our role in this process -- I
2 apologize, Judge -- who hasn't in private shed
3 tears over the victims even when you're the defense
4 attorney. We're all humans in this. It hurts all
5 of us. But unfortunately this isn't just any case
6 for me; this is my family.

7 I wish the Rules of Evidence could have been
8 thrown out the window. I wish they could have seen
9 his Facebook page where he whited out his eyes and
10 put fangs in his mouth. I wish they could have
11 seen his Facebook page where he lies passed out
12 with a weapon in his hand, some bottles of liquor
13 and a bundle of money. I wish they could have seen
14 the real Adam Matos.

15 My life is changed forever -- our lives. The
16 laughter that Mag and Greg and Megan gave us is
17 gone. Their love is gone. There are gaping holes
18 in our lives forever and in our hearts. We're also
19 changed psychologically forever. We all have
20 posttraumatic stress from this. That's a
21 physiological as well as a psychological event. I
22 stopped biting my nails for the first time in
23 60-some years. I looked down. I have fingernails.
24 Why? I was in shock for a long time.

25 There are days when we feel absolutely

1 nothing. There are days when all we feel is anger.
2 There are days when all we feel is hate. There are
3 days -- there are just no days when I feel like I
4 used to. They don't ever happen and they're not
5 going to. I have a hard time believing in love
6 anymore even though my husband and family and
7 friends offer it to me all the time. The world
8 feels crueler to me than I have ever felt before
9 and I've seen a lot of cruelty but it's different.
10 It doesn't get any easier to cope with. There is
11 so much energy spent trying to cope with this.

12 I needed -- I also need to speak for Margaret,
13 Mag, Greg and Megan too. The Defense offered some
14 postulate to the jury that Mr. Matos was afraid he
15 was going to lose [REDACTED] There was never any
16 thought in any one of their minds to take [REDACTED]
17 from him. As recently as several weeks before they
18 were murdered, Margaret explained to me she did not
19 want her grandson to be without his father. That's
20 why they brought him to Florida. They didn't want
21 [REDACTED] to be without his father. I don't know
22 where this crazy idea came from, but the whole
23 thing is pretty darn crazy and sick. And what they
24 experienced something most of us are fortunate
25 enough to get through life without knowing, because

1 of Mr. Matos, they knew the meaning of the word
2 horror before they died. They likely saw someone
3 they loved or knew slaughtered and they knew they
4 were about to die. They were terrorized by
5 Mr. Matos.

6 Evil. I believe I heard some discussion of
7 evil regarding the aggravators. The thing about
8 evil is that it's not just inside of prison. It
9 lives amongst us and sometimes we don't see it.
10 They didn't; I didn't; and my husband didn't.
11 Fifty-three days before Adam Matos killed them, my
12 husband and he and Megan shared a drink together.
13 Megan and her mother sang a song acapella to their
14 grandfather and father with him in the vicinity. I
15 don't know exactly how close.

16 When I was there just 53 days before he killed
17 them, I talked to him in that very same house.
18 Just 53 days before he killed them, I hugged him in
19 that very same house. Just 53 days before he
20 killed them, I was inches from his face talking to
21 him about [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] needs. He loved
22 [REDACTED] more than anything, that was such a bunch
23 of bologna, Judge.

24 And then 53 days after I talked to him like
25 that, he slaughtered our family. He left them in a

1 blood bath and he subjected this son of his that he
2 claims to love so much that thank goodness my
3 stepdaughter Rebecca and her other family members
4 are loving and caring for because he did not.

5 I've heard people use the word win when they
6 heard the verdict the other day. There's no win
7 here. There's no happiness. That's just not me.
8 That's not who I am. I guess something called
9 justice happens and I think that's kind of a
10 concept none of us can really define because in the
11 end, this is a human tragedy for everyone.

12 Mr. Matos caused it to us. He caused it for
13 himself too.

14 There are five lives taken away one way or
15 another. That little boy has no mother, no father,
16 no grandparents and Mr. Matos made sure he has no
17 father too. And the rest of us will just try to
18 continue in life. There are hurdles. I'm a
19 survivor. My husband is a survivor. We just have
20 a belief that when there are hurdles, you go over,
21 under, around or through them. Somehow we will.
22 We'll miss them forever. We'll soldier on. And I
23 can just be grateful that Mr. Matos, even though I
24 might have wished for a greater punishment, is
25 going to be punished.

1 Thank you for listening. And I apologize if I
2 got a little over the top at that one point but my
3 emotions are over the top.

4 THE COURT: It's okay.

5 MR. THOMPSON: I would like to just say just a
6 few words. My daughter Elizabeth has a young son
7 about the age of [REDACTED] She had to stop him
8 visiting [REDACTED] because [REDACTED] full well knows
9 what happened on that fateful day and he
10 continually repeats, "My daddy killed my mommy."
11 It was too bad he couldn't testify to the jury to
12 that fact. But he's autistic and you don't know
13 what impact it would really have on him. But he
14 wishes, because he knows enough about Florida, that
15 an alligator would eat Mr. Matos.

16 I can't say much more other than a little boy
17 who has problems had a whole lot more dumped on him
18 by that defendant here who is now not a defendant,
19 he is the murderer. Thank you.

20 THE COURT: Thank you, sir.

21 No. No. No. No. No, Mr. Thompson.

22 Good afternoon, sir.

23 MR. SHOUP: Good afternoon.

24 THE COURT: How are you?

25 MR. SHOUP: My name is Michael Shoup. I'll be

1 brief. Rita May Brown, an American writer, once
2 wrote, "One of the keys to happiness is a bad
3 memory." I thought long and hard what I should say
4 if I were given the chance to stand here. How
5 would I speak? How would I react? I looked for
6 inspiration in many places before coming across
7 this quote. Immediately it resonated with me as
8 there are no -- there can be no worse memory than
9 the reason why I and many others are all before you
10 today, which is the loss of four amazing people.
11 For I have come to face an enemy, the ultimate
12 enemy to my family, the defendant.

13 For me, for my wife Danielle, none more so
14 than the loss of Nick from our lives. Although
15 this loss does not overshadow the loss of Megan,
16 Greg and Maggie. It just cuts the deepest because
17 we had the privilege and joy of knowing him having
18 not had the opportunity to meet the others before
19 they were taken from this world.

20 Nick was the older brother to Danielle, her
21 only sibling, her best friend, her protector. If
22 he were still here today, he would be my
23 brother-in-law. I can only hope to fulfill the
24 shoes in his absence, hoping he would approve of my
25 efforts. I did not know Nick for very long as

1 Danielle and I had only been dating for just over a
2 year before he was so wrongfully taken from our
3 lives.

4 Just before his murder, I had spoken to his
5 father Dan and asked Dan for his permission to ask
6 Danielle to marry me. I remember thinking to
7 myself, Dan's permission wasn't enough. I would
8 need Nick's as well because I knew how much he
9 meant to her and she meant to him. Thankfully he
10 happily gave me his blessing to me in a phone call,
11 one that ended with us laughing about my proposal
12 plans and him wanting to partake in the grand
13 scheme I had in mind. This laughter was so true of
14 Nick. Anyone who knew him would tell you the same.
15 Laughter and a big grin. I truly don't remember a
16 time where he didn't have a smile on his face, even
17 the very first time I was introduced to him as his
18 little sister's new boyfriend. I remember him
19 eyeing me up and down for a moment, sizing me up
20 and instantly deciding in his mind whether or not I
21 was good enough for his sister. Just a few seconds
22 later, we were sitting down having a drink, his big
23 smile across his face as we got to know each other
24 a bit and enjoyed the family birthday party we were
25 all at.

1 I remember a sigh of relief at this moment as
2 the approval of Danielle's big brother was the one
3 I was most anxious to achieve and thankfully I did.
4 Although I only knew him for this short time, the
5 love for he had for his sister, his mother, Paulie,
6 his father, Dan, and life were easily apparent.
7 Just the way he smiled at them whenever he was
8 around them, the way he talked about them, there's
9 no mistaking how much he will loved them.

10 As much as he loved each member of his family,
11 they loved him just as in return. Over the past
12 three years, there have been so many stories that
13 have been shared about how much Nick is loved,
14 stories that have been shared over holidays that
15 we've had to celebrate without him being with us,
16 stories told over events we've gone to without him
17 being able to attend with us, or stories shared at
18 a moment's notice on social media without him being
19 able to see them. We'll never be able to share our
20 stories with him again.

21 Nick was taken from our lives by a cowardly
22 act by a coward of a person. The loss of Nick has
23 been a painful one, although the pain I suffer is
24 nothing to that of his mother, father and his
25 sister, my wife Danielle, the pain she endures day

1 in and day out, night in and night out. I couldn't
2 begin to tell you the number of sleepless nights
3 she's had, the panic attacks she's battled, the
4 random thoughts of his passing which causes her a
5 painful cry or the nightmares she has suffered
6 since her brother was stolen from our lives.

7 Somehow she gets through this day by day. She's an
8 amazingly strong woman and it pains me for her to
9 suffer like she does. As strong as she is, she
10 decided against standing here for the off chance of
11 showing any weakness, having me pass on some of her
12 thoughts in her place.

13 So I stand here today trying to be her
14 protector as Nick would have wanted in order for
15 her not to have to tolerate the gaze of the person
16 responsible for her pain. You do not get to take
17 anything else from her or our family. And I'll
18 always be her protector on his behalf.

19 For me, I handle and deal with the loss of
20 Nick and the Browns in my own way as I am also not
21 immune to sudden thoughts about their murder,
22 although mine tend to come while I'm working. As
23 you know, Your Honor, I'm a deputy sheriff for this
24 county and I have been for 14 years which calls for
25 me to respond to those who call out for help and,

1 in many cases, to the homes where someone has
2 passed away. Sometimes the passing is recent, but
3 many times they are not with the odor of their
4 passing in the air. I instantaneously think to
5 Nick and the Browns when I detect this odor that is
6 distinct, foul and retched. It is an odor I
7 smelled at the Hatteras Drive address after the
8 crime scene was released and the day the bodies
9 were found for I was there at the command post.

10 As my mother-in-law testified, I had to
11 identify my brother-in-law's body. It's something
12 I will never forget and thankfully I have to bury
13 that and bear that and my family does not.

14 Danielle and I traveled to the scene. We had
15 to see for ourselves where the murders took place.
16 When I'm working and I come across a scene, I
17 wonder if I'm walking into a similar situation as
18 Nick and the Browns had to endure, if someone had
19 suffered like they did when they were murdered in
20 cold blood. The pain of losing them becomes fresh
21 in my mind. Maybe one day this will affect me
22 differently and won't be as painful.

23 I think back to the quote I started with about
24 bad memories and happiness. From this bad memory,
25 there's been some happiness. We've come to know

1 and love the many family members of Megan, Maggie
2 and Greg and they've become members of our family.
3 We've all become very close and leaned on each
4 other since our loved ones were taken, helping each
5 other through this horrible ordeal as best as we
6 all can each in our own ways.

7 I suppose we can thank you for our families
8 coming together; however, I then think that this
9 may have happened regardless, the way it was
10 supposed to have happened with Nick, Megan, Maggie
11 and Greg being here with us as well. We'll never
12 know.

13 The past three years have culminated in the
14 moments we are in right now and it's being a very
15 long road. Thankfully justice has been served in
16 part. For some, death for you cannot come quick
17 enough. For others, a life in solitude never
18 seeing the light of day is a more just punishment.
19 And either way, it is not worth the price of our
20 families have paid. Trading Nick, Megan, Maggie
21 and Greg for your life will always be the short end
22 of the stick. You have no remorse for your
23 actions. You have not shown any remorse or regret
24 since the day you were caught. This trial, which
25 has been broadcasted to the world has proven that.

1 I have little doubt that all who have watched
2 justice against you be served will agree with me
3 and many now share the destain my family have with
4 you. Your life is now over. I take solace in
5 knowing as your life comes to an end, whichever way
6 it has been deemed to end, you'll have had much
7 more time to think and dredge your impending final
8 ultimate punishment. You'll finally know suffering
9 and pain as we have.

10 John F. Kennedy wrote, "Forgive your enemies
11 but never forget their names." I promise you, as
12 your life comes to an end, I will never do either.

13 Thank you.

14 THE COURT: Thank you.

15 MR. SARABIA: I don't believe there's anybody
16 else, Judge.

17 THE COURT: All right. Defense, if you want
18 to rise with your client and approach the podium.

19 Is there anything that the Defense wants to
20 present or any statements the defendant wants to
21 make before I enter the sentence?

22 THE DEFENDANT: I would just like to say I'm
23 sorry to the victims of the family. I know it's
24 not enough, but I just would like to make peace and
25 hope that they don't hold onto that hate in their

1 heart because a heart filled with hate is not free.
2 I'm truly sorry.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Shut the fuck up.

4 THE COURT: Is that it?

5 MR. LIVERMORE: (Nodding head.)

6 THE COURT: All right. Ladies and gentlemen,
7 if you can't control your emotions -- everyone's
8 had an opportunity to speak -- you can step out.
9 Okay? We just need to finish up this for today.

10 Mr. Matos, before we proceed with the
11 sentence, I have a few things to say. We all know
12 what your sentence is going to be. It was decided
13 by the jury. It was decided by one vote and
14 Mr. Pura made sure of that. He asked the jury if
15 any one of them would spare your life that they do
16 so and they did.

17 The last person who they chose, Margaret
18 Brown's case, the vote in your case was 11 to one.
19 That means one person on that jury felt enough
20 sympathy, mercy for you that they decided that you
21 did not deserve the death penalty. So for that, I
22 don't have to make that decision. It's not
23 something that I ever wanted to do or wished to do.
24 But if there was ever a case that I've ever heard
25 that 12 people would have decided that death was

1 appropriate, this is probably it. But it's their
2 decision.

3 I believe whole heartly in the judicial
4 system, and I believe that those 12 people made up
5 their mind and that sentence will be imposed on
6 you. But I also agree with the victims in this
7 case. This was the most selfish, self centered,
8 evil thing that I've ever heard, that you took the
9 stand and you said that you did all of this for
10 your son is ridiculous. Your son was in the house
11 when this occurred. He was either in the room or
12 within 65, 70 feet of when you shot his mother,
13 shot his grandfather and then waited five hours, by
14 your own admission, to walk downstairs and beat his
15 grandmother to death. In those five hours, you
16 must have sat in that house with your son. He was
17 there. It's 6:00 in the evening. He's not asleep.
18 He's not locked in his room. You're sitting there
19 with your son with his dead mother, his dead
20 grandfather and a man who gave his life for those
21 people.

22 You sat there with him and went downstairs and
23 finished off his grandmother and you did that for
24 your own selfish reasons. Maybe it was your age,
25 maybe it was that you felt that they had done

1 something to you that you needed to get revenge
2 for, but there was no remorse. Just saying you're
3 sorry doesn't make it so. You're not sorry for
4 what you did yet. Maybe some day you will be. You
5 weren't sorry that day. You weren't sorry when you
6 took the stand and you're not sorry now.

7 Your son will grow up without a mother, and
8 without grandparents and without a father, just as
9 you did. But worse than you, he will grow up
10 without a father because he will know that his
11 father murdered his mother and murdered his
12 grandparents. There's no worse life than that.
13 Hopefully with the love that he has from the Pyles
14 and the Browns and all the other family relatives
15 that he has, he will learn to understand and be
16 happy and learn the things about his mother that he
17 did not know because you took her at such a young
18 age of his. There's nothing worse than losing a
19 parent at a young age, but to have them taken from
20 you by your father, I can't imagine.

21 So hopefully someday, somehow through the love
22 of the family that he has here, he will grow up to
23 be a healthy, happy, productive, hard working,
24 loving person. But that's not because of you. So
25 to say that [REDACTED] is your whole world, I don't

1 believe that. I don't believe [REDACTED] was your
2 whole world. I believe that you did this because
3 you were selfish.

4 And based on the decision of the jury, I
5 sentence you in Count I and Count IV to life in
6 prison without the possibility of parole. In
7 Counts II and III, I sentence you to life without
8 the possibility of parole; however, that's with a
9 firearm, discharge -- charging death which means
10 hopefully that no matter what happens with the
11 legislature, no matter what we decide on life or
12 death, in your case, you will never, ever be
13 released from prison.

14 Can you afford to hire an attorney for your
15 appeal?

16 THE DEFENDANT: No. No, Your Honor.

17 THE COURT: All right. So at this point I
18 will appoint the Public Defender to represent you
19 for appeal.

20 State, is there any costs associated they're
21 asking me to impose?

22 MR. SARABIA: Yes, Judge. \$5,001 to Victims
23 Crime Compensation.

24 THE COURT: All right. \$5,001 to Crimes
25 Compensation. There's usually \$550 in court costs

1 and fines.

2 Does the lawyers want me to go through where
3 all that money goes or you just waive the break
4 down on that?

5 MR. LIVERMORE: No. We'll waive that.

6 THE COURT: All right. There's also \$250 to
7 the Public Defender's Office.

8 And you have 30 days to appeal.

9 State, is there anything else I need to
10 announce?

11 MR. SARABIA: No, Judge. We are asking that
12 all the sentences to run consecutive.

13 THE COURT: All the sentences will run -- life
14 will be consecutive to each other. So Count I is
15 consecutive to Count II, consecutive Count III,
16 consecutive Count IV.

17 And you have 30 days to appeal. Good luck.

18 (Proceedings concluded.)
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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2
3 STATE OF FLORIDA)4 COUNTY OF PASCO)
56
7 I, Victoria L. Campbell, Registered Professional
8 Reporter, certify that I was authorized to and did
9 stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and that
10 the transcript is a true record.11 DATED this 2nd day of August, 2018.
1213
14 /S VICTORIA CAMPBELL
15 Victoria Campbell
16 Registered Professional Reporter
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